Urban-Rural Connections in the Fringe: From ‘disintegration’ to new opportunity spaces

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The decision-making problem
Rural Economy and Land Use Programme

Connecting People – Place – Environment

• Dan's cartoon please

EA

THE POLITICAL ARENA

ECONOMIC GROWTH

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

ZONING

INTEGRATION

INCLUSION

LONG TERM

LAND USE PLAN

PLACE MAKING

SPATIAL
An agenda for action: To boldly go...

- Reconnecting the urban and rural divide
- Re-discovering the RUF
- Improving connections by crossing boundaries
- Managing contested values
- Adapting for the long-term
RELU-RUF project components, processes and outputs
Building a transdisciplinary team

- Birmingham City University - Birmingham School of the Built Environment
- University of Aberdeen - Aberdeen Centre for Environmental Sustainability
- Forest Research
- National Farmers Union
- David Jarvis Associates
- Natural England
- Localise West Midlands
- Green Economics Institute
- Birmingham Environment Partnership
- West Midlands Rural Affairs Forum
- Worcestershire County Council
- West Midlands Regional Assembly
Reconnecting the urban and rural divide

• Agendas, policy frameworks and goals tend to be pursued separately across the urban and rural institutions creating a marked policy and practice ‘disintegration’

• The ideas, separate policies and research relating to SP and the EA form the contemporary divide

• The language we use is complex and largely inaccessible to public and other stakeholders
### Natural Environment lens

1. Incentives
2. Natural Environment White Paper
3. Habitat and Landscape
4. DEFRA
5. Ecosystem Approach
6. Classifying and Valuing
7. Ecosystem Services Assessment
8. Integrated Biodiversity Development Areas
9. Nature Improvement Areas
10. Local Nature Partnerships

### Built Environment lens

1. Control
2. National Planning Policy Framework
3. Local
4. DCLG
5. Spatial Planning
6. Zoning and Ordering
7. Sustainability Assessments (SEA)
8. Development/Neighbourhood Plans
9. Enterprise Zones / Green Belts
10. Local Enterprise Partnerships
Cross cutting ‘bridging’ themes

• Connections
• Time
• Values

allow professional sectors and publics to engage, interact and participate more effectively within more inclusive and understandable concepts and language.
1. **Re-discovering the RUF**

- Lots of past work and experiments to learn lessons.
- Need assessments of the needs of the people, place and environment within the RUF itself.
- Rural aspects of the fringe need to be considered more explicitly in policy options rather than business as usual urban expansion models.
2. Improving connections by crossing boundaries

- RUF crosses many boundaries with a complex pattern of explicit and hidden connections.
- Scale
  - Vertical
  - Horizontal
  - Actors
- Significant changes in work practices and tools to deliver more joined-up responses.
3. Managing contested values

- Different values co-exist and often conflict.
- Values need to be unpacked using both monetary and non-monetary approaches.
- We only tend to value what can be easily measured as opposed to measuring what people really value.
4. Adapting for the long-term

• Policymakers often fail to learn from the past when planning for the future.
  – lack of adequate resources to capture institutional and human capital is significant.

• RUF is a transitory space, defined within short-term thinking but requiring more long-term policy and investment opportunities.

• Learning from new and experimental approaches is key when planning for uncertainty with partial evidence.
Connections

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=VA5ejBS3_jl (18.48 minutes)
Conclusions

• Start of a journey
• Requiring institutional and behavioural change
• Challenging disintegrated development means going outside comfort zones
• Using EXISTING tools to embed new thinking is key - not reinvent wheel
Questions?

http://www.bcu.ac.uk/research/-centres-of-excellence/centre-for-environment-and-society/projects/relu