An illustrated handbook
for delegates to the Conference
Planning in Crisis

to be held at the Department of
Environmental and Domestic Science
Polytechnic of Central Grotton
September 5-9

Prepared on behalf of the
Royal Town Planning Institute by

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Although published to coincide with the
Grotton conference, this handbook is
primarily intended for those who will not be
there, but who may be intrigued that such
interest is being generated in a place whose
very existence came to light only in 1975. Yet
anyone who has had to grapple with the
British Town Planning system knows Grotton
well and this guide to its more lovable
idiosyncrasies is produced in the hope that,
like planning itself, it will inspire the
disillusioned, enlighten the misguided, and
generally make life worth living again.

Legal note: The authors wish to point out
that any resemblance in this book to any
local authority, living or dead, is purely
subconscious.

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Lastly, they gratefully record their debt to the many thousands of planners, civil servants and councillors throughout the country, without whose unswerving assistance none of this would have been possible.

Contents

10 The Rural Areas
Where we learn about the urban fringe and why life would not be the same without it -- the upland areas of the County -- planning for recreation -- minerals -- district land -- and several other things.

11 The Inner City Dimension
In which T Break tries to understand it.

12 The Future of Grotton

Appendices

i Notes for delegates -- conference programme -- conference helpers and stewards
ii Where to go and what to see during conference week
iii Acknowledgements

Message from the President

1 Grotton in Perspective
In which we are reminded of Grotton's place in the world and its glorious history.

2. Round the Districts
Where we make our first acquaintance with the Metropolitan District of Cogglesby, Dunscote, Golden Delicious and Grimethwaite, and the City of Grotton.

3 Planning with Tiers
The men who try to make local government work -- Roland Pratt, Peter Rabbit, Ron Blunt, Nigel Smootho, Ken Daff and T Break.

4 How is the County Council Run?
In which we come across Tony Monopoly and his corporate management system -- and learn how the Planning Department is organised.

5 The Structure Plan
Where we find our heroes grappling with the horrors of the Initial Announcement -- The Report of Survey -- The Alternative Strategies -- The Draft Plan -- participation with the public -- and much more besides.

6 Transportation Planning
Where we learn how roads get built.

7 Local Planning
Which finds us looking at the Grotton Development Plan Scheme -- and attempting to explain it.

8 Development Control
In which we discover how arrangements are made to decide planning applications

9 Conservation and Design
Where we are told more of Grotton's rich architectural legacy -- are introduced to GROPE -- and find out something about the Design Guide.
What an enormous honour and privilege it is to be asked to introduce this conference handbook – truly the pinnacle of a challenging presidential year. There is no doubt in my mind that this great symposium will surely go down as a milestone in the development of Town and Country Planning in Britain and, indeed, throughout the world. I am particularly delighted that Grotton, of all places, will be acting as host to this magnificent occasion which will (purely coincidentally!) mark the 225th anniversary of Capability Brown’s famous visit to the town in 1750. I’m sure that Capability, had he been alive today, would have been one of the first to agree with me.

I am determined that my Presidential initiative in allowing this leaflet to be produced shall be a resounding success – and I do mean success – we should not be ashamed to say so. I sometimes think ‘success’ today has become a dirty word (like ‘body’, or ‘Statutory Instrument’). Yet well remember, as a young planner, I once met Sir Patrick Abercrombie, and I shall never forget his words to me: ‘Go and get on with your work’ he said, in that deep friendly voice of his. What good advice that was!

I want particularly to thank Mr T Break, the Grotton Country Planning Officer, and his colleagues, for helping to organise the conference. There is a great deal of work in arranging these things, I understand, and in a hard-pressed department it can be the last straw which sinks the camel completely. Yet I know that every effort has been spared on this great occasion and, as the mid-day sun sinks slowly over the horizon, as the pigeons fly wearily home to roost, I feel absolutely confident that this great gathering of ours will be all that the participants expect it to be.

But now the ball is on the other foot; the preliminaries are over and the real business starts. There may be troubles ahead. Sometimes we may be treading on thin water – but I can safely say that a few short days in Grotton will, if nothing else, help you put your own problems in perspective. As Beaujolais rightly said ‘Il y a toujours quelqu’un plus mal que vous-même’.

When all is said and done, and when one considers the age in which we live, with its declining standards, increasing violence, organic change and processed cheese, and were it not for the open-ended commitment to broadening ideological commitments within and outside the profession and the increasing rate of change in technology and social and economic attitudes, leading inexorably towards what can only be described as a state of transition.

But things are not always so clear-cut, and all I can do is to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to those thousands of people whose untiring efforts have made all this possible. I am only sorry that, owing to prior commitments, I will not be able to be there myself. So it is with great pleasure that I now declare this handbook open!!
Chapter 1
Grotton in perspective

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Despite this impressive entry in the AA Members' Handbook, Grotton is surprisingly little known as a town. Yet this part of the country is special, if not unique, for within the boundaries of the great New County, of which the City itself forms such an essential part, there can be found examples of every planning problem known to man — and a few more besides. It is for this reason that the eyes of the world are now being focused on Grotton as it has enthusiastically (if sometimes unceremoniously) embraced the many and varied opportunities thrown up by the modern British town planning system. It will be the purpose of this little book to examine how far — if at all — the country's planners have been able to come to grips with the awesome range of difficulties which confronts them.

Clearly, no account of the major planning problems facing metropolitan Grotton would be complete without a thorough analysis of the underlying physical and economic factors which created them — and which makes it such a fitting location for this conference. Planning in Crisis.

Regional context
Grotton lies roughly midway between Venus and Mars, at a crossing point of the River Grime. It was, of course, this commanding geographical position which put Grotton where it is today and, as we shall see, the importance of the town as a communications centre in the nineteenth century owed its origin largely to its favourable location (this strangely circular analysis owes much to the Head of the Department of Geography at Grotton Polytechnic, who produced it shortly before his untimely incarceration in the Wibybridge Convalescent Home for the Incapacitly Academic).

The importance of the Solar system in the history of the area's development can, of course, be over-stated, and Grotton's — sensibly restricting twelves squared to a more limited geographical horizon. Though we may criticise our Victorian forefathers for the exorbitant physical cost of such blindness, surely it is more than just coincidence that Grotton finds itself much closer to London than does Valparaiso,1 even though the latter is a considerably larger town. This is an important planning matter, and helps to explain why Grotton is in England and not in Chile. (See Fig 2.)

At the more local scale, urban Grotton is all but encircled by extremely boring hills covered in peat bog and sheep droppings, and this may well account for the somewhat morose disposition of many of its inhabitants. The Panamas for it is that rise to a considerable height on the County's eastern flank and have for long provided a cultural and economic barrier between Yorkshire and the civilized world.

Fig. 1 The planners have to look at Grotton in its regional context

Fig. 2 Grotton is roughly 2000 miles from Valparaiso

1 See: A Boy's Wunder Book of How far it is from Une Place to Another. DULP(1932)

Brief history
Thanks to some inspired work by Grotton Museum staff, much is now known about pre-historic Grotton. Sadly, there are few who now remember life in those far-off days, but what has been done little more than intelligent speculation by Victorian archaeologists can now be seen for what it was — a load of rubbish. The Eckborough Hoard, for example — long held to prove the Grime Valley's central position on the Amber Route — has finally been utterly discredited. Instead of being a Mesolithic fertility symbol from the lower Danube, this small piece of weathered wood has now been positively identified as a clothes peg dating from about 1921.

The earliest written reference to the town is in the diaries of the Elder Pimy, who decided (uncharacteristically) to take a holiday there shortly after the Roman occupation. He wrote:

I'des of March, 41 BC* In Grottiensis.
Eccle. Haece Cassiare affiletis est, quam locutus puternius va.

1 Pimy, of course, could not have been certain that it was BC but history has proved him to have been justified in his assumption.

1 visited Beirut where he shot at a stag and missed, and Fig 3 indicates the important settlements in the area at that time. But, to all intents and purposes, nothing happened in Grotton until that fateful day in 1773 when the Industrial Revolution began. As every schoolboy knows, the textile industry in this area owed its beginnings to three essential factors — the swift-flowing streams, whose soft waters made them ideally suited to the washing and bleaching of raw cotton; a generally humid atmospheric regime (which led to a heavy local demand for thick socks); and the ample nearby supplies of loomies, stubbins, wending rods and so on. This is clearly not the whole story, however, and more research is urgently needed in this important field but, whatever the cause, by 1830 the world had already begun to discover that To deal in cotton, that must deal with Grotton — for the great industrial boom was under way. The new factory system, aided by revolutionary mechanical developments such as Richard Meargeave’s spinning Jenny and Isaac Shutzbeckton's
improved horizontal thrusting frame, drew thousands to the towns from the surrounding countryside (where, according to contemporary accounts, things were a bit dead anyway). As textile production increased, towns began to specialise (Eckborough made 90% of the world’s bibles in 1868); at the same time engineering and coal mining were expanding rapidly and the Bogg/Grime Basin soon became the hub of the Empire’s industry and commerce. Thousands of cheap houses were built in towns like Grotton. Grimethwaite and Muxthorpe to accommodate the new urban masses – Grotton itself was transformed overnight from an obscure market town to a major metropolis and centre of world trade. What visitors will doubtless ask themselves as they view the pathetic remnants of this golden age went wrong? Certainly the growing competition from the Far East, the great depression of the 20s and 30s, and the unfortunate failure of the Luftwaffe to inflict anything more than superficial damage to the area, all took their toll. It is also possible to point to the decline of the shipbuilding industry – always an anomaly in such a landlocked location – the final collapse of which now appears to be imminent. Nonetheless, the picture is not one of unrelied gloom, and parts of the County have been remarkably successful in adapting their economic structure to meet changing circumstances (a specialist firm in Betterley, for example, at one time supplied all the packed lunches used by construction workers on the Eskiaf Oilfield).

In what way have the recent radical changes in the administration of local government been able to respond to the problems which the area is now facing? To come straight to the point, the creation of the Metropolitan County of Grotton, on 1 April 1974, is widely acknowledged to have been a mistake. Whilst it is true that this has not aroused a great deal of comment (since the same applies to all the other new Authorities) the lasting ramifications of this painful aberration must surely rank for their enormity alongside the Partition of India, the Grundnut Scheme, and the Greater London Development Plan. No-one is saying that the pre-reorganisation boundaries were perfect; but to many observers, whatever chances the area might have had of extricating itself from the economic and social mire into which, as a whole, it was visibly sinking, may not have been altogether improved by the Local Government Act of 1972, and its offspring – the County, and the five Metropolitan Districts of Giggley.

1 It should be noted that Dr Gibson, of the Polytechnic of Central Scotland's Environmental Studies Group, has now informed us that the information from which he prepared Fig. 4 has since been found to be inaccurate. In a curious way, however, it stills a great deal about the town, and has therefore been retained.

2 A cotton mill had been established in Barnsley as early as 1847,

Dunromin, Golden Delicious, Grimethwaite and Grotton.
Is this tragic theory justified? No doubt a great many words will be spoken on the subject before the Conference ends, but meanwhile it is hoped that, through this little book, some light will be cast upon the darkness.

Fig. 3
Grotton in the late seventeenth century

56 BC 1351 1708 1972

Fig. 4 Grotton’s development provides an interesting case study for urban geographers
Coggley MD Population 41,934
Coggley is a district of many contrasts. With dense urban development sprawling along the Bogg Valley in the south-west, and wild and windswept moorlands in the north and east, this hilly Borough also contains pretty villages, 20 pig farms, and the largest glue factory in western Europe. Over half the total area of Coggley is peat bog, owned by the North West Water Authority (UK), according to the District’s avuncular Planning Director (Bob, the 'Boggy Bob'), apparently true.
Here rise two of the County’s main watercourses, the Swill and the Bogg (which have their confluence in Coggley town centre). The head-waters of these streams tumble off the moorland plasa in a number of torrents or downfalls, and their narrow, wooded tributary valleys have evocative names such as Boggheat Clough, Swill Downfall, Down Swillflat, Boggart Swill Head and Swill Boggart Clough Head. Boggart, over these three, are the rocky outcrops of millstone grit known locally as neb, chief amongst them being Boggart Swill Head Neb and the great Swillflat Head Boggart Neb. Of particular interest to tourists are the ancient 'Swill Stones', famed in myth and legend (and used as an artillery target by the Ministry of Defence).
As local folk are quick to remind visitors to the area, the Industrial Revolution began in Coggley on 15 January 1773—in the afternoon. The actual spot, the present hamlet of Whitehead on the Bogg is now a museum devoted to the life and works of the pioneer industrialist who, after many fruitless attempts, finally achieved the successful self-conversion for his new two-storey weaving shed. This was the vital spark—the humble weaving shed, much like the noise at Grotton, which did so much to establish the area's wealth in the early 19th Century. Ironically, Coggley itself saw none of this industrial explosion; the inherently unstable geology of the greater district is such that from the start it was a notorious manufacturing locale, to the envy of the locals. Settled by the ubiquitous flock of sheep and that is the way things stayed—until the arrival late in 1866, of James and Benjamin McMonico and their glue works.
The McMonico Brothers had come from a respected Quaker family whose fortune had been built on porridge in Poulton. Keen to diversify into other fields, and fully aware of the markets created by the new industrial masses, the McMonicos chose Coggley as the ideal base for their model factory. A happy fusion of the twin virtues of capitalism and philanthropy ensured the success of the venture from the start, and within two years Grogton Hygienic Animal Glue was to be found in every home in the Empire. The factory itself was set amid trees, gardens and recreation grounds and so that the benevolent McMonicos could always keep a charitable eye on their workforce, study dwellings were conveniently erected alongside the offsite-grinding sheds. Lifelong patrons of the arts, the brothers had retained the services of Benvenuto Trattora, an unremunerated Italian architect, to design the main Bolling Hall in the Byzantine style. This fine building, completed in 1874, was only taken down in 1989, soon after the merger of Grotton with the Anglo-Japanese Adhesive Co. of Osaka.
There are several major planning issues facing Coggley as it struggles to come to terms with the 20th Century, chiefly the perennial difficulty of controlling the activities of quarry-owners, rural scrap-metal dealers, pig farmers and barn-converting stockbrokers. But perhaps the most pressing issue is the continuing problem of gentrification of the numerous hill villages which nestle in the folds of the uplands. In particular, Spilte Th' Bottom (now a Conservation Area) suffered much in the late 1960s from intensive speculative development and exhibits a range of architectural solutions which, though frequently eye-catching, somehow fail to achieve that unity of time and space which the developers, Messrs Bettspec, led the previous authority's Development Committee Sub-Committee to expect.

Another problem for the planners to worry about, and one which has caused a great deal of local concern, is the projected expansion by Anglo-Japanese Adhesives, right in the town centre. The 350 foot aluminium-clad gable-end, which would be clearly visible from all over the District, is at the centre of the present furou. Gavin Pennuddock, a flamboyant Cornish poet and self-appointed expert on environmental matters, has already vowed to glue himself to the Japanese Embassy should the Secretary of State (who has called in the application) decide to give the Company the go-ahead. The County Council are in something of a dilemma over the case. They are acutely aware of the controversy over the large-scale, and environmentally conscious of the 9 extra jobs which the £40m expansion will bring to the area, they have, in fact, given it qualified support—suggesting however, that the latter should be adequately landscaped to protect the visual amenity of the town.

Last year Coggley reached the final of 'Jeux sans Frontieres'.

Fig. 7 Coggley's world-famous Mildred Avenue Conservation Area, with its unique layout and bewildering array of architectural gems.

Dunromin Population 70,109
'Then thread the sunny valley laced with streams, or forests wide, and th'in a shadowed brims of gentle ponds, where idle shepherd dreams. And streaks his restless limbs'

Shelley did not, in all probability, have Dunromin in mind when he wrote those glorious lines 1—but he might have done. For it is Dunromin, more than any other part of the north-west, that gives the fullest expression that the north-west of England is all muck and clogs and brassy bands. Indeed, with its 'werpant' meres and ponds, famous golf-courses, public schools, and liberal and sophisticated outlook, one of the first sights, something of an oasis in what is otherwise a rather ordinary Metropolitan County.

At the centre of things is Betterley. This rapidly-growing town has traditionally looked towards Manchester for its jobs, to a certain extent, and economic ties, rather than to the less cultivated influences of industrial south-east Lancashire. Even the coming of the railway from Grotton failed to integrate the town fully into the life of the nearby conurbation. Today, Betterley folk (of whom, incidentally, only 9% actually work within the District) vehemently resist any suggestion that they have anything in common with their somewhat less refined neighbours— still less that they are in any way dependent on the rest of Grotton for any other than employment, transport, entertainment, sport, cultural services and the like.

Dunromin is quick to point out the ancient origins of Betterley itself—though to the casual visitor, little evidence exists of the medieval conurbation. The splendours of which the tourist brochures tend to dwell at some length. Indeed, thanks to the impressive commercial redevelopment of the 1980s (which earned Betterley the title of 'The Croydon of the North') the only clue to them, or the original layout, is to be found on Mrs Gaskell's husband Mr Gaskell's use of his workshop near Betterley.
Unfortunately, land for reasons with which the Fraud Squad are believed not to be entirely satisfied, some £22 million of the repayments have been invested in the Snodgrass Centre, and this threatened at one time to bring the Council to the verge of bankruptcy. However, by a skilful manipulation of the rates— and a courageous increase of the supervision fees on new developments— the situation has been averted.

Some critics of the Snodgrass Centre have suggested that part of the problem lies in the apparent willingness of the Council to accept any design which would keep the rates to a minimum. In fact, there is no doubt that this has been the case. The Council has been keenly aware of the fact that a successful speculative building in Belythorpe did not please everyone, and that there is no doubt that it has brought the area into disrepute. The area has been generally found in the rest of the County. The most obvious symbol of Belythorpe’s growth is the Snodgrass Centre—a massive 15 acre development containing, amongst other things, no less than 2.5 million square feet of office space and what Megabulb Property Corporation describe as a centrally-located out-of-town family hypermarket, a new concept in convenience shopping, providing for the needs of the local community with three car parks for every visitor. This huge scheme was the brainchild of Les Slot, a local businessman, the leader of the Council, and reflects Belythorpe’s (and now Dunrobin’s) philosophy of providing the entrepreneur with the right incentives. Even he, however, has been obliged to concede that the Snodgrass Centre has somehow failed to realise its full potential. With its sad record of structural defects, its frequently troublesome air-conditioning system and its four miles of wind-twisted upper-level concrete walkways, it is hardly surprising that the only occupants of the office space are the 26 civil servants of the East Anglian Hydro-Electricity Commission.

Goldie Delicious Population 6,728

Tucked quietly away at the south-western extremity of the County, nestling inconspicuously in that part of the Fertile plain which (mercifully) still separates Groton from the town of Belythorpe, Goldie Delicious was, until this year, a medium-sized town with all intents and purposes inaccessible from either, lies the evocatively-named Metropolitan Borough of Stottsoken. This small town, with its romantic-sounding settlement of Stockocks, Golden Delicious was, as the world now knows, a district of the country with a high proportion of the population numbers, the exact location of which is not known. After their efforts at sorting out the new boundaries in the Belythorpe area of Golden Delicious, it looks as if the area has been depressed after their efforts at sorting out the new boundaries in the Belythorpe area of Golden Delicious. After the area was passed to the:eq:0] the pre-war housing market, the area in which they had been working and committed a fatal error—one from which the County is unlikely to recover. Even on the casual visit, the sense of isolation is immediately apparent, and no-one, least of all the Borough Council, doubts that it would probably be better for all concerned if Golden Delicious had not been created at all.

Nonetheless, history gives some credence to the idea of the area’s separation from the rest of the County. Indeed, its ancient name was "The Isle of Stottscock", which derived from its position close to the confluence of the Gime and Biter Rivers. And the modern-day Golden Delicious still has all the appearance of not really belonging anywhere. With very few exceptions, the whole of the Borough consists of pasture land. There are some small farms, but they are small and in former peasant holdings have, of course, to Stottscock’s famous dahlias. Two miles south-west of Stottscock itself is the famous rosse mustard, or could it be a darning.

During the Second World War much of what is now Golden Delicious was taken over by the US Air Force as a vast landing strip with, alongside, an enormous factory devoted to the production of armaments, and as a home for American armed forces, of chewing gum and bromide tablets. Thus, the Stottscock base, whilst it could not actually claim to have won the war for the Allies, at least helped to guarantee the honour of half the female population of Europe. Now the Americans have gone, much of the airstrip has been ploughed up, and the factory stands gaunt and deserted, its windows broken, its doors fastened with a few abortive and half-hearted attempts to change it to a "home and garden centre, or a cash-and-carry warehouse, or some such thing, all of which have been opposed by the County Council, largely on the grounds that County Councils usually oppose this kind of thing.

Stottscock itself is very small. The Church of St Rita is thought to have the poorest acoustics in England.

Grimesthwaite Population 92,143

It is difficult to imagine that, less than 150 years ago, the Grime was a clear and swiftly-flowing river, renowned throughout the area as the finest salmon stream south of the Lake. For not long after the salmon was seen being gazed at for the first time, it was taken as an omen that the water above Muckthorpe, had anything entered that area in the course of the river. And, in short, it is not a pretty sight. There can be few parts of the county displaying, within one small area, such a bewildering combination of environments. From the headwaters of the Grime to the housing stock lacks five or more basic amenities—22%, for example, have no television; 83% of the total area is taken up by spoil-tips, slag-heaps, chemical waste dumps, clay-pits, disused railway lines, and redundant sewage works; much of the remainder consists of derelict cotton mills and coal-mining sites; it seems almost inevitable that such a blighted landscape should leave a mark on its hopeless residents. Indeed, the good people of Muckthorpe and Grimesthwaite (the principal— and rival— commercial centres of the District have a reputation for surliness and bloody-mindedness second to none in the country. So uncouth is this miserable place that all four of the gypsy sites made available by the Borough Council remain unoccupied. The residents' representatives have objected to the squall living conditions and insanitary habits of the local people.

Grimesthwaite is the Country’s power-house and, for this reason, it still provides 17% of the available employment, with cotton-spinning and mechanical and electrical engineering (which are declining not far behind Muckthorpe, of course, and also of the cotton products, for which there is naturally a strong local demand (carbolic soap was first synthesised in Grimesthwaite over 100 years ago), and has at least managed to diversify to some extent—a factory has recently opened making a revolutionary new pill for the development of the government. Grimesthwaite has had it’s local people have a saying, 'Wur it’s much it 'uglin', yer robbin' get that welsh inndied', and that's as it's ever was. As a result, a fierce and continuing rivalry exists between Grimesthwaite and Muckthorpe—a rivalry which attracts a particularly robust character from the area, providing an interesting contrast of the towns. Rugby League teams. The two towns, though only six miles apart, have always been fierce rivals. This long-standing mutual antipathy was bound to spill trouble for the new authority even before it was created in Grimesthwaite, the larger of the two, naturally favoured Grimesthwaite, as the name for the Metropolitan Borough of Muckthorpe, after careful consideration, opted for Muckthorpe over Grimesthwaite. I think that the newly-elected Council submitted for the consideration of the Secretary of State a number of imaginative compromises— including Woodpark Vale, Sewlake, Sheringham, Westerham, and Switzerland, and the Netherlands.
Sovage Works. The Secretary of State, who in those days was a busy man, thumbed through his AA Handbook to the appropriate page and, finding Grimethwaite to be the only settlement shown on that part of the map, decided on it as an eminently suitable name for the new District. (It was thus only by chance that the reorganised authority adopted the name, called from a nearby hamlet, which was in favour.)

Mention must be made of Staunton Regis, whose determined residents had succeeded at last in obtaining a minute in which they themselves from the embraces of the new, Metropolitan, Grimethwaite. The result of all this was, at a stroke, to deprive the populous authority of one-tenth of its population and 607 acres of its rural expanse. This, its rateable value, although this trend has been firmly denied by the City Council who suggest, for instance, that the annual Rate Support Grant Settlement, that, in arriving as an estimated population for the town of 160.813, the Registrar-General, somewhat contorted to print the correct figure upside-down.

Gromton City Population 160.861

What can be said about Gromton that has not already been said in countless school geography textbooks, in reports of Royal Commissions and in decisions by the Ombudsman? The City of which Oscar Wilde once said is "This is a alive and well and beginning to come to terms with the twentieth century" for which could it within Our Districts are always ready to debate the point, Gromton is clearly the economic and social focus of the new County, and the City Centre provided by the City Centre make it second in importance only to a number of other towns in the Region. As we have seen, the original impetus for the City's growth was provided by the textile industry, but this part of the last century, although there was for a long time previously a confection with the coalfields trade. The City of Gromton is at the very heart of the coalfield industry which was to take place. (Romish weavers and Humberstones respectively).

The City has been only moderately successful in attracting new investment to counteract the continuing decline in the traditional industries of textiles, engineering and shipbuilding. The clothing trade survives, a prime example of industrial inertia—though a shadow of its past greatness (it will be recalled that Jeeves & Ackroyd's fortunes were founded on his brilliant plan for supplying the Russians with coarse cotton serge during the Crimean War—a fairly simple dispatching the air in which, even more than the consequences of salvation, brings tears to the eyes of the residents and visitors alike. No-one seems to care any more—in fact when the Government recently announced that a vast area to the west of Muckthorpe was to be used as a tip for spent nuclear fuels, only 3 people signed a petition, and one of those was in favour.

Groniton Junction Railway being perhaps the best-known example, there is no doubt that Gromton's new connections to the expanding national network were irrevocably linked with its amazing growth during this period: the town's population was only 3,145 in 1901 to 24,600 in 1981, and, by 1991, to a staggering 207,436.

4.5 For a thorough survey see especially 'Nemesis' Groniton, there is West Bank/Technical College (unpublished) (in fact until)

Forcibly in the 1950's and 1960's were not the complete success for which they had earlier hoped—it and the recently-announced demolition of the twin 25-storey blocks of walk-up flat-surface maisonettes (known locally to the residents as Sodom and Gomorrah) suggests that a totally new approach to the problem is being tried out.

Indeed the 'Gromton Experiment' is beginning to attract national attention, even before the pilot scheme has been completed, the technical possibility of improvements to the existing housing stock involves, in an attempt to speed up the process, no less than four hundred council workers moving the occupants into a Portakabin in the street and, according to the critical path programme, powered together with the aid of a computer by Messrs Hunsby and Palmer (Management) solutions of Portakabin, completely renovating the property—by providing damper-proof courses, new window frames and redecoration (details to be published in the near future).

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have developed since the passing of the Local Government Act 1972 — accompanied by a growing conviction in the Town Hall that the County Council’s sole statutory function is to get in everybody’s way.

So, somehow or other, the City of Gorton (a title which nothing on earth would persuade it to abandon) has to face its new, if somewhat diminished, responsibilities in the sub-regional scheme of things. Is it equal to the task? Only time will tell. One thing is certain, however: steps will need to be taken to avoid any repetition of the kind of uneasily occurrence which marred the celebrations to mark the centenary of the City’s Act of Incorporation in 1875. Then, it is well remembered, a likeness of Peter Walker, specially cast in blanmcane, was ceremoniously consumed by a team of former Lord Mayors before a large and somewhat undiscreet audience.

Chapter 3
Planning with tiers

‘Let’s be clear of one thing. The County Planning Department got a job to do and, by God, we’re gonna do it.’

Little did T Break (Gorton’s County Planning Officer) realise, when he uttered these courageous words late in 1974, that he would still be mulling over those laws (and) deratification some five years later.

Interviewed on a regional television programme, ‘Urban Problems—Relationships between the County and Districts in our area are not as good as they should be, we have the slightest difficulty, or not much, I can’t tell you about it because they’ve only been working together for a year they’re a pain in the neck sometimes, bloody impossible in fact—whops! Did you say that was over live?’

The events leading up to this outburst are worth close investigation, and have their roots in the 1972 Local Government Act, which split the planning function in two.

This was the piece of legislation accurately described by the Minister of the day as “.. an Act between consenting local authorities in public and not surprisingly, there is still widespread confusion amongst members of the public — and even more so amongst planners themselves — as to what it is all about.”

Delegates to the conference who are still unsure may be assisted by the following notes kindly prepared by a technician in the County Planning Department.

i) There are several Counties and, almost as important, some Districts.
ii) Counties are meant to prepare a Structure Plan, (whether the Districts like it or not) (most of them don’t). This takes a very long time. It is supposed to help the Districts to prepare their Local Plans (but it doesn’t)
iii) The Districts are meant to prepare Local Plans, but some of them find it more convenient not to bother, and there is not much anybody can do about that.

vi) Counties can prepare a Local Plan, but generally speaking the Districts won’t let them.

vii) The County likes it when the District does a Local Plan, because this gives them the chance to tell the District why what they’re doing doesn’t fit in with the Structure Plan.

vi) The public can object to anything, whatever it is.

vii) Planning applications can be dealt with by the County or the District (or, if necessary, both)

viii) The general rule is that Districts can decide any applications they like, unless they think they shouldn’t. Most counties think that this is quite reasonable except that they should be consulted when the Districts can decide they can decide. Wherever Counties decide that Districts aren’t producing a Structure Plan, they can decide they can (if they’re quick) decide to direct the Districts to decide how they should decide the ones they decide not to ask the County to decide (provided they decide to direct the District to decide) refuse ii. Some people want to alter these arrangements.

ix) The Department of the Environment can do exactly what it likes, but generally tries to avoid it.

This system, as we will see, works as well as it does because of the good sense and professionalism of those who have to operate it. Life, after all, must continue; planning applications need deciding, the stocks of Letcher must be maintained, more sophisticated ways round Flextime remain to be discovered. In Gorton, as elsewhere, a thorough pragmatic approach to the County Government has ensured that petty squabbles only break out when there aren’t enough serious arguments to settle. Naturally enough there are occasional genuine differences of emphasis but this is perhaps inevitable with any system. The vitally important factor at work throughout the County as a whole, from the most exalted types right down to the lowest Planning Committee Chairman, is the will, the burning determination, to succeed.

4 Local Government Jargon for ‘bloody great row’
As the conference approaches, there is talk in some quarters of 'organic change' in local government. While some would support this and others would not, there is a general agreement that no-one understands what it means (although Grotton City Council appears to support the idea—they have recently announced that they hope soon to take over deferred). For the time being, let us return to the Grotton of today and to the men who have to make the system work—after all (as Shelley put it) 'everybody's different'. Just how prophetic these words were will now be revealed, as we relate our interviews with the six Chief Planning Officers of Metropolitan Grotton, exactly as they happened....

Roland Pratt [50]  
**Grotton City Planning Officer**

It has to be said that Mr Pratt seemed to view us with some suspicion as we stepped into his office. It had taken over ten minutes to find him, on the third floor of the east wing of Dobigton's magnificent Grotton Town Hall but, once there, and as our eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, we could not conceivably have been more by an emergency telephone call on the following day. The 'Draft Structure Plan', he said, 'looks like a new church, and it's the only one we've got so far.' We explained that we had found it in the offices of the City's in the dimmest and scruffiest of boxes; massive and ancient bookcases lined the room on all sides, tightly packed with municipal records, acts of parliament, statutory instruments, bound volumes of learned journals and unopened copies of 'The Planner'. Indeed, the man himself was difficult to locate in this cathedral-like setting, but there he was, grey-faced, staring blankly at us over his half-moon glasses, almost hidden behind his immense mahogany desk.

Mr Pratt's view of the world was, in the circumstances, not surprising. Here was a man, the 'Chief Planner' of a great city, and in every way a worthy successor to the eminent Sir Hubert Buchan, PPRTP, (who had fought for, and finally achieved, the separation of the Planning and Cleansing Departments in 1963). Forced to accept the imposition of an additional, clearly unnecessary, tier of local government—and who, whatever might be his professional inclinations, was acutely aware of the desire of his members to act as if the Local Government Act had somehow failed to reach the statute books.

'Do you want to know what I think?' he said, rising with difficulty out of his well-worn leather chair and walking over to the window.

'I'll tell you what I think. We didn't need a County Council when we took control of the Grotton Gas Company in 1893, or when we built the Bataclava Street tram depot in the twenties. We got on perfectly well without being called a Metropolitan District or whatever it is. How do you think we managed all those years to knock houses down and build roads and schools and libraries and things? I'll tell you how we managed. We didn't need a County to help us, that's how we managed.'

Mr Pratt flicked repeatedly at an imaginary scrap of dandruff on his Grotton Corporation tie and turned to gaze absently at a yellowing diploma which had been clumsily stencilled to the wall. 'Look,' he said at this point, 'I threw this thing away. I'm not going to use it anymore.'

We thought we understood the City Council's attitude to the County by now. It was quite clear as we left that Queen Victoria, whose likeness in alabaster stood majestically alongside the west door, found the whole thing most disquieting.

Peter Rabbit [50]  
**Borough Planning and Rents Officer, Clogley**

Our visit to Peter Rabbit was like a breath of fresh air after the dank corridors of Grotton Town Hall. He greeted us warmly as we pushed down the plywood doors of the Portakabin which the Clogley Council had provided for his department on waste ground adjoining the Corporation Yard in Back Peeries Street. With a practised leap, he neatly side-stepped the splintering woodwork and, courteously helping us to clamber over the debris, led us into his office.

Peter Rabbit was rounded and balding, yet with a boyish charm which made it difficult to believe that he had been in local government for almost 35 years. 'Cocoa?' he said, as he swept a pile of planning applications off an old oak chest and offered us a seat.

Gratefully, we accepted, and asked him how he was enjoying life. 'Oh, mustn't grumble, you know. Tomatoes have been rotten this year, but that's the same everywhere, of course. Can I have the spoon back? Tal. No, things aren't so bad, all things considered. Biscuit? ' He tipped the contents of an old tea-pot on to a leafless rubber-plant which stood under his

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**Grotton Before Reorganisation**

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18
had been by the rather unconventional route of professional wrestling and a day-release course in Estates Management at Boulton Polytechnic.

His office, occupying an annex to the town hall, was, in Mr Pratt's own words, 'not like any other'. There was nothing we had ever seen before. To say it looked like a bomb site would be an understatement. The rooms were filled with mountains of discarded papers and files, unsanctioned waste baskets, at least 3 propane cylinders, overflowing ashtrays, empty cigarette packets, old car batteries and old car and bar batteries, and what seemed to be complete exhaust systems for at least a dozen cars.

Although Blunt himself was nowhere to be seen, we were quite sure (from the occasional crash of papers hitting the floor) that he had not abandoned his post. As we were pushing our way through the chaos in the room, searching for Mr Blunt, he was prowling somewhere in the middle of this appalling carnage, considered diving in after him, but thought better of it when we noticed that he had somehow continued to spoil his shirt down right through the middle, leaving a wide crack from one end to the other (which he appeared to use for the purpose of storing thick and rather unwarranted sandwiches.

His mental state was not conducive to conversation and it would be wise not to cause him any unnecessary aggravation. But how could we obtain the truth when on his own local government without actually mentioning the County Council?

Mr Blunt: we were saved the trouble - Blunt suddenly burst out from under a pile of the most godforsaken papers and said, 'I am the County Hall which apparently dared to suggest that a meeting might be arranged with Graham. Why not just discuss the structure plan. Back the Helen this twerp think they are? He exploded, 'jumped-up little twits with their big Policies, poking their bloody noses into things they don't understand. Just wait till I get my hands on this bastard'.

Mr Blunt had picked up a steel filing cabinet that had been lying on its back behind his desk. He raised it above his head and slammed it against the wall with a strangled cry of 'Get stuffed, the lot of you - and we knew it was time to leave.'
We had actually arrived early for our appointment. Surprisingly, perhaps, in such a vast complex as County Hall (situated rather precariously over an incident meter in a particularly sluggish and unlovely stretch of the River Exe) the Planning Centre we had had little difficulty in finding the Planning Department. Even from the busy streets outside, the large sign on the Planning Centre building was immediately noticeable. The sign policies being generated was quite unmistakable.

The meeting was strategically situated on the seventeenth floor, and when we stepped out of the lift and paused to admire the view of the City far below, we reflected for a few moments on the heavy responsibilities which rested upon the shoulders of the members of the man we had come so far to see. But an immediate difficulty presented itself as we turned back to the matter in hand: where was T Break's office? After casting round the lift lift and paused to which way our path should lead, we finally spotted a small notice stuck to the opposite wall. On close inspection we discerned the words:

PLING PAR MNT

and with some relief, soon found ourselves in a large reception area. In a corner of this room stood a desk marked "Specialist with whom the famous young lady pulling remorselessly through her nails, a large sign reading:

"PLANNING DEPARTMENT. YOU PROBABLY WANT THE DISTRICT. TURN LEFT OUTSIDE COUNTY HALL THEN RIGHT JUST PAST THE ABATTOR - GROTON TOWN HALL IS ON CORNER OPPOSITE FROG AND TRIFLUM"

This was not, of course, a great deal of help in our present situation. Selecting one of the passages which led from the enquiry desk, we set off, anxiously aware that we would not do to keep the County Planning Officer, of all people, waiting. For what seemed like hours, we walked along the thickly-carpeted corridor, in a silence disturbed only by the sound of mileage claims being adjusted, the muffled cries of private architects being insulted, and technicians cursing in the queue for the photo-copy. It soon became clear that we had no idea where we were.

Something had to be done. Finding ourselves opposite a door marked "Development Control" we plucked up courage, knocked, and went in.

"We are Structure Plan offices, in odd corners of which slumber yellowed Swazi Cheese plants and rampant grape-vine, and small groups of young planners could only conclude were planners. From where we stood in the door, it was possible to discern several quite distinct groups - some seemed heavily involved in watering down statements, others were trying to round the office under the burden of hundreds of planning applications, and a few - not clinically asleep, but sitting bolt upright like some prairie stork, was the County Planning Officer's desk. It was apparent to the notorious, the dreaded Euthanasia Procedure 'YOU'RE LATE' she screeched as we knocked and whispered to get the f róż from under the desk desperately trying to arrange the leaflets which we had sent tumbling to the floor in our panic and confusion. We wondered whether or not to point out the difficulties we had encountered. She didn't seem to take them very seriously and, if indeed, we failed at all to understand her, she politely observed:

"As it happens," Miss Proode seemed particularly interested in the fact that the County Planning Officer cannot see you just at present, since he is in conference. So you'll just have to wait, won't you? We thanked her for her assistance and sat down, grateful for the opportunity of recovering our equanimity, and plan our escape route, should the necessity arise. There was not a great deal to look at as we waited. But as the minutes went on with his magazine we began to build up a picture of what was going on in the room next door. It seemed that Miss Proode was having a meeting with one of his colleagues about some of the finer points of the Structure Plan - and both evidently were finding the whole thing rather hard going.

'Don't say that!' we heard him call in a tone of anguish County Planning Officers generally reserve for meetings with the Department of the Environment. 'Good God, man, the Districts will skin us alive if we try that on... The other man said something like... bloody cock-up if you ask me... ' and the room fell silent for a few moments. We glanced idly at the fadist Dutch Elm Disease poster, and the neatly-framed Dylan Thomas poem. Meant to be studied, but suppressed Concree Federation (presented to the County Council in recognition of their widespread use of the materials in the construction of County Hall itself, and had little to do but wonder whether Miss Proode brood scenarios in her spare time. The minutes passed, with nothing but an occasional shrill of sarcastic laughter from the adjoining room (and, at one point, a distinct smell of burning). About half an hour, and just when we were thinking about leaving, there was a sudden flurry of activity from Mr Break's office. As the argument flared up once again, we heard chairs being moved around, a sudden crash of activity from paper being ripped apart and, as a horrifying climate, what we were later to learn was the
Chapter 4

How is the County Council run?

A good question. But how to set about finding the answer? Although many articles have been written about the corporate system evolved (and recently patented) by Grotton County Council, opinions as to its merits differ to an alarming degree. The reason for this is not hard to find: only one man at County Hall fully understands the intricacies of corporate management, and that man is the Chief Executive.)

In view of the critical importance of the subject to any understanding of how decisions are taken at the strategic level, Mr Monopoly was invited to submit a brief paper for inclusion in this handbook. This he kindly agreed to do, and it is reproduced in full below. It will be appreciated that his views do not necessarily reflect those of the County Council - or, indeed, of anybody else.

The development of a truly corporate approach to management in the Local Authority of today demands a subtle fusion of personal initiative, leadership and, above all, sensitivity to the needs of others. Those who have worked closely with me will be. second only to the man who bore his responsibilities.

Mr Monopoly, although previously Managing Director of the Consolidated Biscuit Company of Ghrol, was no stranger to local government before moving to Grotton Council, having held a number of posts in local government departments during a long and fruitful tenor in the public sector.

1 Mr Monopoly, although previously Managing Director of the Consolidated Biscuit Company of Ghrol, was no stranger to local government before moving to Grotton Council, having held a number of posts in local government departments during a long and fruitful tenure in the public sector.
Development of the Corporate Plan itself was of course no easy matter, but within a few weeks, I was able to devise a planning, programming and budgeting formula that was simply yet sophisticated, a rational programme that would be acceptable, and, in a local government, allowed priorities, resources and targets to be identified and, if necessary, ignored. Once done, this allowed me to advise my colleagues in the other Departments how they should organise their workload, without my being embroiled in the day-to-day responsibilities which can so often get in the way of good management.

It was unfortunate that the meaning of the Policy Committee which agreed all this had to be called at such short notice in August 1978, when most of the other Chief Officers were on holiday. This was unavoidable, but more than justified by the unequivocal support I received from the Chief Officers, which was of great assistance when subsequently I called a meeting of the Management Team, to which I explained the system to Mr Break and the others.

It is a measure of the success of our approach in Gorton that it has become necessary to increase the number of staff in my Department fairly substantially, particularly on the monitoring side. But I am sure it is generally accepted that, with so much to do, open court is neither here nor there. I would certainly support such a view — indeed, the Policy Committee have now agreed to a further increase in my establishment so that we can help the Consumers' Department which is being run down.

Naturally, no system, however well-conceived, can operate without a proper organisational framework to ensure a degree of consistency. At the centre of the Management Team, and as a forum for those Chief Officers whom I feel have a contribution to make, is the Consumers' department. I remain a member of the Management Team in the authority as a whole. This meets several times a week, generally without warning, and always without an agenda. This has a number of advantages, but particularly saves my colleagues from being incumbered with a whole lot of factual information before the meetings, and I find this helps us to make rapid progress on a wide range of issues.

In addition to the Management Team there are several Programme Area Teams, each chaired of course, by a senior member of my Department (or, if he is on holiday, by another senior member of my Department). The team members are those who help to raise the issues, and who are the people who give me the feel of the Department. They are not the staff, but they are affected by the work of the Department, and as such, are important.

My staff tell me that 47 inter- departmental teams is too many, and represents an unnecessary burden, but as I believe I said in the recent Management Review of SERNCR 1 it seems to me that unless you do the thing properly it is simply not worth doing. I suppose it is largely a question of having the courage of one’s convictions.

With hindsight, I think one or two of the details could have been handled differently, and we are, of course, always looking for ways to make improvements. But in almost every case, I found that any opposition which did exist was simply due to misunderstanding on the part of the Chief Officers concerned. For example, the reason for suggesting that town planning should be brought under my control was simply to increase efficiency and in no way did it represent a criticism of Mr T Break or Mr Gorton. It was the highest honour to be an administrator. Nonetheless (while I can hardly condone it), I can quite understand why he reacted the way he did at the time, and as soon as he feels able to make an apology in open court we can forget the matter closed.

To conclude, there is no doubt that this comprehensive system of corporate planning enables the County Council to take the right decisions quickly, at the same time as providing us with a highly effective channel through which I can tell the other Chief Officers what they are. You must judge for yourselves. But as you walk about the County during conference week, as you look at what we have managed to achieve in the 5 short years since reorganisation — the Bolderwood Quay, the Cheadle and the Goyt Valley by the Street Junction realignment spring to mind — you will not need to ask yourselves "How was all this possible?"

Further comment seems superfluous.

1. Society of Chief Executives of Relatively Small Authorities. Incidentally, Mr Morpeth was the Society’s Secretary from 1975 to 1977.

Organisation of the County Planning Department

Naturally, the internal organisation of the County Planning Department has not remained unaffected by the overall management arrangements devised, and rigorously implemented, by the Chief Executive. Nevertheless there are many elements of the Department’s structure (see fig 15) for which Mr Break is entirely responsible, and which are closely based on something he remembered from a management course at Frinton he was once sent on against his will.

Mr Break likes to think of everyone in his Department as people — indeed he reputed to know all of his Assistant County Planning Officers by name — and this helps him to ensure that all his staff pull in the same direction as possible. The Department is now down to a total establishment of 238, which still leaves it some way short of the Association of County Councils recommended standard of 1 planner for every 3 residents, and Mr Break has made repeated attempts to increase his staff but to no effect. He is, of course, the last person to be expected to do that. The Department is divided into 5 sections and the breakdown is as follows:

Structure Plan

Assistant County Planning Officer

Al Gebara

Mr Gebara’s difficulties in producing the Structure Plan are detailed elsewhere. Nevertheless, his tiny team of 18 planners and a technician have produced, or so it is estimated by the leader of the Information Officers, over 700 tons of draft policies since 1974.

Development Control

ACPO Ernest Quill

An attempt by Mr Quill to obtain a site in Stockport for Ernest Quill at its head, a man who knows the Grand Development Order by heart, and whose attention to detail is renowned throughout the province. The prime responsibility of his 62 staff is to look around for planning applications for the County Council to deal with.

Implementation

ACPO Barry Keene

Barry Keene’s responsibilities are wide-ranging. His 12 staff have to do all the things that the other sections are not equipped for or too busy for, including, for example, writing to the Districts about how they are getting on with their own local plans.

There are no compromising efficiency by ex-ACPO Gerald Piles, ensure that professional staff follow the correct procedures for obtaining road transfer, wellingtons and spikes.

Administration

ACPO Gerald Piles

In many ways the power-house of the whole Department. The 100 clerical and administrative assistants, led with the uncompromising efficiency by ex-ACPO Gerald Piles, ensure that professional staff follow the correct procedures for obtaining road transfer, wellingtons and spikes.
ACPO Mrs Ethel Clutterbuck
Ethel Clutterbuck's role needs no further explanation. Her highly-trained team of 29 brewers and shoppes-out, though at times fully stretched, continually maintain a high regard for excellence equal only by British Rail.

The five Assistant County Planning Officers have, however, a quite separate role to play, and the potential for co-ordinating and working for themselves. However, the Department organises itself in such a way as to ensure, as far as possible, that what it is that is being done is going on, and why, and when it is likely to stop. As soon as the Management Team has finished, T. Breck calls together his Assistant County Planning Officers for a briefing (although he was generally unable to attend himself more than 3 or 4 times each year as he rarely feels well enough for public meetings). When this happens, the chair is taken by Mrs Clutterbuck. Briefly, these meetings of the Assistant County Planning Officers, who have weekly liaison meetings with the Planning Officers and the Assistant Principal Planning Officers. They consider the matters that are the responsibility of their Group Leaders, who in turn bring their Groups up to date. There is also a meeting every Friday afternoon for everybody who hasn't been to one of the other meetings.

Mr. Breck

Date: 4 October 1978
Subject: Regrating of Technician

To: B Keene
From: T Breck

Thank you for your memo about young Mike Best. I am, however, interested in seeing strategic planning documents ever seen in this country? No-one can say for certain, even Mr. Breck, when instinct to talk about it at a recent conference, was forced to declare, based on the grounds of pressure of work, but in reality (or so it is widely assumed) because he doesn't really understand himself. It may come as a surprise to some that strategic planning in the County began only as early as 1973, when Mr. Breck was still working in blissful obscurity somewhere in the North of Scotland. The Development Plans (the Town Maps of Gorton) Grinethwaite and Muchthorpe County Boundary, and preparing the rest of the area had long outlived their usefulness (even though the last of them was only approved in 1969), and the Planning Officers of the former local authorities got together under the chairmanship of the then Gorton City Planning Officer, Sir Hubert Buchanan, who retired following his death in 1971. The obvious intention was to undertake a pre-reorganisation period, much of it highly sophisticated and of it totally useless. Unfortunately the majority of this material, which had it survived would have formed a unique historical record of the time, was burned during the 1974 Miners' Strike to keep Sir Hubert's office warm during the last days of his long and distinguished career.

Thus it was, that when Mr. Breck was appointed County Planning Officer, he was faced with a blank sheet of paper. This, however, was nothing new to him and he was well aware from his long planning experience that the way out of this dilemma was to get someone else to fill it up. This solution was frequently relevant to Mr. Breck's case as he had (by his own admission) no knowledge of, or interest in structure plans, and indeed this was land remnant of one of the main attributes of a successful County Planning Officer.

Mr. Breck was, however, aware that structure plans were very complex, and included numbers as well as maps.

Therefore, from the very limited number of applicants who responded to the County's advertisement for a Structure Plan Chief, he chose Mr. Al Gibbons BSc, who had just returned to this country after a stint at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (and who, when he was only 5, had competed to find the person who could produce the longest equation, which had been organised by the Boys' Club in Boston. Thus equipped, and further assisted by a powerful team of statisticians, even sociologists, transport planners and micro- climatologists (none of whom were able to obtain posts, and who therefore embarked on its great journey into the unknown, a journey which was to culminate in a submission in the strategic wilds out of which they only recently began to emerge.

To: Mr Breck
From: Barry Keene
Date: 5 October 1978
Subject: Regrating of Technician

Barry Keene

This random example provides some insight into the sort of difficulties which the Department has to face. However, daunting though such problems as the re-grading of a technician obviously are, they may be insignificant when compared with more fundamental issues.

PS Sorry about the ACPO's meetings recently - I just don't seem to have the time.
The Report of Survey

As every planning student knows, a plan is not a plan unless it is preceded by a survey. While some of the information thus gleaned can be found in various sources of information, a great deal of assistance in the preparation of the final plan, the main purpose of a survey is to facilitate the production of a report upon it. Although there are no statutory requirements as to what should be included in a survey, in practice most Local Authorities accept that to be worthy of the name, a true Report of Survey must be exhaustive, objective and above all, very, very long. The conspicuously-successful Gorton County Council in this area is now well-known indeed, for sheer comprehensiveness. Its 8 volumes far exceed any attempted.

Response to Report of Survey

As required by statute, the public were informed about the Survey as soon as it was completed. In addition, copies of the full Report were given to the District Councils and to the press. Surprisingly, the serious professional publications continued to ignore the event. The Plan (and only 9 months later) published a review of the whole affair in an enthusiastic academic article from the University of Polytechnic in the Home Counties. This may be worth quoting in part:

rubish. For example, the statement on page 913 of the Summary that: ‘the population of Grimmethwaite in 1865 will rise to 95,473.7’ betrays an overdependence on statistical technicalities. Surely Grimethwaite is likely to experience a declining population over the next 10 years. This comment comes out in the comment on page 1391 that the house condition survey demonstrates conclusively that post-war houses are likely to be much more expensive than those built before 1900. This is not adequately supported by factual information. Having said that, the conclusion on page 1870 that ‘there is a prospect of rising male activity rates just above females throughout the 1980’s while the government will need to be monitored carefully. In general, I must say, I find the Gorton Report quite irrelevant and extremely heavy, and in my view it should be:

The District Planning Officers again came up with some interesting views...

Durnumin

Dear Break

Thank you for sending me a copy of your Report of Survey. These are, of course, replete with supportive and optimistic statements and work has gone into them, though perhaps this is to be expected in view of the fact that they have taken two years to emerge. I am bound to say that I have been a little disappointed by the lack of consideration with my Authority during the preparation of these reports, and this is reflected in the fact that I must respectfully attach some 16 pages of reservations in respect of various points you may make which I feel do not adequately reflect Durnumin’s perspective on strategic issues. I must particularly draw your attention to the failure to recognise the importance of Bishley in the regional economy and I look forward to your reaction on this omission in future drafts. I was more than a little surprised to find no reference at all in the Report to some of the more routine planning problems: such as unemployment, which while admittedly only at 1.5% at the present time, shows every sign of rising sharply in the not too distant future. I am sure you will be able to take all my points into account as work proceeds (which will hopefully be more speedily than

It is my intention to raise the problem of the lack of consultation at one of our fortnightly liaison meetings, although I must point out that I shall be at a conference in Vancouver for the next few weeks and will miss the next two meetings. Yours very sincerely etc. Right Minds did you ring Mrs Smout? No problem. Good, your place at half eight then. Thank you. Dictated by Mr Smoote and signed in his absence.

Grimethwaite

Break

I see you have sent us your Reports of Survey. Kindly send a furniture van round to collect them as they are no use to us.

Blunt

Cloggley

Dear Ted,

Thank you for your good wishes. I am glad to say Jemima is up and about now. Not sure how the hopper will come off next week. Many thanks also for the Reports of Survey. I haven’t had the chance to read them, but I am sure you will have covered everything. It must have been a lot of hard work for you. Best wishes.

Peter.

Grotton

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your recently produced Structure Plan Reports of Survey and must confess to being somewhat at a loss as to their purpose and value. Rather than going into detail about the many over-simplifications in the documents, or the factual inaccuracies they contain, I would merely reiterate my Authority’s view that your exercise would be likely to proceed in a more satisfactory manner were the City to be omitted from its purview. In this context, it would appear that your reply is still awaited on my last letter on the subject.

Yours faithfully,

Roland Pratt

No reply was received from Golden Delicious.

-*Under a-fiver*
The reports of Survey were also sent to the other departments of the County Council to elicit their views. The Chief Executive (who was busy at the time reconginizing the County Treasurer's Department), indicated that he would defer comment at this stage; while the County Surveyor, who was asked to comment particularly on the transportation aspects and to indicate the intentions and priorities of his Department, replied that the intention of his Department was to build a lot of roads and his priority was to build them as quickly as possible, but he was "not able to say quite where just yet'.

Alternative Strategies

Altemative Strategies, a consultancy funded by the computer, and lost the various responses to the Report of Survey. Al Gebbara commenced working on the next phase of the preparation of the Structure Plan. In the continued absence of advice from M Berke, whose attitude to the Structure Plan had been daily more obscure, Gebbara produced for his team a series of alternatives, many of which would require additional competence on the generation and evaluation of alternative strategies ...

Internal Memo

From: Al Gebbara
To: All Structure Plan Group Leaders
Subject: Alternative Strategies: Proposed Methodology

Following our meetings on the 3rd, 7th, 9th, 11th, 12th, 16th, 21st and 22nd, I feel that our way forward is now clear but it may be helpful if I put down in writing one or two of the main points upon which arises from our discussions.

Firstly, of course, we are agreed that, basically, we will be following the approach developed by Read et al in 1989. [For anyone who's still unsure about this there's a copy in the library – Al Read: Temporary Disequilibrium in a Gusinski Structure Plan: The case in Zeilsheim - Die Statistiches Dummknappe Vo XXIV, page 475].

As you will all recall, Read's model in its simplified form goes like this:

\[
\text{Strategy} (Z) \text{ or the waste paper basket} (W). \text{ Development is any other zone, it's a broader}\]

\[\text{relationship} (x) \text{ between the two} \]

\[\text{ finite sets (Z and W) in order to calculate the}\]

\[\text{size of the population} \text{ in the planning area. This}\]

\[\text{required (if, of course, is a subset of the}\]

\[\text{Caribbean population) plus W, to therefore} = Z \text{; it}\]

\[\text{is} \text{ Z is related to} \text{ W (I know Bill is unhappy about this but it}\]

\[\text{should be acknowledged and)) and Gebbara} \]

\[\text{concluded in his last work (I don't think} \text{this is in the library) that the whole may be}\]

\[\text{be determined by an incidence matrix}\]

\[\text{Y = } (\text{DiV}) \text{ when } (Z) = 1, \text{ if } (Z \text{=W}) = 0 \text{ from}\]

\[\text{this it naturally follows.}\]

Since this indirect application of algebraic topology (assuming the survey information is in non-Euclidean space) to each of the variables producing an algebraic response (17th – no problems here, are there?) – I suggest instead that we develop a set of Fourier routines to generate a dynamically related co-efficient (binomially derived) which should p < 0.1, if (Z=W) = 1 (Z=DiV) = 0. From this it naturally follows.

While the Gebbara technique, or one of its many derivatives, is now a commonplace in planning departments throughout the country, it is easy to underestimate just what a revolutionary breakthrough it was. It involved, of course, the identification of every possible alternative planning policy through the individual of these policies in relation to a range of possible social, economic and physical objectives, and was achieved by statistical methods of representative strategies for detailed consideration. It came as no surprise to anyone that the results of these analyses were revealed over 42567 major variables which were then taken into account. As a result, analyses were corridor-co-efficients were multiple-correlated. 'Ch's were squinted and deviations were rooted out across the land and breadth of the country. The combination of these variables into strategies involved computer running at last 3 months at a time, leading to the gradual reduction of the number of strategies from figures with dozens of rough the end to 3, one of which, incidentally, relied upon the departure of the entire population of the immediate and neighbouring shires; this strategy appeared to score very high in that it eliminated the housing problem of the project, and stopped vandalism at a stroke. The wide amount of evidence involving the weighting of the population's priorities, combinations against 812 broad objectives, was carried out on a computer comprising some 4 acres on the floor, walls and ceilings of a disused coke-store in the basement of the primary 2, which still remains known as the weighting room. It was in that room that Gebbara himself lived during the whole two years for which this phase of the process lasted, and so far as anybody knows, he never left it. (Note: only a visit to NASA at Cape Canaveral (where data had been brought in to handle the computer runs).

After what must have seemed like an eternity in that gloomy, smoke-filled dungeon, one day, shortly before Christmas 1976, Al Gebbara finally emerged, blinking into the light, bearing the enormous weight of the draft strategies on his shoulders, and triumphantly entered the Department to acknowledge the approbation of his enduring colleagues – who, since it was a Sunday, were all at home in bed. Undaunted, the exultant Gebbara carefully set down his precious burden in front of the County Planning Officer's desk, and, overcome with emotion, staggered out of the building and into the silent streets of the city. Little did he know at that climactic moment in time, that his life's work was completely incomprehensible and more than 2 years out of date.

The Draft Plan

As soon as he arrived the following day, Mr. Berke realized that something was wrong, as he approached the huge pile of papers which leered to the way to the chair, his eyes turned. He glanced at the top page, saw Gebbara's signature, and reacted for the phone. By 11 o'clock that morning the unfortunate Gebbara found himself on a plane to Stuttgart, where a copy had been reserved for him at a conference on structure planning in the Balkans. As soon as Gebbara was out of the way, T.B. read in Ms. Clutterbuck and, working till well after 4 o'clock for nearly a week, they wrote the Draft Plan between them and by early the following week, had sent the complete document to the Department's Structure Planning Division for them to review. The reasoned justification. Gebbara had considered, but regretted the idea of having alternative strategies for public consultation because of the obvious danger that, having been consulted, public might then decide on the wrong one. As it happens the plan now produced was designed to have sufficient flexibility to fit the political post-change, and it was with considerable pride that he subsequently referred to it as a minimum frame strategy.
Public participation

It was at this point that Mr Brek was reminded of the necessity to consult the public about the Draft Plan. This was essential, of course, in order to be able to produce a statement saying that the public had been consulted. Not surprisingly, the County Planning Officer was worried about this; he recalled that public involvement in earlier stages had been limited to one enquiry from a Dr J McTavish of Bedside Manor, Stabroek, who had been a postcard in the refreshments and had written asking for a sample bottle of Structure Plan which he had assumed was a new patent preparation designed to restore lost vitality.

Even the sceptical T Brek was forced to admit that a more comprehensive approach to public participation was going to be necessary for the Draft Plan. But, apart from a few bearded lefties in the Structure Plan Section (whom he viewed with understandable suspicion), there was no one in the Department who seemed to have any ideas about how the job should be tackled. Suddenly, the answer seemed clear—consultants! After some brief enquiries he was put in touch with a highly reputable firm of market researchers called Ashram and Scarpia Ltd whose experience in this field had been limited to the unsuccessful national launching of badger-flavoured crisps and shortly afterwards their northern representative, a Miss Gloria Heatherdown, visited the Department to show her credentials. Some of her ideas for exciting the public’s interest went a little too far for Mr Brek, but when she described her role in an earlier exercise bringing half the adult population of West Bromwich, he had no hesitation in taking her on. In no time at all Brek had agreed to go to his Committee with a scheme of public participation which for its complexity, sophistication, and (particularly) its staggering cost, went far beyond anything previously attempted in this country—or indeed thought feasible by anyone outside academic institutions.

Immediately after their appointment, Ashram and Scarpia launched into their multimedia campaign with devastating thoroughness. Local newspapers were kept supplied with press releases four times a day; local radio and television coverage was intense; several hundred public meetings were arranged (and often held); talking letter baskets were installed in shopping centres; school children were issued with commemorative Structure Plan mugs; and huge night-time firework displays were held which cleverly spelt out summaries of the main transportation changes. The ‘Grotten Advertiser’ naturally played an essential part in the whole process, thanks particularly to the journalistic skills of Laurie Rootes, the paper’s local government correspondent. After a six-hour briefing on the Draft Plan, during which each policy was carefully explained to him, Mr Rootes wrote the following day:

But perhaps the greatest breakthrough on the public participation front was the famous questionnaire and accompanying leaflet which was pushed through letterboxes throughout the County on a 100% sample basis. It was this, even more than the day-time strafing of the urban areas by formations of low-flying bombers dropping copies of the plan itself, which ensured that the Structure Plan became the topic of conversation in laundrettes and supermarkets the length and breadth of the County.

Much of the credit for this achievement must go to Chris Nowell, a young sociologist who had joined the County Planning Department by mistake. It was he who had insisted that the questionnaire be written in everyday language—with the impressive result shown on the next page.
The Grotton Structure Plan

Yes, even you have a part to play in shaping your County's future. It's your chance to tell us what you want! It's your opportunity to tell us how to get it! And so it will be your fault if it all goes wrong!

What is a Structure Plan anyway?
Well it's very complicated. But in simple language, it's a very big plan - not really a plan so much, more a lot of words and phrases which we call policies. There is a plan as well as course - that is, not really a plan, so much as a kind of diagram.

How will it help?
It will help us build a better Grotton. It will safeguard our children's future. It will make life worth living again.

Will it affect my house?
Well, the thing is, it's very hard to tell. But even if we knew (and as it happens we have a pretty shrewd idea) we're not allowed to tell you in this plan. What you need is a Local Plan - and that's one for the Districts!

How much will it all cost?
Not as much as you might think.

Why has it all taken so long?
Look, to start with, some people have taken a lot longer than us and anyway you seem to have managed perfectly well without one all this time, so why all the fuss? As it happens, it's a jolly difficult job planning a whole County, and it doesn't make it any easier when people keep criticising us.

What am I supposed to do about it?
It's your future and your Grotton. So it's your views we want. Fill in the simple questionnaire (form) and put it out with the milk bottles. It will be collected in a few days. Then sit back, relax, and leave the rest to us.

Issued by the Grotton County Planning Department in the interests of public convenience

Grotton County Structure Plan - Your views

Important notes for candidates:
You have 3 hours. It is in your own interest to attempt all questions.

Neatness and style will be taken into consideration. All rough work must be done on a separate sheet of paper.

1 Name and address if known

2 Age

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3 Sex

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<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
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4 What will you miss most when you knock your house down?

5 In your leisure time do you prefer to be down?

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<td>Male</td>
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6 Given the choice, which of the following alternatives would you prefer?

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<tr>
<td>A lovely new park with a swimming pool and a floral clock</td>
<td>A fast moving, horrid, smelly tip at the bottom of the garden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Do you think that planners are an honest, underpaid, hard working bunch of people who are only trying to do their best in very difficult circumstances?

8 Are there any other useful observations which you feel would be able to assist the County in preparing this plan?

Next, use your skill and judgement to answer this simple question:

Do you like the Structure Plan? Yes No

A £2 Co-op voucher will be given for every correct answer

Thankyou for your co-operation
Please note that owing to a printing error, the answer to Question 3 should be selected from the alternatives given at Question 5, and vice-versa.

And now we want you to complete the following sentence in no more than 12 [that's twelve] of your own words:

'I like the Structure Plan because....'

This competition is not open to members of the Royal Town Planning Institute or their families and friends.
Grotton

Dear Sir,

I refer to your recent letter which enclosed a document entitled "Draft Structure Plan". Having considered the matter carefully, my Council have asked me to say that they see no reason to depart from their earlier view that it would have been better for all concerned if your Plan had proceeded without any reference to the City being made. However, I do not wish to be negative in my observations and would suggest that a meeting is arranged between us, at which I will provide you with the full list of objections which I have in mind. At this stage, however, I must inform you that I am especially concerned at your failure to stress the primary role of Grotton City Centre (indeed the Report appears pre-occupied with references to places which free of us here have ever heard of) and in this respect I am particularly disappointed to see so much emphasis being placed on Dunbeath. In addition, I shall wish to discuss with you, as a matter of urgency, the forecasts in your Plan which purport to show a fall in the City's population up to 1991. This conclusion is unacceptable to my Council. In view of the accompanying document of the Plan, I see no alternative but to reserve the position of the Corporation. Yours faithfully,

Roland Pratt

(The Chief Executive and the County Surveyor were also sent copies of the Draft Plan and referred Mr Break to their earlier memoranda, in which they had deferred their comments to a later stage in the process.)

Although he succeeded in putting it off for as long as possible, T. Break was unable to avoid consulting the Regional Controller of the DVE, Mr N Cumbrance, on the Draft Plan. It is quite impossible in these pages to do justice to Mr Cumbrance's extensive comments, but a few examples will give the flavour of the DVE's remarks:

Page 3 para 1.19

There ought to be a corona after 'drip' in the fourth line from the bottom.

Page 27 para 2.12

There is a typing error in the nineteenth line – it should read 'trips in the open country-side for enjoyment', and not ... strips.

Page 42 para 3.8

This paragraph should have regard to Sections 8(1)(b) and (c) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1991.

Page 58 para 3.127

The first sentence should be in capital letters.

Page 96 ff

Policies which urge or press' the Department of Transport to do various things are all-advised.

Page 96 para 3.120

The use of the word 'action' in the sixth line of this policy could cause problems.

Maps 1-43

The representation of the County boundary on these maps is not acceptable as it involves a site-specificity not appropriate at the Structure Plan level.

In addition to these and many other substantive comments, Mr Cumbrance also had a considerable amount to say about the policies themselves, and in fact wide-ranging modifications had to be made to the Plan in consultation with him. Again, a few examples will suffice:

The County's policy on housing, as originally drafted, had read:

The County Council will ensure that an adequate number of houses of suitable size and type will be provided in all parts of the County.

This now reads:

Housing is a District matter. The County Council will however keep an eye on the District policies to ensure they are providing an adequate number of houses of suitable size and type in all parts of the County, and if they are not, the County Council will give the matter a lot of thought.

On land the plan said:

The County Council will not permit development in the open land south of Stingley and Upper Gummer.

This now reads:

By and large, and depending on the climate, the County Council will have regard to the possible need to limit development south of Stingley and Upper Gummer, and will only allow it if it is alright.

Not all the draft policies were this straightforward to deal with, however. On industry, for example, Mr Break had originally commented: but a few examples will give the flavour of the DVE's remarks:

The County Council will take action to assist industrial development.

N Cumbrance replied suggesting an improved wording:

The County Council will endeavour to take steps towards the consideration of encouraging the encouragement of industrial development, and will monitor the results of this activity...
Chapter 6
Transportation planning

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that the Romans, with their usual astuteness, made sure that they could get out of Grotton as quickly as possible by building roads, apparently at random, in every conceivable direction. Fig 18 indicates the likely position of the main legionary Highways in the area, together with those of towns at about AD68. Some scholars are hopeful of discovering a further route to Bath, but others believe that, while plans for such a route were undoubtedly drawn up (indeed, it is likely that some property was actually acquired in advance), fierce public opposition to the scheme obliged Rome to abandon the project. Few improvements to the road system were to be made for the next 1700 years, and this inevitably accelerated the general decline in the area between the departure of the Romans and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Conditions were unbelievably bad for the motoral. The young Mozart, shortly before his appointment as Stadtkeppelmeister at the Court of Grand Duke Ferdinand of Scharnel-Nebelung, passed through Grotton on a short concert tour in the Spring of 1762, and left us with some unforgettable impressions of his experiences. He wrote to his uncle on the second of April:

I know not in the whole range of language terms sufficiently expressive to describe this infernal road (661.96 Bascap Grotton). When the frail light of the sun is withdrawn from this accursed region we are at every moment stopped by our solicitous coachman lest we wander amongst briar and thorns, bags or pards or, by coming unsuspected upon hidden precipices, meet with fearful death upon the instant!

And it seems that Mozart’s vivid account described a situation that was not untypical of the whole area at the time. Indeed, apart from a turnpike road built some 20 miles to the west, not one carriage-way realignment or junction improvement was carried out between the end of the Roman occupation and the outbreak of the Crimean War. Clearly, something had to be done. As a result of mounting public pressure, the chairman of Grotton Corporation Highways Committee (the flamboyant Major Roadhouse called a meeting in late 1960 of all the neighbouring authorities and, with a great deal of encouragement from the thin Ministry of Transport, they all urgedly began work on the Grotton Ring Road. The resulting plan (see Fig 19) was a milestone in transportation planning in the region. While some of the assumptions which underlay the whole concept might now be questioned1, there is little doubt that the plan had been put forward in advance, and that the constantly improving information base clearly demanded a complete re-appraisal of the plan. So it was that during the next few years a bewildering procession of new strategies emerged, were tested, approved—and finally abandoned. 1970 saw the Grotton Land-Use Transportation Study2, 1971 the ill-fated Grotton Orbital Ringway Report and the more successful Rail Rationalisation Plan (see Fig 11); in 1975 separate reports appeared on bus routing, car parking, pedestrianisation—and a particularly massive study recommending the immediate construction of the Grotton External Relief Road (another name for the Orbital Ringway which had been finally abandoned the previous year).

There was thus an alarming degree of uncertainty throughout this period—an uncertainty seriously exacerbated by the periodic suggestion by the Department of the Environment that all the studies should somehow attempt to construct the plan, by the early 1980’s, of the Ipswich-Workshop-Cromer Motorway which (although the DoE confirmed it would never be their intention to build) would

1 (for example, that car ownership would rise to 2.15 per person by the year 2010)
2 (in November 1961 priced)
3 (at the time of writing)
Fig. 19

- New Motorways
- Existing roads to be improved

Fig. 20

Grotton
The Grotton Regional Highway Plan, 1962

Grotton
The 1979-80 road programme
nevertheless be likely to have a considerable impact on traffic flows in the eastern part of the County. A new initiative was clearly needed. Partly because it had to be seen to be effective within a short period of coming to power, and partly because it had no money left after County Hall had been fitted out, the County took the historic step in January 1976 to defer taking any decision on the road programme for the time being.

Needless to say, the shock-waves of the argument which followed reverberated throughout the area for months. Eventually, and after much consultation, all the Districts agreed that a concerted effort was needed to force the County into action. Baring their own considerable differences, the Planning Officers, Engineers and Chief Executives of Groton, Dunmorr, Gromeshwate and Cloughley all signed the following letter to Tony Monopoli:

It is clearly the prime (if not the only) responsibility of the County Council to provide the Districts with the infrastructure they need at the earliest opportunity. In particular, greater resources must be devoted to the urgent improvement of the primary road network throughout the County area, and of course it is vitally important that this is achieved with due cogiscmance being taken of the likely increase in traffic by the end of the Century. At the same time, the District Councils would emphasise the need to keep plans for road building down to a minimum, in view of the overall responsibility of the County Council to minimise blight and the serious environmental damage which can result from major highway schemes in sensitive urban areas, and particularly in the open countryside. Furthermore, the County Council is urged to take immediate steps to increase the attractiveness of the public transport system (particularly the bus and rail network), and to secure the early provision of additional car parking facilities in the various town and city centres (linked to a phased scheme of road improvements and street closures), new bus stations and road/rail interchanges, bigger car parks, an increased level of accessibility by road to the national motorway network, further subsidies to lower bus fares, more parking spaces and, above all, to ensure that this programme be firmly allied to a gradual reduction in (and eventual abolition of) the County Rate Precept.

A lesser man might have reacted to this letter with some concern. Not so Tony Monopoli. Calling upon the vast reserves of craftsmanship with which his many years at the top of his professional tree had endowed him, the Chief Executive promptly wrote to the DoE's Regional Consultant Engineer and Transport Office, enclosing a copy of the Districts' letter and asking - among other things - for approximately £20,000,000 over the next 15 years. The Chief Executive added that the DoE's reply would also help him to sort out the County's annual TPR submission, which he appreciated was some three years overdue. The Department replied as follows:

Dear Mr Monopoli,

I regret the long delay in replying to your letter about the financial basis upon which your various plans will rest, and may I say that I am indeed most grateful to you for raising so many difficult and embarrassing questions at this particularly awkward time.

I can say there is no doubt - and I expect soon to be in receipt of confirmatory advice from Headquarter offices on this point - that funds will be made available to your Authority as time goes by. You will, I think, appreciate that details as to the amounts and any guidance as to how it may best be used, will be for the Government and the Local Authorities to decide at the appropriate time.

Perhaps I could take the opportunity of pointing out to you, however, that the advice contained in my last letter on the question of finance should now be disregarded, following the issue of Circular 153/779. No doubt you will find it is intended to reinstate the various schemes which you abandoned last month in response to that letter.

I need hardly say the Government will be looking to your Council to keep fully up to date with the necessary changes of emphasis which occur from time to time and I am sure that they will wish to co-operate to the fullest extent possible during this difficult period.

Yours etc

N. Cumbrance

This reply was, of course, ideal for Mr Monopoli's purpose in dealing with the Districts, since it would encourage them to ignore the County's failings, and concentrate on those of the DoE.

To be fair, however, Mr Cumbrance is no more able to gawp far into the future than anyone else, and his uncertainties about the longer term were soon to be ameliorated by a firm commitment to the County in relation to the medium term (ie next year). This took the form of a grant amounting to £295,416.88 which, while marginally greater than nothing, fell far short of the County Council's aspirations as set out in their TPR submission.

Unhappy, and in view of the overwhelming need to treat each of the Districts equitably, the County has so arranged matters that this finance will be split five ways and for their £197,083.37 (with 3p left) over each District will, in the current financial year, benefit from the construction of 0.44 miles of new dual carriageway the provision of 9 new bus shelters and, interestingly, 3 small junction improvements of their choice (the major elements of this programme are shown in Fig 20). Allied to this, and in an attempt to reflect the Government's desire to get the most out of the existing infrastructure, Groton's transport planners...
have devised a series of strikingly flexible schemes, the success or failure of which is being anxiously studied by planners, engineers and environmentalists all over the world. There is, for example, the Huddersfield Road by-pass priority scheme in Coggleby, which requires buses to mount the pavement at critical junctions; and there are revolutionary tidal flow arrangements now in operation on most radial roads leading out of Grotton, which involve motorists travelling in reverse gear only between 4.30 and 6.00 in the evening. There are even experimental traffic orders operating in certain pedestrian streets banning access to all traffic except that which finds it inconvenient to use an alternative route. It may take even more than this impressive range of schemes to solve the County's transportation problems, given the ever-worsening energy crisis, the recent

Chapter 7
Local Planning

At a time when statutory local planning in the rest of the country is coming in for a great deal of criticism, it is encouraging to note that, in this County at least, real progress is being made in this complex field. While, undoubtedly, there are different approaches to the problem; many of the Districts are getting on with the job with a grim determination, the like of which has not been seen in Britain since the dark days of the last war. Naturally, there has to be some coordination of all this local activity and attempts have to be made to ensure that the sum of the parts becomes a strategically coherent whole—the 'fish', as it were, upon the County's Structure Plan. This, an essence of the legislation will diligently remember, is achieved through the medium of something called the Development Plan Scheme, which exists to tell the public what is going on in the field of local planning, and is prepared by the County Council. The Grotton Scheme is a model of its kind and is reproduced here in full, as a guide to delegates during Conference week.

Introduction by the County Planning Officer

The County Council is required under Section 10 (a) of the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act (inserted by the 1972 Local Government Act) to prepare and keep under review a Development Plan Scheme, in consultation with the Districts. This is it.

Purpose of the Scheme

All enquiries as to the actual purpose of the scheme should be addressed to Mr N Cumbrance, Regional Controller, Department of the Environment, Dan Smith House, Grotton.

Method of preparation of Scheme

We wrote to all the Districts asking for information about what plans they were doing, then we stapled it all together and had it printed (see the Schedule). Some people may notice the great variation between the Districts; this reflects different levels of staff resources and competence, but since I'm always being told that local planning is mainly a District function, there's not much I can do about it.

Preparing the Plans

The public have to be consulted about all these plans at various stages (Mr Cumbrance will be able to tell you more about this). Most Local Authorities take far longer to prepare plans than they expect, so don't worry if nobody gets in touch with you for a while. Fortunately, the County has to be consulted at some stage or other (I forget quite when) so that should prevent anything really useful from getting through. If you require any further information, I should contact the nearest District Planning Office.

Best Wishes,
T Break

Grotton County Council
Development Plan Scheme

Fig. 24
Compromise scheme proposed by the Government's Road Construction Unit

Conservation Area

1 (The County Surveyor never really recovered from a 12-hour strike in the centre of Grotton which resulted in him being cast away on a traffic island for three days with only eight gramophone records and the Bible—or Shakespeare to keep him going)
Even a casual glance at this extraordinary document reveals significant differences of approach by District Councils to the vexed question of statutory local plans. How can it be, for example, that Cloggly (with a full-time professional staff, when they turn up, of only 8 plus 12 frozen personnel) is proposing to flip itself into no less than eleven plans,\(^1\) while the large and powerful Grimesthwaite apparently intends to do none at all? There is no easy answer to this, but there is some evidence to suggest that one or two Districts are unhappy about the prospect of doing any local plans because of the excuse it gives the County to have assistance to the County by providing an input to the Structure Plan. It will study Dunrrom's needs up to the year 2025, and it is hoped that it will be incorporated into the Structure Plan without amendment. The County will be consulted when the work has reached an appropriate stage.

Date of commencement – work begun in 1976 and will shortly be complete.

Golden Delicious
No information available

Grimesthwaite
Sod Off

Grotton (City)
1 City Centre Local Plan
The present plan, which envisaged large-scale shopping and office development and the demolition of much of the City Centre, was prepared in 1965. A detailed examination may suggest that circumstances have changed since 1965. Date of commencement – 1974

Date of completion (est.) – 1985

Grotton County Council
1 Green Belt Plan
2 Minerals (Local) Plan
3 Refuse Disposal (Local) Plan
4 Unallocated Urban Plan

These plans are obviously necessary to sort out the Green Belt, minerals, refuse disposal and coastal conservation, and to give the County the chance to start work. Work will commence as soon as the DoI can find some way of letting us get on with them without upsetting the Districts.

The END

\(^1\) Peter Rabbit once received a letter from The Town and Country Planning Association, asking their Planning Aid service. After some hesitation he finally decided that he could probably manage satisfactorily on his own.

Nigel Smoothe, in a recent article.\(^2\);

Let me say at the outset that I am a staunch defender of the statutory planning process, particularly in respect of local plans, which are so badly needed in many parts of the country. But it has been said, insofar as my own Authority is concerned, that the extended timescale, the complex procedures and, above all, the required consultation with the Councils, effectively deny us the essential element of flexibility which is so critical if we are to meet the challenge of the Dunrrom of the future. I am sure the Dunrrom is an admirer of the County Councils and the vital work they do in refuse disposal and so forth, but with the best will in the world, they simply cannot be expected to appreciate the day-to-day planning problems faced by those of us who are out in the field.

\(^2\) Estates Gazette September 5 1978

Dunrrom has therefore taken the view that apart from something they call the Dunrrom Metropolitan Borough Plan (about which very little information is available), they would prefer to manage without formally prepared local plans for the remainder of the whole story, however, since there is known to be a whole number of informal plans locked away in the bottom drawer of the ancient cabinet in Mr Smoothe's office. This appears to be an essential element in Dunrrom's general strategy on local plans. By Mr Smoothe's own admission in an unpaid moment it enables the Dunrrom to influence these plans and prevent them from producing anything anyone and anything as important, to get rid of them again a few weeks later should the tide begin to turn. Anxious to avoid any criticism that this approach might be in conflict with modern concepts of open government, Mr Smoothe goes on in the same argument:

It would be misleading to suggest that John Citizen is being excluded from the plan-making process in Dunrrom. But our way of doing things does enable us to avoid those time-consuming public inquests and the other legal niceties so dear to the hearts of our friends Whitehall, I do appreciate, of course, that one of the great and unavoidable drawbacks of this approach is that we are unable to take advantage of the enormous benefits which flow from the eventual approval of our plans by the County Council – but this is a situation which, in time, we shall learn to live with.

Cloggly, on the other hand, has had such an approach to statutory participation, apart from the reference to the Statutory Plan Scheme, a further 27 local plans have been worked on in one way or another since 1974, all of them in the fullest consultation with the public, statutory authorities, amenity and civic associations, community

Fig. 26
Grimesthwaite Borough Council is one of the few authorities to have included in a General Improvement Area an almost complete estate of Neolithic semi-detached bungalows.
Chapter 8

Development Control

Although it was clearly not the intention of the Department of the Environment, Groton's planners believe they have actually found a way of implementing certain sections of the 1973 Local Government Act. This achievement must, in part, be due to the 80 or so urgent (and frequently acrimonious) meetings held by the Chief Officers concerned during 1974 and 1975, which after considerable effort — and compromises on all sides, resulted in the agreement of a general principle for deciding which Authority should deal with planning applications — this being the most irascible problem posed by the new division of responsibilities between County and District.

With commendable brevity, the six Chief Planning Officers finally agreed that:

Apart from those to be dealt with by the County, all planning applications shall be dealt with by the Districts.

T. Break had argued for a slightly different approach (which met with a surprisingly unhelpful response from most of his District colleagues) — namely:

Apart from those to be dealt with by the Districts, all planning applications shall be dealt with by the County.

Although, some 5 years later, the agreed principle remains the basis of the development control arrangements in the County, it was soon found in practice that the various parts of the agreement (while in many respects its great strength) was nevertheless making it difficult for County and District planners to understand their respective roles and, of course, for members of the public to know who they were dealing with. In response, the basic principle was expanded significantly in 1976, to read:

No one is saying that the County shouldn't be involved in the overall planning application here and there, if it asks nicely, but generally speaking the Districts will be dealing with them, especially if they're going to be on the spot. Having said that, if there's any doubt, it's probably best for the people concerned to have a chat about it just to avoid any unnecessaries (but of course, Grotnhthermite thank you very much)!

On hearing of this agreement, the Chief Welfare Officers of the six authorities naturally felt it necessary to examine the wording and they held a conference to discuss the matter. It now reads:

And it be enacted that it shall fall to the County (hereinafter to be called the 'County Authority') that nothing whatsoever herein enacted shall be construed as preventing any matter or thing not herein mentioned, not and in like manner it shall fall to the District (hereinafter referred to as the 'District Authority') that in respect of any application for development being an application for development as defined in paragraph 7 of Schedule V of the Principal Act (Applications for Development) then the manner in which any such application shall fall to be determined shall be first agreed or otherwise as the case may be, and as a consequence the said District Authority and the said County Authority acting severally or jointly as the case may be may agree to act on the 'phone (but not in Grotnhthermite thank you very much).

This essentially ad hoc approach has naturally led to various differences between the Districts in their dealings with the County manages to get involved and these are reflected in the table on the next page. The complete lack of information from Golden Delicious makes comparison difficult, but it is clear (as there is no evidence to the contrary that they have made any decisions since 1974) that Break naturally feels that these figures amount to not only any suggestions that the County's relevance in development control is so small as to be capable of being dismissed. As he said at a recent seminar organised by the local branch of the RPT:

...stands to reason, I think. As you can see, the total number of planning

1. The only plan thought necessary for Golden Delicious is one for the Core area
2. Mr. Puffa reads the dilemma of the various statutory requirements for the slow rate of progress on this plant
3. It is aware of the Department's lack of expertise on the local plans side and that Mr. Puffa have been appointed by South America, where he was responsible for the successful completion of the Anagor Vineyard Development. Jointly prepared by Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador, Mr. Break hopes that Puffa's experience in attempting to reconcile the conflicting claims of the various valley users — prisoners, home owners, motorcyclists and herd-hunters — will be most valuable in negotiations with the Districts and the DPP.
4. Mr. Cumberbatch was drawing heavily on the advice given by the DPP in their very popular Circular No. 1974/13 How to Make Friends with Local Authorities.
appli cations dealt with by the County rose by getting on for 10 per cent from 108 to 111, and this illustrates the increasing importance of the County in development control. In fact, at this rate, by the end of the century I calculate that we shall be dealing with a very large number indeed. You must also bear in mind that in over half the Districts the number of applications we determined rose or stayed the same. Though there is a continuing problem with our friends in Grimsby (who find themselves unable to send copies of any applications to us), this is overall a significant achievement and the figures demonstrate most forcibly the continuing need for a strong and viable Authority at the strategic level.

Nigel Smith, addressing the same conference, viewed the figures in rather a different light. His paper on the matter included the following observations:

of which there can surely be little doubt. As you can see, the proportion of planning applications dealt with by the Grotton County Council slumped dramatically from 205% to 207%, and this illustrates the diminishing importance of the County in development control. In fact, at this rate, by the end of the century I calculate that they will be dealing with hardly any applications at all. You must also bear in mind that in over half the Districts the number of applications they determined fell or stayed the same, and in Grimsby they dealt with no applications at all.

Overall, the figures clearly demonstrate that District Councils are increasingly capable of dealing with this particular branch of planning activity unaided.

From the chair, Roland Pratt summed up by saying: "Clearly the County does have a role in this important field of development control - I'm thinking here of applications for the larger nuclear power stations and the like - but I think the feeling of the meeting is that Districts can generally manage on their own."

Delegates will be interested to know Dr. Rosa Belfour of the Institute of Local Government Studies will be presenting his own analysis of these figures to the conference; it is understood that his major recommendation will be for further research to be undertaken.

Whatever the rights and wrongs in the continuing argument over who does what, the achievement of the authorities in dealing with nearly 6000 applications in 1978 is impressive. On the other hand, it has to be borne in mind that over 14,000 applications were submitted that year, of which 1219 are presently the subject of appeals against non-determination. 3227 are awaiting registration, about 1000 have been lost, and 881 are the subject of appeal, as to which authority should deal with them. The remaining 3227 undecided applications are, of course, awaiting the comments of the County Council.

1. (which may or may not be complicated further as a result of certain proposals for urgent change, which are under consideration as the conference approaches)

Who decides Planning Applications?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1977</th>
<th>1978</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ducrobin</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grotton (Cly)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oglesby</td>
<td>811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Delicious</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grimsby</td>
<td>n2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 9
Conservation and Design

The Splendiferous That Was Grotton

Although Louis XIV’s great plan for Le Palais d’Orléans never got off the drawing board (see Fig 26) the area around Grotton has been a source of inspiration for architects throughout history. Though much has now been lost, for over (many of the buildings) erected in the period between the end of the Stone Age and the Industrial Revolution having been affected by slum clearance, some irreplaceable gems remain. A full appreciation of the glories of the area around Grotton can be obtained only after a lifetime’s study and of course, apart from a number of academics, few people have got that long to spare. We can be grateful therefore, that so many distinguished writers have, over the years, set down their attempts to capture the essence of this unique place.

Ebenzer Howard (referring, in 1919 to Mumford Garden Village, Bletchley): "The construction of such a magnet as Mumford is the symbol of George, love and care for man and all his fellow creatures. Here are seen a multitude of charitable and philanthropic institutions, healthful non-statutory allotments, cow pastures and beautiful well-watered gardens to encourage the promotion of elevating pursuits. Here an Art Gallery, there a bubbling rivulet, and every other shop a branch of Intlerfor." (1915, on Grimsby):

To N. of the Town a Gothic TOWER by Slug, now vandalised. Unstoppable CONG, CHURCH adjoining handsome Art Nouveau CO-OP, with pretty covered mouchettes and quadrated tipegphils.

Fig 27: Renaissance pragmatism: Sir Christopher Wren’s magnificent Guildhall...
Sir John Betjeman* (1962):

1 Visions of Clogley in the mists of my youth, Daisy's fine rump as we roamed the hills (strewn). That blossom-time picnic we mislaid Great Aunt Mahal (A moment before she'd been sat at the table!)

2 My springtimes in Clogley (mutatis mutandis) Cricklwood, Lewisham, slow train to Brent. Cream buns and doughnuts laid out on the balcony, Nobody told me that Nanny was bent.

3 O Clogley, dear Clogley (Edwardian reverie), Splendid, incongruous, awesome and drab. The bike by the trip shop, the tram at its terminus. And Rosemary's bloomers rolled up in my hat.

Sir Kenneth Clark* (1969):

As one stands here, transfixed by the majesty of the scene, who can doubt that something rather wonderful must have occurred on this spot sometime between 1500 and 1959. What flax, what panache, etc, etc, etc...

Les Dawson* (1977):

The unfathomable richness of Grotton's spatial progression; the elegant symmetry and (it must be said) occasional capriciousness of form, counterbalance precisely the erotic sinuosity of the predominant physiographic modulators, producing a throbbing primal dynamism, rhythm and awe, a contrapuntal articulation of voids, and that rare and precious sense of awe-worth, which is so reminiscent of New York, Paris, Rio de Janeiro and, to a lesser extent, Bridlington.

Fig 28 — with its stately and dignified interior

Thanks to the international interest aroused by similar eulogies, Grotton folk have themselves finally come to appreciate just what they are privileged to possess. Even members of the various Councils now accept that old buildings are not necessarily synonymous with wasted assets. Indeed, commencing in a recent interview with the Grotton Advertiser on a controversial application for development by the Max Profit Property Corporation, Councillor Stanley Grimshaw, the Leader of the County Council, said, 'Don't worry about Grotton Hall. Not get-rich-quick property developer's going to knock down what is probably the finest building I own. Leastways not for the miserable amount they're offering at the moment. Er, sorry, that part slipped out. Don't print that last bit, Arnold.'

Though the meagre illustrations to be found on these pages can do them scant justice, who can fail to appreciate the lavish detail of Wren's masterpiece; the brooding self-confidence of the Spanish El Sub-sta, the collective sense of Angst surrounding Walter Gropius's little post-Bauhaus divenimento? So much to be proud of, so much to cherish.

Fig 29 Iterian autonomy — the imposing El Sub-sta

Fig 30 Endemic eclecticism — Walter Graplo's only hardware store outside Germany.

*Arms


GROPE

The redoubtable watch-dog for this stagnating historic legacy is GROPE, the Grotton Regional Organisation for the Protection of the Environment, which was formed in 1969 in order to fight the proposed Grotton airport, the open prison, gypsy caravan sites, pornography on television, council housing and the introduction of decimal currency.

(Miss Daphne Pike, the organisation's energetic founder, will be remembered for her dramatic action in 1971 when she spent 18 weeks perched up a tree which lay in the path of the proposed Grotton Orbital Ringway (ME25SM). Sadly mourned, Miss Pike died the following year from a particularly unorthodox form of Dutch Elm Disease.)

GROPE sees a continuing need for vigilance while Grotton's precious heritage remains under threat from insensitive development, and they have made it clear to the local authorities that they are fundamentally opposed to the impending changes. Anne Teak, a local spot-welder and the present Chairman of GROPE, puts it this way: 'We are fundamentally opposed to the impending changes.'

Over recent years GROPE has proved increasingly successful as a pressure group. One of its finest achievements came in 1978 when, after considerable effort, it finally persuaded the Department of the Environment to list No 18 Ugham Street, Muchmore, as a building of special architectural interest. The Secretary of State agreed with GROPE that No 19 was one of only 30 examples of a two-storey brick weaver's cottage, possessing the characteristic vernacular feature of front and back door in the same elevation, still surviving in this part of Grimethwaite.

More generally, it is reasonable to suppose that GROPE's tireless efforts influenced the County Council in their production of a guide intended to encourage builders and architects to design new developments of a character and quality which will respect and enhance the best features of the area's rich architectural heritage.
The Grotton Design Guide

The great popularity of the design guides published by Eeissi and Rutland (now sadly out of date) encouraged Grotton Council to produce their own as quickly as possible. Handily produced on cheaply-recycled Structure Plan Reports of Survey, the Grotton guide is rapidly, and deservedly, becoming a classic of its kind.

It deals with an impressive range of subjects from handy hints for anyone designing an airport runway, down to a provocative building entitled 'Do's and Don'ts for Decent Doors' (see Fig 31). Indeed, for those who will say that Grotton is one of the listless places in Britain that one would think of as needing a design guide, the current standards of design throughout the County being generally high. It was at first only in 1978 that one of Grotton City Council's new housing schemes, put forward in a competition to decide the most distinguished building development of the 20th century, was placed a close second to the Batter Wall.

Any attempt to precis this 2000 page pamphlet would clearly be doomed to failure, so a few selections chosen more or less at random will have to suffice.

Chapter 18, for example, deals largely directly on some points with the visited Fig 31 Do's and Don'ts for decent doors (from the Grotton Design Guide).

question of garden gnomes. Admiringly comprehensive though many other design guides are, it comes as something of a surprise to learn that Grotton's is the only one which really comes to grips with this difficult and emotive subject. Gnomes (and the Grotton planners have shrewdly drawn their definition widely enough to encompass pixies, elves etc) have become increasingly popular in the County, but the boom period of the nineties resulted in a rash of speculative gnomes, generally badly designed and poorly constructed, and some action was obviously needed.

Careful consideration of the relevant design constraints says the Grotton guide pointedly, will help in the production of a harmonious and spatially balanced resolution of the competing elements, and the ultimate reconciliation of form and function.

This, of course, is only a general rule-of-thumb and the following specific guidelines are put forward:

Height

Maximum gnome height will normally be nine feet, and it should only be necessary to exceed this in very special circumstances. As far as possible, the gnome should not be the dominant feature in the landscape - in many ways the impact can be greater if it remains subordinate to the surrounding buildings. It would normally be inappropriate for the gnome to exceed twice the height.

Materials

Concrete gnomes weather badly and should be avoided. The toadstool should be of a design which is in sympathy with the shape and markings of local species. (Toadstools indigenous to Grotton do not have spots.)

Facial expression

A successful scheme will reflect the character of the locality. Restraint is essential in conservation areas, whereas a sober and dignified demeanour will minimise visual dislocation. Parts of the gnome should exist on a single unit. However, benevolent and careful positioning of gnomes at a more popular disposition.

The toadstool

As a minimum requirement, toadstools should be designed to Parker-Morris standards, as set out in the Report 'Gnomes for Today and Tomorrow'.

Perhaps even more important than the question of gnomes is that of acceptable design principles for housing developments. And throughout the Guide, Grotton's planners have stressed the need for designers to look carefully in the particular characteristics of the site to be developed. Any site is bound to have its advantages and disadvantages - in Grotton's case, of course, the latter tended to predominate. This is not to say that in these areas the genius loci 1 is any less important - although it is always tempting to ignore it in the hope that it will go away. If it has a fault, the Guide contains some advice which, though well-meaning, could impose undue burdens on designers working to a deadline - for example:

Architects and contractors should recognize that buildings on sloping sites have a tendency to fall over unless special care is taken. Thus, it is generally preferable to carry out surveys on site conditions before building work commences.

The Guide naturally emphasises the importance of conservation. Pages 192 to 1214, for example, touch on that thorny old evergreen, barn conversions in the Green Belt, and contain some sound advice on how old barns can be successfully and sensitively converted into new barns or, should the necessity arise, crumbling heaps of rubble. At no stage, however, is it suggested that the way to the Planning Committee's heart lies through slavish conformity with vernacular styles. On the contrary, the recent exciting development of neo-Norman manorhouses at Edna Street, Muchthrop, is highlighted as an example of a successful scheme that analysts authorises' willingness to encourage experimentation with new forms. Indeed, the writers of the design guide have been quick Fig 33 Grotton's architectural heritage demands a high standard for industrial estate layouts (The Scheme as submitted)

1 'a sense of place' - see Eeissi Design Guide
to identify the obvious limitations in the planform of some traditional homes. It points out, for example, that the division of the dwellings into a number of rooms, while having certain functional advantages, usually increases costs and reduces the all-important element of flexibility. From original research done in the County Planning Department, it now seems clear that the larger rooms become, the more space they contain. The Guide urges designers to take full advantage of this principle by making some rooms bigger than others.

Finally, ever conscious of the continuing debate on "permitted development" under the General Order, Grotton's planners have carefully analysed the problem of residential extensions and conclude that, in most cases, satisfactory design is best achieved by building the extension at the
same time as the original house.

The Groton Design Guide is clearly essential reading for every architect and developer in the County, and should be of equal interest to the average man in the communal pedestrian circulatory intesepe. It is, in fact, a powerful reminder of just how helpful a Planning Department can be if it isn’t very helpful. Perhaps its importance is best summed up by T. B. Break himself, with this extract from the introduction to the Guide:

I must stress that this is only a guide. It’s not for us to tell you architects how to do your job, and if you want to go ahead and ignore the whole thing, well that’s fine, but I should warn you, if you do decide that that’s what you’d rather do, I may be unable to restrain my Planning Committee from adopting the kind of unfavourable attitude for which they are renowned throughout the County, So it’s entirely up to you.

Chapter 10
The Rural Areas

Coggyley’s heathar-planted hills
Makes nice change from f’ mucky mill
(Anon c1951)

Though Groton is a Metropolitan County, it nevertheless has a wide range of countryside problems to deal with. Indeed, these have seemed more acute since 1968, when the advent of the Countryside Commission (which does its best to spend considerable sums of money in the countryside) suddenly caused many Authorities to redefine as countryside what they had always regarded as simply bits of land with cows on.

The Urban Fringe

Like all true cities, Groton is completely surrounded by Urban Fringe.

As planners are beginning to find ideas for new problems within the urban and rural areas harder to come by, they have naturally turned to the land between the two for inspiration. And here they have unearthed a whole range of planning issues waiting patiently to be identified. The first thing they

Fig 35: The severe drought of 1975 dealt a heavy blow to the rural economy.

The Upland areas

The broad wind swept acres (hectares) in the north and east of the County, once the backcloth to the Industrial Revolution, are now the battleground between a proud but diminishing local populace, and the horde of Grotonians who pour out from the urban areas in search of adventure, freedom, and a bit of the other, in nature’s warm embrace.

The problems of depopulation have become particularly acute in upland Coggyley (as over the years it has required fewer and fewer people to handle a sheep) and, as in many parts of the country, the young have departed — in this case abandoning the farms and villages for the bright lights of Groton — leaving behind a population imbalanced by age and sex. The local authorities are agreed that a comprehensive programme of action is needed to stem this outward drift and they intend to reissue the rural communities by encouraging new sources of employment and protecting essential services such as buses, schools and Chinese takeaways.

1 Delegates booking on Tour B will have the opportunity of seeing some of the environmental problems caused by mechanised farming methods, such as those at the Van Thumen Pigfarms near Grimneshaw.
which there is normally a presumption of a pair of nesting red-kneed teal hawks and a colony of hairy-seamed geese. The twite hawks have since been re-identified as magpies, but the gossips is still there, growing vigorously between the stones, and now occupying the site, and a special bird has been designated as the nesting site through the winter to

The implementation of this policy has not been without its problems, however. In particular, the use of the term "Category D village" led inexplicably to invasions of broadcasters, local television producers, the Press, and Guardian reporters, all demanding street, television and national press coverage. There was particular concern that the County Council, which promptly renamed them all "Category C villages". In any event, the new class of residents of Category A villages quickly became incensed by the arrival of Christmas crackers everywhere, and the by their children to show up by road in national press stories and seven minutes intervals throughout the night.

Recreation

The rich and varied landscape of upland Grammar shows a remarkable diversity of terrain and flora, reminiscent of the dwellers with much-needed relief from their woodland labours. Here, on the uplands, it is possible for the green folk may take their recreation — whether strenuously physically or more gently with their gulls by clinging to rock faces or falling down pot-holes or simply by informally standing and observing the landscape. The demand for rural recreation with its separations of wild landscapes.
The Inner City dimension

While progress in the Gorton Inner City Partnership Area has been limited to the conversion of an old warehouse into luxury offices for the Gorton Partnership Area Team, and the construction of a small cul-de-sac to serve the new municipal zoo and abattoir (proposed for 1985), hopes remain high that the designation of Gorton and Grimnethwaite Districts under the Inner Urban Areas Act and the Government aid which goes with it will shortly bring forth a prosperity not seen since the 1870s.

Chapter 11

The Inner City dimension

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Fig 36
The County Council is also the Refuse Disposal Authority
There is little doubt that strenuous efforts are being made in Grotton to meet the Government’s objectives. Noting that money was available for Industrial Improvement Areas, for example, the County and the two Districts have declared 43 in the last twelve months. Almost every factory in the Partnership Area now finds itself situated in an IIA, and some are in two or three. As yet, however, little progress has been made on the ground (although a building has been partially painted in Omdurman Street, Eckborough).

In the much-studied Grotton Docklands (which is an area of about 30 run-down acres beside the Bitter Navigation), most of the land is vacant and already publicly owned. This has encouraged successive attempts by the local authorities to rejuvenate the area, but unfortunately, British Rail wish to retain their landholdings in case the Channel Tunnel is built. The Gas Corporation is reluctant to part with theirs in case North Sea Gas runs out; the Port of Grotton Authority are keeping theirs in case the Bitter Navigation is reopened to shipping; and the CEGB wish to retain theirs just in case. It has now been decided that the remaining half-acre might as well be landscaped.

In the light of the valuable experience gained in projects such as this, the Partnership Authorities have begun to adopt a more flexible interpretation of their inner city responsibilities. This has allowed them to pursue a range of projects (many of which are situated outside the inner areas as strictly defined) which they see as being compatible with the overall objectives. These schemes include the Disneyland development in Huckthorpe, a new museum of computer technology at Bitterley, and a proposed holiday home for the elderly in Biddington which had been chopped from the City Council’s estimates every year since 1953.

The DoE’s comments on these schemes are awaited.

As an important adjunct to their work in this field, the local councils have been firm supporters of such schemes as Job Creation, the Special Temporary Employment Programme, the Youth Opportunities Programme, the Temporarily Work-Free Widened Horizons Project and of course, the Involuntary-Leisure Mid-Career Retraining Opportunities Scheme. The authorities see these schemes as a way of giving local people a chance to develop skills which will be of value to them in their future unemployment.
Planning in Crisis Conference

Polytechnic of Central Grotton
5-9 September 1979
Notes for delegates

Transport

By Rail
The nearest station still open is at Grotton, Sludge Street. Conference Officials will be on hand to help delegates off the train, and tell them where to go.

By Road
Grotton City Centre is only 14 miles from the M62. However, as there is no link road, the best thing is to use the A6728, the B6009, turn left on to the A6305, past where the Methodist Chapel used to be, then ask.

By Air
Conference delegates are advised against attempting to travel to Grotton by air.

Accommodation

Delegates will be accommodated in the new and luxurious Stanley Grinshaw Hall of Residence in Pussy Cat Mews, Slightley, which is only three miles from the Polytechnic. Hot and cold water on many floors. No rucksacks. Please make your own bed.

Meals will be taken in the Winter Gardens, Gas Street (except Breakfast). Please replace trays on racks. Coffee extra. (NF) The Winter Gardens is a Grade II Listed Building of great character. Please avoid areas marked 'Keep out - Dry rot'.

Lectures

Repairs to the Poulson Lecture Theatre should be completed in time for conference week. Please arrive early to be sure of a bench.

Facilities for delegates

Medical
If you feel unwell, please do not bother the organisers. Grotton Royal Infirmary is in throncow Lane, next to the newsagents.

Telephones
There are two telephone boxes near the bus station.

Church Services
Those wishing to attend church services are advised to visit Grotton Cathedral, Commercial Street (Anglican), or St Vitus's Church (RC), Back Vatican Street, Grimethwaite.

Swimming
There is a Swimming Pool in Grimethwaite. (This has now been declared safe by the Medical Officer of Health).
Anniversary dinner
The menu for the dinner to celebrate the 44th anniversary of the passing of the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act, 1935 (tickets 50p from Conference Office) appears below:

Menu for T'Anniversary Dinner

Potage Brun Windsor
ou
Jos de Prune

Dégis de Poisson
- Tout ce que vous aimeriez

Left-œufs Mornière

Pudding Noir

Grand Poulet Crêqué 'NALGO'
à la créme
(avec stuffing)
ou
Toupe dans le Hâle
avec choice de veg

Bombe Surprise Management Team
ou
Hadjiak Split
avec
Dieux Sponté au citarade

eau

Divers éminées
Piquets de dent

Exhibition

Badges
Badges MUST be worn at all times. There is a reason for this.

Publications
The following are available from the Grotton County Council Publicity Department:

History of Grotton

The Problems of Grotton

What's On in Grotton

This Closeley

What to Do in an Air Raid

The Structure Plan — Why it isn't finished

Heading for a Crisis?

Remember
you're never alone with

Llewelyn-Davies, Weekes,
Forestier-Walker, Davy,
Brewer, Stewer, Gurney,
Widd'n, Hawke, Cobley, All,
Bar and Partners!

Conference Programme

(Names of speakers yet to be announced)

Tuesday
10.00-11.00 Development Control — Where we went Wrong
11.00-12.00 Coffee
12.00-12.30 Discussion
12.30- 2.30 Lunch

Afternoon Free
6.30- 8.00 Dinner
8.30- 9.30 Population Projections — Have they a Future?

Wednesday
10.00-11.00 Structure Plans — Why they have Failed
11.00-12.00 Coffee
12.00-12.30 Discussion
12.30- 2.30 Lunch

Afternoon — Tours
A — Coastal Scenery of Grotton
B — Historic Grimthwaite
C — Modern Buildings of Ashton-under-Lyne
(Tours commence at 3.30 and return at 4.00)
6.30- 8.00 Dinner
8.30- 9.30 Local Planning — What’s the Point?

Thursday
10.00-11.00 Leisure — Is it Worth the Effort?
11.00-12.00 Coffee
12.00-12.30 Discussion
12.30- 2.30 Lunch

Afternoon Free
6.30- 8.00 Dinner
8.30- 9.30 Employment — The Disaster to Come
9.30-10.30 Grotton Roadshow (an Entertainment)

Friday
10.00-11.00 Transportation — Are we Getting Anywhere?
11.00-12.00 Coffee
12.00-12.30 Discussion
12.30- 2.30 Lunch
2.30- 3.30 Life — Is it Worth Living? (1 Brook)

Conference Ends
Conference helpers and stewards

A number of members of Grotton County Planning Department have kindly offered to act as stewards at the conference, and are ready to help any delegates who find themselves in difficulties. As an aid to recognition, here are a few descriptive notes.

Mark Thrust

Warren Street

Alison Foot (Ms)

John 'Jack' Baxter
57, homely, holding, sports jacket, tie! Smells strongly of pipe tobacco. Works in Development Control, begins all conversations with 'Now, there's a history to this site.' Gets diaries from developers at Christmas; thought to get sherry too, but no proof. Four children, two dogs, caravan (Anglesey). Radio ham. Expert on superannuation. Oxfish Mass, grows large marrows, drinks cider. Daily Mail; had beard in Navy.

Dave Sledge

Where to go and what to see during conference weekend

Notes kindly provided by the County Publicity Officer, to whom all queries should be addressed.

**Museums and Art Galleries**

The City Art Gallery
Coronation Street, Grotton

Admission free

A permanent exhibition of paintings belonging to the English School, from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day, and over forty remarkably similar paintings by L S Lowry.

Ackroyd Hall
Follicle Street, Cloglwy
No 26 bus, every hour

A Georgian House built for Iedelah Ackroyd in 1855. The Hall, now run by Cloglwy Parks and Cemeteries Department, contains a varied collection of paintings, sculptures and native artefacts assembled by successive Ackroyds until the late Sir Benjamin bequeathed the whole estate to the Borough Council in 1912. (NB Certain works acquired by Sir Benjamin when he was Viceroy of Hyderabad may be viewed, by serious students only, upon written application to the Town Clerk.)

Whitehead on t' Bog Industrial Museum
Cloglwy

Director Dr Arminghope Shanks

In the village of Whitehead on t' Bog, three miles north-east of Cloglwy Town Centre. Among many interesting buildings at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution is a carefully reconstructed example of James Watt's revolutionary triple-condenser steam engine.

Grimehwaite Museum of Mining
Station Yard, Grimehwaite

(Closed until further notice, due to subsidence.)

**Places of Worship**

Grotton Cathedral
Commercial Street

Visits to the top of the tower (25p) can be arranged if notice is given at least 24 hours in advance. The view from the top of the 75m high building is remarkable. For further details direct to the Bishop of All.

The Grottons, See View, Cathedral Close, Grotton, enclosing a stumped, addressed envelope. The Cathedral itself contains relics of 5th Grotton Fusiliers, who saw distinguished service on the Limpopo against Fauz Fasha, the Woj of Bamf.

**Theatre**

Coliseum Theatre
Victoria Square, Grotton

The resident Repertory Company in 'Flippin' eck', a new play by Henry Liddings. (Wednesday to Saturday).

Theatre Royal
Yorkshire Street, Bletterley

Dundoom Amateur Dramatic Society in the ever-popular 'Stefan Wiencewiczycy's Mule', by Carl Zeita Jerra. A few seats left. (Until the 7th, then Bingo, twice nightly.)

**Music**

The Grotton Sinfonia
Conductor Hans Pluffing

will give a concert in the cathedral on 6 September at 7.30. There will be one work, a new Requiem Mass by Sir Michael Tippett, using a setting of the Community Land Act as its text. Seats £2, £1, 7p (unres.).

The Ad Nauseam Ensemble

This internationally acclaimed orchestra will be appearing at local highways depots throughout conference weekend. Details on the main notice board.

Barry Acme and the Blackhaws

Students Union, Grotton Polytechnic, on the 5th. Tickets from the Union Building and Green Custard Records, Cemetery Road.

**Planning in Crisis**

Best wishes from the Department of the Environment

Authors of Circular 55/77

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**Cinema**

The ABC
High Street, Grotton

'Black Emmanuelle's Jaws' (AA) and 'The Wonderful World of Grayere Cheese' (U).

Tubro Cinema Club
(Strictly members only, address available from the Conference Office)

'Confessions of a Typing-Pool Supervisor' and 'Differential Calculus Swedish Style'.

Art's Theatre
Snodgrass Close, Bletterley

Takemoto's prize-winning 'Intellectual Pursuits of a Minor Government Official from the Kawaski District' (X).

The Regal
Colliery Street, Grimehwaite

As ABC, Grotton.

**Sport**

Coppit Park Stadium
Hanseatic League 4th Div: Grotton Academicals Reserves at home to Hyde Rangers (no need to book). 9 September. KO 1230 pm

The Green
Cramshaw Superior, near Bletterley

1st Annual Gymkhana and Village Fete. Proceeds towards restoration of Scout Hut. 9 September.

Polytechnic Sports Centre
Ringmore Road, Grotton

Inner Cities v New Towns (amateur boxing match)

Co-operative Hall
Pioneer Street, Muchtorpe

Grotton County Structure Plan Examination in Public. All seats bookable. St John's Ambulance in attendance. 20 August - 10 December (at least)

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Planning in Crisis
Ver Best Wishes From Grotton Co unty Council

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Where to eat
Royal Grotton Hotel
Station Approach, Grotton

The Page and Onion
Sykes Street, Muchelney
Pies, mushy peas, Ruddock’s Old Best from the wood. Lady entertainer every other Friday. Informal.

Vieux Chapens
1 The Square, Grotton
French cuisine (ie, greasy snails, etc), authentic bistro atmosphere. Do not offend manager.

Boggart Clough Forest Lodge
Claggolvey
Smorgasbord with draught Gay, Tyrolean (Thursday – Bavarian Night). German-style lager. (Not recommended).

Parks and Gardens
Of the many fine parks throughout the County, the following are of particular interest:

Grime Valley Country Park
Over a mile of temporarily-landscaped slag-heaps adjoining the Muckthorpe-Grinemithwaite Road. Rare orchids, motorcyclists.

Carbuncle Hall Office Park
Boynton Road, Dunemoen
Interesting examples of Twentieth Century office-blocks, several with landscaping.

Personal services
Just Sid. Hairdresser
1 Sid Street, Grinemithwaite
Grimshaw’s Central Massage Parlour
Internal Relief Road, Grotton
(Ask for our special assisted chiropody service).

Grotton is equidistant from London, Edinburgh, Belfast, and a point on the North Sea about 50 miles east of Grimsby. Situated within easy reach of the national motorway network Grotton, the seventh largest Metropolitan County in the British Isles, is superbly located.

PLANNING IN CRISIS?
SOLVE IT WITH A NEW TOWN!
GOOD LUCK FROM THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ASSOCIATION!
Grotton, of course, grew mainly in the nineteenth century as a result of the textile industry. But so much for history! What is Grotton like today?

The Regional Capital, serving a wide area, the City of Grotton has a population of nearly 200,000. Here is a true metropolis, and its size means that the level of accommodation, management services, and other resources is of unparalleled adequacy. The town centre is large yet compact. The modern shopping precincts blend harmoniously with the Victorian warehouses and inter-war offices to give the town its distinctive character. Shopping facilities range all the way from Burtons to John Collier, from Dixons to Timpson’s.

Grotton has an interesting range of industrial sites available, situated strategically to take advantage of the planned expressway link to the national motorway network, and if your industry is a little on the dirty or smelly side, Grimethwaite’s the place for you.

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The adaptability of Grotton folk to changing technology is a by-word, and the Polytechnic provides a constant stream of industrially orientated graduates who want nothing more than to work hard for a living. Secretaries and typists are also in a penny.

Housing is very cheap, especially in the characterful Grimethwaite area. Depending on where your house is, you may be able to cycle to work in less than half an hour.

Grotton is superbly isolated, and as you will be closer to the national motorway network, the world is at your feet – Blackpool, Snowdona, the Norfolk Broads are all within easy reach.

Grotton – almost the centre of World trade
I joined the Civil Service straight from Oxford. Like everyone else, I was attracted by the romance, the adventure, the danger and, of course, the beautiful women. I’d always wanted to be my own boss. Those were the good times. I had my own little office, a pleasant (African Violet, Grade 31), a hanger for my coat, and even a chair.

My boss was a Deputy Permanent Principal Under Secretary — and he was mean, sadistic, and particularly nifty with Local Government Officers. Naturally, I wanted to be like him. I suppose you could say I was my idol really. I’d never forget, once a month, he just sat down and wrote the Local Government Act. That two hours work caused total chaos the length and breadth of the country, naturally, a CBE soon followed.

I knew it was difficult for me to live up to an example like that, but I had to try. I began quietly at first, just writing the odd order now, then when nobody was looking I would add a Appendix on to a Circular, and just occasionally I might manage to slip away to the law office and redraft bits of the GBD. But it wasn’t long before I began to get into a bit of trouble. One night I took a copy of the Circular home with me. I didn’t mean it any harm, I just wanted to be near. Then before I knew what was happening, it was seen every night, then it was whole album. It was so easy — being the right source whatever was the in thing and the time, the Department would be preparing a few circulars in just to show they’d been reading the Guardian. I simply used to raid them so that they were totally incomprehensible and that they needed very many alterations. I was only too happy to advise.

But I didn’t see what was happening to me until it was too late — disaster was on the way. I was determined to write an Act of Parliament — it would be the ultimate experience. I’ve never forgotten that day, I think I must have had a heavy lunch in the D1 canteen, perhaps the odd gin — you can imagine the sort of thing — and it happened. I wrote the Community Land Act during my lunch break. You see, for weeks before I’d been rescuing bits of other people’s Acts from the wastepaper basket and just stuck them all together, and there it was. Of course, I was hoping to achieve the sort of chaos my old bosses had managed with their Act. But it didn’t happen. Everybody just ignored it, I was glad. I think it was the end of a dream.

His colleagues did what they could for him. Naturally they tried promoting him, but it was too late. He went from bad to worse. By now it was affecting his family, he used to get drunk and write his wife up as a Sputnik instrument. She tried hard to come to terms with it but it was the old story — she finally can off with a Chartered Surveyor. For Dennis, it was the end of the world. And that’s where Britishton comes in.

Here, in the peace and calm of the home, Dennis is assured of the loving care and attention of a devoted staff. Along with the many other residents, he can now look forward to bring his protected from the pressures and strains of the world outside.

I am sure you will be touched as I am, by this story and if you search your hearts you will be able to feel compassion for the civil servants of this world. Help us to keep them! Give them a spare memorandum, a rubber stamp perhaps, a hat, a piece of lace, please send them to me, N Cumbrance, at the D1, Groton, and I’ll pass them on, meaning so little to you, but so much to the poor souls incarcerated in Britishton. Please give generously.
Have you ever tried to get planning permission for a nice front porch, and discovered that it sterilised the nation's mineral reserves? Or that it threatened the County Council's new Structure Plan? Perhaps the Town Hall asked you to provide further details about the number of floors in your bungalow? Or maybe your application simply disappeared without trace.......

This is the sort of thing that the long-suffering citizens of Grotton have (like everyone else) learned to take in their stride - for them, planners have become part of the fabric of modern living, rather like yoghurt, or putty. Indeed, not an eyelid was batted when their much-maligned County Planning Officer, the hapless T Break, first brought Grotton to the notice of the Ombudsman when he unhesitatingly recommended the granting of temporary permission for the demolition of a listed building.

It seems scarcely credible that what is commonly believed to be the world's smallest Metropolitan County should display within its boundaries every intractable planning problem known to Man - and several that haven't yet occurred to him. So perhaps it is hardly surprising, given this gloomy legacy, that the Planning Departments of the County are full of people who only stay in Grotton because they can't get jobs anywhere else.

How do they keep going, this gallant bunch of bureaucrats? What, apart from the prospect of an inflation-proof pension, do they have to look forward to? With the kind of cool detachment which comes only from many years in local government, the authors of this unique book (who themselves work for a large planning authority not all that far from Grotton) reach some surprising conclusions which are of direct relevance to anyone who is a town planner, or who knows one, or who knows somebody who knows one.