Reconstruction and the small town

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Reconstruction planning and the small town in early post-war Britain

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Reconstruction planning and the small town in early post-war Britain

Abstract

The majority of studies of British post-war reconstruction planning have focused on the better-known plans for larger towns and cities, yet many much smaller places were also represented in the tremendous outpouring of plans in the period c. 1951-1952. This paper discusses the context of the smaller town replanning, using four very different unbombed towns and plans as exemplars (Bewdley, Durham, Todmorden and Warwick). Uninformative and incomplete records still preclude explicit discussion of why consultants were chosen in each of these cases, and indeed small towns seem unusually prone to engage expensive consultants. Key common themes in the plans included road provision and housing conditions; indeed the concerns of these small-town plans are little different from those of larger, and badly-bombed, places – perhaps because consultants were used. However the removal of planning powers from all of these authorities under the 1947 Act means that implementation of expensive plans was delayed and substantially amended: perhaps the bandwagon of replanning was not worth the expense?
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Introduction

There was a ‘planning fervour’ in the decade or so from the start of bombing raids on British towns and cities c. 1940 that is probably unparalleled before or since. Council minutes are full of reports of councillors and officers attending national and regional planning conferences, and there are mentions of overseas visitors inspecting current planning projects: this was an issue of immediate and great importance. Beyond the exigencies of the war this was an opportunity for creating a better physical environment as part of a new and better Britain. The vast outpouring of planning documents and plans in this busy period has received much critical attention in the last decade and a half. A major focus from the earliest days of critical attention to the present has been upon some of the heavily bomb-damaged cities such as Coventry [1] and on the re-planning of London [2]. Subsequent themes of focus have included the plans of the eminent and prolific consultant planners, with most attention being paid to Professor Sir Patrick Abercrombie [3]; particular types of settlement such as historic cities [4] and industrial towns [5]; the development of specific policy arenas and design issues and performance roles for plans [6]; and facets of their production, including discussion of agents of change, costs of production, the use of imagery, and the move from radical ideals to mundane realism and its mythology [7].

However, significant questions remain unanswered and in need of further exploration. The replanning and rebuilding of some badly-damaged towns, and the majority of little-damaged towns that nevertheless commissioned plans, remain little known. There has yet been little in the way of identifying and exploring over-arching themes of the reconstruction planning era. One of the principal issues demanding further
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attention is exploration of the reasons why, and indeed the extent to which, little-damaged and undamaged towns so rapidly seized on the activity of replanning during this hectic period: a ‘bandwagon effect’. How and why was such replanning undertaken; with what outcome; and how did this relate to the wider agenda of replanning and rebuilding in the larger and bombed cities? This paper is an exploration of reconstruction plans for smaller towns in this category – after a brief overview discussion of the plans for smaller towns with populations of around, at the time, 60,000 or less, the focus shifts to four case studies with populations of 25,000 or less – very much the lower end of the urban hierarchy. These small towns highlight particularly interesting issues. It is easily understandable why a city such as Plymouth, devastated by bombing, should commission a plan or, without that context, why a little-damaged but problematic industrial town such as Wolverhampton would see it as a useful activity. However, it is less immediately apparent why these smaller settlements, often not directly troubled by the war, would do so. The financial implications of this activity were substantial, especially for smaller towns. Although not suffering the economic consequences of bomb damage, many had suffered significant indirect economic consequences of war (for example, the absence of tourist income for resorts), and the rateable income for small towns was often tiny. Planning was not a cheap activity, even when the plans were not implemented (for years, if ever) [8].

This paper therefore explores issues of reconstruction in some of the much smaller towns and cities, physically untouched by war, which did follow the fashion. Why did local authorities – frequently with no direct previous experience of undertaking planning work – become involved? How did they do so: who wrote the plans? What
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were the key substantive issues that plans were intended to address and, in practice, did they focus upon them? What divergences or parallels exist between the experience of these places and those of the larger and better-resourced towns and cities that have been studied in greater detail?

Overview of small-town planning activity

Criteria for selection of appropriate ‘small towns’ for study would include population size, area, rateable income, and the main function of the town. Table 1 imposes an arbitrary maximum population size of 60,000 and includes a large sample of 28 of these smaller settlements – most essentially free-standing, although some townships forming a small part of larger conurbations such as the Black Country have been included. Perhaps the first point to make is that this by no means includes all plans undertaken at this time, merely those identified by Larkham and Lilley’s bibliography and their subsequent research [9]. This undoubtedly privileges certain sorts of plan – there is far more chance of a plan being known if it was undertaken by a well-known consultant and/or was published; however a careful search of a range of professional journals of the period has been able to identify the existence of a substantial number of plans about which little else is yet known, and further research in local archives may yet reveal more.

Table 1 roughly classifies the 28 towns and cities considered. The nature of these ‘small towns’ varies considerably, and the fact that some have formal city status is irrelevant: this is a historic designation unrelated to contemporary function. It can be seen that there is a preponderance of historic, long-established places especially at the lower end of the urban hierarchy. However, at the larger end of population size a
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wider range of settlements is included, including some resorts including spas, and industrial towns.

Of those tabulated, 20 engaged outside consultants. A distinct minority employed existing in-house staff, and this contrasts strongly with the national picture, where consultants produced just under half of the known plans [10]. This is perhaps not surprising, despite the known costs of consultants: smaller settlements were much less likely to have the resources to employ suitably-experienced in-house staff to undertake this sort of work and, up to this point, plan-making activity would often have been undertaken in conjunction with other local authorities. Consultants employed included the most eminent (Abercrombie), the most prolific (Sharp), the then-eminent but now unknown (Alwyn Lloyd) and the young professional (Jeremiah). There may have been a promotional issue in being seen to employ a high-status consultant, although there is relatively little contemporary evidence that the standing of consultants was highlighted as a particular issue in their selection or in ‘selling’ the plan to elected members and ratepayers. Jeremiah’s employment at Sudbury is an interesting case, where the Sudbury and District Planning Association was formed by subscription to pay for the production of a plan [11]. At Tunbridge Wells it was the Civic Association itself which undertook the work [12].

The ‘wealth’ of these towns (expressed as rateable value, i.e. income derived from rates in the year surveyed) ranged from Bewdley’s tiny £18,655 to Guildford’s £509,788. Their population ranged from just over 4,000 (Bewdley again) to Eastbourne’s 57,435 (although it should be noted that this is usually the 1931 Census data). Seventeen of the plans were published, four by national publishers (three by the
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Architectural Press), with known cover prices ranging from free (Macclesfield, produced as a thin pamphlet), to a fairly hefty twelve shillings and sixpence for Warwick and tiny Sudbury (for substantial hard-bound books). There seems to be no significant link between ‘wealth’ and nature of plan publication.

The publication of a plan can be taken as some indication of the intended audience. Clearly, where a plan was officially and widely published, the intention was to promote and/or to consult on the proposals it contained, at least in the local area. On the other hand, wide publication also engaged a broad professional readership and gained publicity for the town. Other clues about the intended roles of plans, and rationales for their production, can be gleaned from the plans themselves: they often contain the terms of reference under which they were carried out or some other explanatory foreword. For example, their role in widespread public consultation is found in the Foreword of the Macclesfield plan, which described the proposals as ‘of vital interest to each and every citizen of the town’. This plan also captured the feeling of the war as opportunity,

When the war brought devastation to our towns and cities we immediately became conscious of the opportunity afforded by this destruction to rebuild again nearer to our heart’s desire. It was not only the ‘blitzed’ areas which attracted attention; there was a general awakening of the public conscience with regard to the generally low standard of environment for nearly all our towns, particularly in industrial areas where the heavy hand of the Industrial Revolution has left such a heritage of chaos and squalor [13].

Yet many of these small towns were historic, where the sorts of tensions described by Pendlebury in balancing modernity with more valued heritage were evident [14]. For
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example, the foreword of the plan for Farnham discussed ‘…the problem of how best to provide additional modern amenities and services, but at the same time retain that indefinable charm and atmosphere of an old English country town…’ [15]. Elsewhere again, the civic boosterism noted by Larkham and Lilley can be discerned [16]: that is, towns becoming conscious of the changes in the hierarchy of retailing, business and image, and seeking to use the production of a plan, or even the engagement of a high-profile consultant, to reposition themselves in the post-war urban economy. So, for example, the dust-jacket of the plan for Leamington (Fig. 1) had a bold arrow pointing to the town, emphasising its geographic centrality, and the Foreword discussed ‘a plan for bold and courageous development as an inland Health Resort… the Mecca of holiday-makers from the whole of the surrounding area; from all over this country and from all other countries…’ [17].

To explore the dynamics of small-town plan production, content and reception in more detail we now turn to four case studies.

The case studies

These deliberately deal with four settlements at the smaller end of our range, with populations at the time of less than 25,000. They are Bewdley, Warwick, Durham and Todmorden, selected to represent a range of town types within this size category, and to contrast with the more familiar towns covered in the literature on post-war replanning. To introduce some consistency, the replanning of all four was undertaken by outside consultants. Bewdley is the smallest town in Table 1, but nevertheless engaged a professional – although the architect and environmental polemicist Clough
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Williams-Ellis [18] was not well-known as a planner he was at least available in the later war years, when there was a shortage of experienced professionals. Warwick engaged arguably the best-known planner of the time, albeit towards the end of his career – Sir Patrick Abercrombie [19] – and suffered a shock when the final account was presented. Durham and Todmorden both used Thomas Sharp, a well-known writer on planning, who made his reputation as a planning consultant by a substantial series of ‘reconstruction’ plans [20]. These examples are early in this series, and indeed the plan for Durham was important for establishing his reputation in this field.

In each case the impetus for replanning, and indeed the nature of the plan, seems to transcend party political concerns: while several were dominated by middle-class conservative concerns, Todmorden in particular was very different.

**Bewdley**

Bewdley is a small and rather isolated town, whose main feature is its location as a crossing-point on the River Severn, allowing movement from the resource of the Wyre Forest to the industrial Midlands. It was never a significant industrial town, but the river traffic was important to its income; its location also meant that it was an easy day-trip visitor destination from the Midlands. It was not bombed. However, in January 1944 – for reasons not apparent in the surviving records – the Council’s General Purposes Committee invited the architect Clough Williams-Ellis to prepare a plan [21]. A Development Committee was constituted ‘to whom be delegated the consideration of all matters relating to the preparation and completion of the report and plan for the future development of the Borough’ [22]. At that time the borough’s Town Planning Committee was more concerned with wider-ranging proposals for
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local government reform, and with the removal of numerous temporary buildings that had been constructed without permission in the early years of the war.

Williams-Ellis was too old for active service during the Second World War, and therefore might be considered to have been available at the right time. This is his first known reconstruction plan; shortly afterwards he was involved, with his junior partner Lionel Brett (later Lord Esher) in producing the plan for Weston super Mare, and from 1947 both were involved in designing ‘reconstruction’ housing estates in Bilston to the concepts of the architect Sir Charles Reilly [23]. Williams-Ellis is best known today as the owner, designer and developer of Portmeirion, a project begun in the 1920s, and professionally he generally worked as an architect. His autobiography hints at his erratic work practices and of the disappointments caused by government interference or inertia when working more in a planning capacity:

once the delights of the preliminary reconnaissance and the draft proposals were behind me and one began to be impeded by the dead weight of public lethargy and official slow-motion brakemanship, I found it hard to sustain my initial enthusiasm or to persevere with whittled down schemes with the necessary patience. For some years, however, I was reasonably persistent, sometimes collaborating ... with Lionel Brett ... but the actual physical results on the ground – for all our hopeful work on paper – remain pitifully small [24].

In Bewdley he applied his reconnaissance skills, consulted with professional officers at local and county level, and held several public meetings. A draft report was quickly available – as early as July 1944 [25]. This reads most unusually: it is a very
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personal document, written largely in the first person. Williams-Ellis was clearly anxious that local residents should be consulted:

Though I can bring to the solution of the several problems that must confront the town a certain technical experience, it is the intimate practical local knowledge of Bewdley’s own citizens ... that should be drawn upon as a check to whatever I may put forward as theoretically desirable. It is in the hope of benefiting to the full by this specialised yet varied local wisdom that I ... issue this interim draft, which indeed is expressly designed to provoke discussion and evoke such alternative proposals as may seem worth consideration ... [26].

This is unusual. Although many contemporary plans mounted elaborate exhibitions or published books and reports, and some explicitly sought local ‘criticism’, few plan authors or local authorities sought to issue draft reports in this manner.

The draft report, and the few surviving papers accompanying it, highlight Williams-Ellis’s own concerns about planning as an activity. First, planning should not necessarily involve large-scale and expensive public works and rebuilding; in fact ‘one of the prime objects of a Planning Scheme is to prevent the unnecessary expenditure of public money’ [27]. But, more fundamentally, in a note attached to the draft, he said ‘I believe in Planning but do not believe in planning too far ahead, say fifteen or 20 years, as conditions change considerably in this time and what may see alright [sic] now may not be justified or necessary when this period of time has elapsed’ [28].
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The initial concerns of the draft report make interesting reading. The town is praised for its ‘higher proportion of architecturally pleasing buildings than almost any other that I know of in all England’ [29], though many are let down by inappropriate painting, advertising, alterations or neglect. In fact this mirrors the concerns of the inter-war Design and Industries Association with which Williams-Ellis was involved [30]. There was felt to be no need for ‘radical internal re-planning’, although some road widening and new roads could provide a ‘round-the-town circuit’ [31] and this mirrors the concern in many reconstruction plans for ring roads and by-passes.

In fact, as elsewhere, congestion was identified as a major issue. Through traffic could only be dealt with by ‘radical re-planning’ that would destroy the integrity and character of this small town, or by a ring road/by-pass. It was suggested that much traffic ‘will wish just to “see” Bewdley’ [32], and this led to the suggestion for an embanked river-front by-pass that would facilitate this. However, this would require a new road bridge (Fig. 2) – the alternative, of replacing or substantially widening Telford’s bridge of 1801, which was already designated as a scheduled monument, had been considered but rejected.

Although the town had little industry, there was concern for provision of some new working-class housing, and a programme for immediate post-war construction was being developed elsewhere within the authority. Williams-Ellis sought to minimise further outward sprawl (again, hardly surprising given his inter-war activities as, for example, author of *England and the Octopus* [33]). The town could afford to ‘fill in its gaps’ and perhaps extend the most recent fringe pre-war estate.
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That is, of course, provided that what is built is rightly built, for if it is not, the less the place is meddled with the better and what must be built had best be smuggled away as far as possible and out of sight – at any rate of the old Borough [34].

He certainly sought to restrict further industrial growth, suggesting instead that the town seek to retain its character as a residential centre and tourist destination. The town needed to remain distinct and distinctive, not 'submerged and lost in an unpremeditated industrial mix-up scarcely distinguishable from that of Kidderminster or Stourport' [35].

At the public meetings, the main issues raised were the extent and severity of flooding in the town, and what replanning could do about it (Williams-Ellis noted that one could remove all river property and lay the whole out as garden – though ‘I risk sack here’), and that the proposed riverside road and bridge ‘will not look at all well’ [36]. Williams-Ellis was clearly advocating a contemporary design: he argued that ‘there is no reason why the new bridge should not be a great adornment to the landscape, and every reason why it should be, an absolutely plain stream-lined single-span structure in ferro-concrete probably being the most acceptable’ [37].

The draft plans were circulated, indeed copies were intended to be sold through local newsagents and there was a small display at the Town Hall in October 1944. The plan – including the embankment, by-pass and new bridge – was mentioned with approval in Hussey’s *Country* Life articles on Bewdley in December 1944 [38]. Copies were sent to the County Council and the Ministry’s Regional Planning Officer. However, the County Surveyor took exception to the consultant’s road proposals in terms of practicability and cost, and especially to his unwise description of an alternative by-
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pass as ‘an engineer’s by-pass’ [39]. A range of responses received had been sent to Williams-Ellis, who had replied to the Committee. The Council was even discussing publishing the final report in book form by early 1945 [40].

Although Williams-Ellis was also engaged as architect for various post-war housing schemes in Bewdley, by late 1945 the Council was expressing irritation that he was not responding as they desired, and considered his appointment terminated [41]. Final revisions to the plan were also greatly delayed, and indeed were overtaken by proposals put forward by the County Council [42]. In fact no final report was ever produced or published. There were, clearly, disagreements with the County Council particularly about traffic planning and major road proposals, and this disagreement, and Williams-Ellis’s own delays, finally killed the plan. The Town Planning and Development Committees merged in November 1945. No more is heard of the plan after January 1946. The Borough lost its planning functions after the 1947 Act, although it did consider planning issues such as the local implications of the West Midlands Plan [43].

Warwick

Warwick is a county town, significantly larger than Bewdley, but still very small considering its historic administrative and market functions. It was virtually undamaged during the war, but nevertheless felt by January 1945 that a plan was necessary. This may have been a reaction to the replanning exercises of its neighbouring towns, especially Leamington Spa, which appointed consultants on 12 May 1945. Warwick’s Town Clerk sought and received a list of suitable names from
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doctor planning institute, and Professor Sir Patrick Abercrombie had been engaged
by June 1945, to begin work in September. The fee was about £500, although
Abercrombie wrote to Sharp (then President of the Town Planning Institute)
suggesting that this was low [44]. At the time, Abercrombie was probably the
country’s best-known planner, reaching the end of his career but still seeking
commissions (he said he could not afford to retire [45]). This is not one of his more
important plans, but it has nevertheless attracted some critical interest [46].

Even while survey work was being carried out by his assistants in 1946, the Council
requested details of the costs of publishing the report in book form [47]. The reasons
are unclear in the surviving documentation, although their professional officers cannot
have been unaware of Sharp’s well-reviewed published report on Durham nor press
reports of his Exeter study, about to be published [48].

The focus of the report was explicitly on the ‘preservation of character’, although the
full title of the published book is Warwick: its preservation and redevelopment [49].
Abercrombie and his team focused on Warwick’s function as a regional tourist centre,
and an architectural and photographic survey of the town centre’s buildings was
carried out to support the analysis.

To retain this function and character, the town’s growth was to be restricted. Efforts
were made to ensure that Warwick did not sprawl outwards to coalesce with its
neighbours, Leamington Spa and Kenilworth. What was sought was explicitly a
‘compact development’ form [50]. In fact, the maps show, and the text discusses, an
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‘urban fence’ (a Ministry of Agriculture term) (Fig. 3), the clear physical limit of development [51].

It was strongly suggested that long-term population increase should not exceed 20 per cent. There was to be no major development of the retail centre, nor of the administrative functions beyond the ‘county administrative headquarters’. Nevertheless, there were proposals for some redevelopment even within the originally-walled town core. These included the creation of small ‘precincts’ and some land-use redistribution to achieve functional quarters. The modest residential expansion was to the north, but was not to exceed one mile from the centre. One part of this extension was planned in detail, as a demonstration [52].

Road development was a high priority. Changes were proposed to ‘internal’ roads in the area between Warwick and Leamington Spa. However, ‘unless radical changes are made ... congestion in the town will become intolerable’ [53]. An outer bypass, first proposed in the 1920s, was designed to the west and north, and was to be extensively landscaped. Abercrombie was aware of the need that new roads ‘must be planned so as not to encroach unduly on valuable buildings, agricultural land, or to mar amenities by cutting through areas of natural or artificial beauty’, though in practice the northern bypass eventually built broadly followed a line suggested in 1928 [54]. An inner bypass would run around the town centre, more or less following the line of the original walls (Fig. 4).

Implementation of the proposals was carefully organised in three phases. The first, over about ten years, would include the outer bypass and some housing. The second,
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‘of the greatest significance’, would take about 15 years and would include the inner bypass, other major road improvements, and the reminder of the housing and commercial expansion. The final phase would consolidate improvements to the town centre, and its timing was more vague [55].

It was decided to publish extracts of the draft report in the local newspaper, and to hold a public exhibition. However, there was no formal consideration of the report’s suggestions: this was deferred until such time as the report could be circulated [56]. The exhibition took place in July 1947, and was visited by 665 adults and 295 children [57], representing about 6 per cent of the borough’s population. Comments reported in the *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser* were largely positive, although there were some doubts about when the work would be completed, and one correspondent suggested that ‘it’s a waste of public money to draw it up ... It’s too vast for Warwick: the reconstruction has got to come some time or another, but not on the lines of the Abercrombie Plan’ [58].

By 7/2/47 Abercrombie’s final account was presented. The costs had risen to a startling £3,200; although the Council had approved various additional surveys and expenses in the meantime. In the late 1940s the costs of publishing were rising fast, and Abercrombie’s final advice was that 3,000 copies in book form would cost about £3,000. This was agreed, not without acrimonious debate, and the report was finally published on 7 November 1949 (over two years after the Leamington Spa plan) [59].

On publication the Council finally had sufficient copies of the report to circulate for discussion, and its contents were debated and adopted on 17 March 1950 [60].
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However, by this time the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act was in operation; like Bewdley, Warwick Borough Council no longer had responsibility for town planning, and the County Council was in the advanced stages of preparing an Outline Development Plan. This was adopted by Warwick Borough Council almost exactly a year later, on 16 March 1951 [61]. Although technically superseded, Abercrombie’s general ideas did have some influence on subsequent developments in and around the town.

**Durham**

Durham, like Warwick, was a small county town retaining administrative functions and with a historic built environment generating significant tourism. Some of the issues which were to dominate the Durham reconstruction plan had been live planning issues for some time, such as the need for new roads (as with Warwick) and the inadequacy of significant parts of the housing stock. For example, the County Council’s planned relief road line had been approved in 1931; the convergence of a series of major roads on the three narrow streets leading into the peninsula at the heart of the city meant that traffic congestion was already a major problem by this time. By 1940 work on an East Durham Planning Scheme by a Joint Planning Committee including Durham City was being discussed by the Durham City Council Works and Town Planning Committee, and eventually a resolution was passed to prepare a planning scheme following section 6 of the 1932 Town and Country Planning Act [62]. In December it was reported that Ministerial approval for proceeding with such a scheme be deferred, anticipating revised post-war legislation [63].
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In April 1943 the Town Clerk of Durham City Council presented a report about the desirability of appointing a planning consultant [64]. Surviving correspondence with Sharp shows that the Town Clerk was in communication with him that May [65], although it is not known who else (if anyone) was considered. In June the Town Clerk recommended Sharp’s appointment [66]. However, this was not uncontested. Opposition in the City was led by Councillor Smith, Chairman of the Works and Town Planning Committee, who was later one of the critics of Sharp’s proposals. Attempts were made by Smith to block the appointment and to consult the East Durham Joint Planning Committee [67]. The County Surveyor was reported as being strongly opposed to the appointment of any consultant ‘and to the appointment of Mr. Sharp in particular’ [68], but the reasons for this antagonism are unclear.

Neither is it clear from the surviving local government minutes why Durham City chose to go it alone. The report of the discussion of the Council meeting in the Durham Advertiser suggests one stimulus for the City proceeding in this fashion; a councillor suggested that the Ministry of Town and Country Planning was keen to see someone consider the planning of the City itself, rather than through the constraints of East Durham as a whole. [69]. Whatever the underlying reason for the appointment, the City wished to present this to the County Council as complementary to the sub-regional process in East Durham [70].

The County Surveyor’s antagonism towards Sharp may be explained by Sharp’s pronouncements over issues in Durham in the preceding years. He had written on Durham in his contribution to the polemic Britain and the Beast [71]. It had been estimated that nearly a third of the city would have to be rebuilt due to slum clearance
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including ‘picturesque (and hygienically foul) quarters’. Sharp had no quarrel with this, but ‘one-third of the entire city! That is surely a job of such enormous scope that is should only be undertaken to a most carefully worked out plan. And, characteristically, there is no plan at all’ [72]. But his key target was the County Council’s relief road proposals, sections of which would have been elevated on a high embankment. Sharp used this opportunity to publicize his ground-level alternative (first prepared in 1934 [73]) to the officially-approved elevated road. Here, and elsewhere in the chapter, he attacked the responsible authorities, including local authorities and the cathedral and university, for their apparent lack of engagement in the city beyond their own interests.

Sharp’s appointment was, however, duly approved by an agreement of 10 December 1943. Amongst its key provisions were that the consultant would prepare

an outline redevelopment plan and report for the City of Durham which plan and report shall have particular reference to the historical and architectural character of the City and to the appropriate treatment of areas which have been or are likely to be cleared of buildings under the provisions of the Housing Acts ... [74].

Completion was expected by 31 March 1945.

What was to become Cathedral City [75] was commissioned at a time of great interest in planning issues in Durham. In mid-1943 the Durham Advertiser published a series of articles on planning issues in the city by the Bishop of Durham, Dr Williams; the Dean of Durham, Dr Alington (who was also President of the Durham Preservation Society); Patrick Shiel, and Bertram Colgrave FSA [76]. The Durham Advertiser also
published various reports of planning publications prepared by several local bodies [77], and Frank Rushford produced a slender book with miscellaneous interventionist proposals [78].

It was clear that Cathedral City was no ordinary commission for Sharp. It was his first significant commission as a consultant-planner after leaving the Ministry (as opposed to as a writer), and he had a personal passion for Durham that led him to invest far more effort in the commission than was commercially sensible (his fee was £472 10s). Towards the completion of the report Sharp, in correspondence with the new Town Clerk, estimated that a true account would be 1500 guineas for his time and effort. Furthermore, he commissioned the perspectives from A.C. Webb for 75 guineas from his commission fee (Fig. 5), and unsuccessfully sought to sell these on to the Council [79].

Cathedral City, which became one of the best-known of the reconstruction or advisory plans, was a handsomely-produced plan, heavily focused on the master-planning of physical form. It was published in January 1945 [80]. The City Council viewed it as a consultation document, as the proposals had not been formally approved before publication [81]. Sharp’s appreciation of Durham was largely based upon its visual qualities. Not surprisingly the Cathedral, and to some degree the castle, were central to this, although there was an appreciation of the roofscape and of the foil that domestic-scaled building gave to the major monuments. Sharp also emphasised the historic and visual importance of the cathedral as part of emphasising the significance of Durham. His proposals for preservation were focused on the peninsula containing the Cathedral, Castle and heart of the University and commercial
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centre, although a map of buildings of historic interest included buildings across the
City such as a concentration on the north side of Old Elvet, an historic street to the
north-east of the peninsula. The setting of the Cathedral and Castle were discussed
extensively. Beyond the peninsula he saw the need for extensive rebuilding, whilst
acknowledging that some of the buildings to be cleared had architectural merit.

A key element of the plan was his alternative to the County Council’s inner relief road
proposal. Sharp produced an extensive critique of this elevated proposal in terms of its
impact on the character of Durham, saying of his alternative that ‘it will belong’ [82].
Also important was the suggested 4,500 limit to Durham’s population growth, from
18,500 to 23,000. He saw the appropriate function of Durham as being an
administrative, shopping, educational, residential and tourist centre.

An exhibition was held in the Art Gallery in February, opened by the then Chairman
of the Royal Fine Art Commission, and 8,000 copies of the plan were printed [83].
Although the report was to receive many plaudits and favourable reviews nationally, it
did generate some local dissent. Councillor Smith, who had led the objections to
Sharp’s appointment, complained that they had paid Sharp to be their own critic [84].
The editorial content in the Durham Advertiser was generally quite critical. The
major problem was considered to be the impracticality of its timespan for
implementation. There were also criticisms of specific proposals, such as the
intention to remove fairly new housing at Milburngate for his road line at a time of
housing shortage. Sharp responded in his normal robust manner, asserting that his
critics could not ‘see beyond their nose ends’ and defending the plan’s practicality
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[85]. The Council generally approved the plan, although not unanimously on all issues [86].

The planning issue which came to particular prominence with publication of
*Cathedral City*, and which was to rumble on through a convoluted series of proposals
and inquiries, was the relief road scheme (Fig. 6). On this occasion the City and
County Councils were in opposition, with the City accepting Sharp’s proposals and
the County preferring its original scheme. Sharp was employed as consultant for the
City for a public inquiry in 1946. This issue dragged on until the relief road was
eventually constructed in the 1960s, broadly on Sharp’s line although to a detailed
design about which he was highly critical [87]. Sharp’s relationship as a planning
advisor with Durham continued from 1948 until the end of 1962.

*Todmorden*

Todmorden was the largest of the small towns under consideration here; and its
industrial nature and topographical constraints provides further contrasts. The
decision to engage a consultant was taken in early 1944 by the Development Sub-
Committee, a newly-created sub-committee of the Finance Committee [88]. The
same Committee resolved a few weeks later to approach Thomas Sharp, then busy
with his Durham report, although the surviving Minutes do not record why he was
selected [89]. Planning was very much in the air at Todmorden at the time, with, for
example, the creation of an Upper Calder Joint Planning Committee.
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A later newspaper report suggested that Sharp had been approached because of his outstanding reputation as a consultant and that he had accepted the commission, whilst turning other requests down at the time, because he viewed the very difficult topography of the town as a challenge [90]. Indeed topography was a key feature of the town, lying at the junction of three narrow valleys which quickly rise to high moorlands. Sharp was initially engaged to write a short preliminary report, which led to an invitation to consider preparing a full report, accepted by Sharp, leading the Committee to resolve to appoint him to prepare a full plan [91].

The outline plan was received by the Council at its Development Sub-Committee meeting of 6 September 1945 [92]. Sharp then attended a special meeting of the full Finance Committee [93]. Although there was not the build-up of planning issues evident in Durham, there were clear challenges to be faced in the post-war period. Sharp’s preface identified housing conditions as the main physical problem, but an equally profound issue was the decline in the local economy. Todmorden was very much a cotton town and, at this time, in some decline. In the report Sharp discussed whether, with this steady loss of raison d’être it might be sensible to evacuate the town. He concluded otherwise, given the well-settled community with all its spiritual and emotional attachments. Whilst industrial relocation was outside the scope of the plan, Sharp sought to identify sites where new medium to medium-heavy industry could be housed. The sites for new industry were largely seen as being produced by the clearance of housing. Sharp was pleasantly surprised at the well cared-for state of the housing, but nevertheless considered that between a third and a half of it, much of which was back-to-back, would need redeveloping. He considered, and dismissed, the rehabilitation of this stock. Finding sites for new housing was considered
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problematic given the topographical constraints. Sharp’s goal, as with industrial sites, was to achieve reasonably large groupings of housing in order to create neighbourhoods. He recommended a density of 24 houses/acre. He earmarked sites to the north of the town to accommodate some of this new housing but was forced to look beyond the valley floor to meet all the need he identified (Fig. 7). His recommendations on some of his usual preoccupations of roads and the central area were limited. Given the topography, he saw no scope for a bypass and thus proposed a phased improvement of roads where they met in the centre which, in his view, gave scope also for a better public space along with the rebuilding of some public facilities (Fig. 8).

Sharp’s report seems to have been fairly well received, with the Finance Committee approving the report in principle and authorising both the publication of the report in book form and a public exhibition of the proposals with models [94]. Within a few days the Housing Committee had resolved that two sites be submitted for Ministry approval [95]. It was a while longer before the town centre proposals were considered but, in November 1946, the Highways Committee recommended that the Council approve Sharp’s proposals for the town centre with a view to submission to the Ministry of Transport and the County Council for inclusion in their programmes [96].

Arrangements were made for the publication of the report and the exhibition. After some debate over publication costs and cover price it was eventually decided to print 2000 copies [97]. By the end of November 1946, 1115 copies were reported as being sold [98]. The exhibition was arranged for September 1946 and was opened by the Minister of Works. It included a model of the proposed town centre made by local
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volunteers. As in many cases, the scope of the exhibition seems to have been much wider than Sharp’s own proposals, including showings of various relevant films and exhibitions by the electricity and gas departments of Halifax Corporation [99].

In his *Chronicles of Failure*, Sharp briefly referred to his Todmorden proposals and commented ‘Whether any part of them was ever carried out I do not know – an experience that is common to planning consultants in relation to most of the plans they make’ [100]. Despite the general welcome that Sharp’s proposals seem to have received, with none of the controversy evident in Durham, in the speeches at the exhibition opening it is clear that full implementation was anticipated as being the work of many years [102]. Visiting Todmorden today it is difficult to see evidence in the town of any proposals having been implemented; indeed there is limited building from the twentieth century generally. For whatever reason, the town centre proposals were not proceeded with, nor was housing constructed at his preferred sites. Some housing was located in sites suggested by Sharp but, given the scarcity of sites in the town this is hardly a matter of great surprise. Similarly, some clearance of older housing took place but less than Sharp advocated, and substantial numbers of back-to-backs remain.

**Discussion**

This paper is an exploration of reconstruction plans for a particular type of settlement; after an initial survey of towns of populations under 60,000 the focus moves to case study towns and cities with (at the time) populations of around 25,000 or less. There is a particular intrigue with these places in terms of why they engaged in this novel
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and expensive activity: Nolen’s work on US small cities is well known [102], and indeed a few UK pioneers were engaging consultant planners in the inter-war period [103]; but most have received little attention in the outpouring of recent research on this period.

Impressive as is the amount of planning endeavour evidenced by the ‘planning fervour’ of the time, and the actual plans produced, it covers only a fraction of the number of settlements of this sort of scale that existed in the country. Most such places did not plan, at least in anything like such a formal way or at this time. The planning fervour was a genuine, but limited, phenomenon, restricted to some in the professional and political classes. The general indifference of the bulk of the population has most recently been graphically documented by Kynaston [104].

Authorship and cost

Smaller towns appear to have been more inclined than their larger cousins to employ consultants to undertake planning activities. These were small authorities and the lack of internal capacity to undertake such a job must have contributed to this. Larkham has suggested a variety of factors governing selection of consultants, such as prior connections, being ‘on the spot’, word of mouth, suggestions by professional bodies and the reputation of the consultant [105]. As in so many cases, the surviving documentation in these case studies gives no explicit reasons why particular consultants were selected; but generally it seems to have been a case of invitation on the basis of reputation – there is no suggestion with any of the case studies of a competitive process, or even a selection short-list. Sharp was known in Durham
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through his employment by the North East Durham Joint Planning Committee and his published writings on the city, although because of their critical nature, these might equally have cost him the job. In the case of Todmorden, Sharp seems to have been selected on the basis of reputation, although it hard to say on what basis, as he was engaged before the publication of his Durham plan. Abercrombie’s reputation was great, but nevertheless he was presumably recommended to Warwick by the Town Planning Institute. Williams-Ellis was the least well-known of these consultants in terms of planning expertise, but he was available at a time of skills shortage.

There was certainly a considerable expense to bear by employing an outside consultant to prosecute these plans; the financial implications when in-house staff were used remains under-explored. Warwick’s plan and its publication cost approaching £6,500; Williams-Ellis’s fee for Bewdley is unknown, but in the year of his activities, the town’s rates increased from 14/10- to 17/10- (producing £13,261 in 1944-5 and £15,836 in 1945-6) when there are no records of other major expenditure changes. In comparison Durham had a bargain at £472 10s, plus probably some loss on Cathedral City. The cost of redevelopment, as opposed to the replanning, would also be substantial [106]. An expensive consultant was not necessarily a recipe for harmony, however. The problems experienced at Bewdley have been described. The Warwick and Durham plans as publicised had not been discussed and adopted as policy by their respective councils, something made very clear by the respective authorities.

Themes in the plans
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The themes found in the reconstruction plans of these small towns have been discussed. It is evident that in some of these towns, such as Durham and Warwick, despite their small size and lack of bomb damage, urgent planning issues of road provision and housing condition had been fermenting for a number of years. Indeed, this points to some of the shared principal themes of the plans. Above all, there was the issue of traffic. All but Todmorden (where topography made major road proposals impractical) proposed substantial new roads as the means of removing existing or anticipated high traffic loads from the centres of small medieval towns. Bewdley’s led to significant disagreement with the County Council as highways authority, probably contributing to Williams-Ellis’s disengagement and withdrawal. Warwick’s outer bypass was – much later – built more or less to Abercrombie’s principles, though Slater noted that ‘the proposals for the [outer] by-pass are carefully related to, and use, the fine grain of the countryside – existing hedgerows, woods, paths and lanes, yet his proposals for the historic town ignore the fine grain of streets, lanes, plots and buildings, particularly where road plans are concerned’ [107]. In Durham, Sharp’s substitute road was ultimately built along generally the lines he proposed, but only after many years of County Council opposition.

A secondary theme with three of these plans was the importance of heritage, including the qualities of townscape and character, and the need to balance this with necessary modernisations. Warwick was explicit in considering the protection of the town’s historic character as a fundamental part of the proposals. In Durham, the historical and architectural character was at the heart of the contract agreement. Despite Williams-Ellis’s earlier involvement with the Design and Industries Association [108], in Bewdley there was much less explicit concern for character or heritage; in fact
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demolition and replacement of Telford’s bridge had been considered. Heritage was not considered a significant issue in Todmorden.

Other common themes included the need to address housing conditions; nationally this emerged as perhaps the most significant planning issue given the need for slum clearance and replacing wartime losses. Indeed, a significant start had been made upon slum clearance in the 1930s as a key element of housing policy and following the 1935 Housing Act [109]. Housing was at the heart of the Todmorden plan but was also significant in Durham and Warwick. Although Bewdley was actively considering new post-war housing development, it was on a very small scale (50-100 houses). Wider prevalent issues in the planning ideology of the time were also promoted, such as the need for urban containment, linking inter-war concerns over sprawl and ribbon development with post-war green-belt legislation. This included identifying the correct functional role for places and often arguing against urban expansion; Abercrombie and Sharp were adept at arguing the case against local growth-minded interests, often positioning the historic qualities of a town or city as a national or international asset in need of protection [110]. Otherwise there was a focus upon general tidying up and amenity improvements, such as the improvements proposed for Todmorden town centre.

Overall, the themes of small-town reconstruction are little different from those in the larger towns and cities, whether plans were prepared by outside consultants or in-house staff. It is the impact of the measures proposed – for example Williams-Ellis’s river-front by-pass and additional bridge for Bewdley – that might have provided a
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significant difference simply because of the settlement scale, had such schemes been implemented.

*The bandwagon effect*

Exploring why these smaller, and largely undamaged, towns indulged in the expensive activity of replanning is a complex task. The surviving local government records tend to be frustratingly opaque in explaining precisely why plans were undertaken. The case study plans considered here were all commissioned by lower-tier authorities. At least some of them had been engaged in plan-making activities, but this was usually as part of sub-regional groupings to prepare a statutory scheme under the 1932 Town and Country Planning Act. It seems to have been widely understood by the early 1940s that this legislation would soon be redundant and be replaced by something more comprehensive, even if the form that this would take was unclear. One factor behind the commissioning of plans seems to have been the Ministry of Town and Country Planning (or its predecessors), which urged local authorities to embrace planning. There are well-known exhortations by the then Minister, Lord Reith, in 1941 for bomb-damaged towns to ‘plan boldly and comprehensively’; sentiments reinforced by a later Minister, Silkin, in 1947 [111]. Furthermore, the government was prepared to intervene directly in advocating the employment of a consultant, and even which consultant might be suitable, in places considered to be important, such as London and Portsmouth [112]. Of the case studies considered here, circumstantial evidence would suggest some Ministry involvement in Durham; certainly as the subsequent public inquiry in December 1944 over proposals for a power station in Durham demonstrated, there was a national sensitivity to planning
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issues in Durham [113]. However, after the implementation of the 1947 Act, planning powers were removed from many of these smaller settlements, and they were included as very brief sections (Bewdley has a mere three pages, for example [114]) within broader Development Plans covering, perhaps, half a county. The expensive plans discussed here therefore had little direct impact; although sometimes they were to have an enduring influence on the ‘planning discourse’ of place, a theme we return to briefly below.

The publication and promotion of plans might also be part of a bandwagon effect, in contributing to place promotion in the new post-war economic and social climate. In fact even the engagement of expensive consultants may be a part of this phenomenon. It is noteworthy how many of the plans for smaller settlements were published; a higher proportion than appears to have been the general case [115]. Three of the four plans considered here were published and, had the fourth been completed, it too would have been published. Given the expense of this, highlighted by the Warwick documentation, and the risk of not covering costs, this is perhaps surprising. Durham and Warwick were both published commercially, and the market for such publications must surely have reached saturation point by the end of the decade. A significant number of plans for much larger towns were never published: some are only known as typescripts, some indeed marked ‘confidential’. Different factors probably came into play in each case. Over and above local considerations, the decision by the Architectural Press to publish Durham and Warwick was probably part of a wider promotion of planning that was being taken up by its part-owner H. de Cronin Hastings; there is evidence that from the mid-1930s that Hastings had been thinking about a town planning theory which was effectively to materialise as the townscape
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campaigns starting ten years later and Sharp in particular was seen as a likely collaborator [116]. Commercial factors presumably also played a role and Abercrombie would have been considered reasonably saleable, at least to a broad professional readership, given his national and international profile. The case of Todmorden is rather more typical, with a more modest Council-produced document emerging. This publication, and the others like it set out in Table 1, may have represented an act of civic boosterism: having employed an expensive consultant operating at a national level, it made sense to advertise the fact. More specifically, plans may have been intended to have a role within the local polity. It is quite likely that one of the drivers behind their production was tensions between different layers of governance, with small lower-tier local authorities seeking to position themselves in the uncertain but changing post-war planning system and gain influence in the wider planning process.

In part, too, the desire for publication in these small towns may be explained by a desire to inform people in the locality as widely as possible, in response to the interest that was presumed to be there. Sharp’s Presidential Address to the Town Planning Institute [117] set out what seem to have been prevailing attitudes towards public consultation, where he argued for the rights of people to know what is planned for them; and that planners need to be able to accept criticism. However, he did not, to put it mildly, advocate that the public be engaged in the plan-making sense (other in a general briefing about broad requirements). Consultation was most appropriate after plans had been drawn up, for criticism, alteration or rejection. To this end, organising a public exhibition was also a common practice. Indeed ‘criticism’ was openly sought in some instances (such as Walsall [118]) – so it is hardly surprising that criticism
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often resulted. It was common for national politicians, including Ministers, to accept invitations to open such exhibitions – as at Warwick and Todmorden. In many cases, though, these attracted relatively low numbers of visitors; and Bewdley had a much lower-key event. Local press coverage probably took the message more directly to more people. However Hussey’s favourable mention of Williams-Ellis’s involvement would also have brought further publicity, albeit at the level of *Country Life*’s readership [119].

*Plan reception, influence and implementation*

The final issue for exploration focuses on what actually happened to the plans. Todmorden seems to have been essentially well received; each of the others seems to have been more controversial for one reason or another. In the case of Bewdley and Durham, hostility from the County Councils on highway proposals in particular was evident. None of the plans can be said to have been implemented as such. Both Bewdley and Warwick were delayed; in one case apparently by the consultant; in the other because of a reluctance to discuss the draft proposals until they had been published in expensive book form, by which time they had been superseded by new legislative arrangements for town planning. Indeed, in the wake of the particular requirements of the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, all of these reconstruction plans soon appeared anachronistic, as well as unrealistic in the austerity of post-war Britain. Even the well-received Todmorden plan seems to have had little or no impact in practice as a result of these changes, and perhaps also for the lack of any driving force to carry proposals through; as most planning powers rested with a combination of the Ministry, County Council and Upper Calderdale Joint Planning Committee.
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However, this does not mean that these plans had no influence at all. Some enduring influence of the ideas put forward in the Warwick plan are evident in later policy documents and Larkham has shown in work on the Sharp plan for Chichester how the existence of a plan was used to frustrate more interventionist proposals until prevailing attitudes became more conservation orientated in the 1960s [120].

The clearest example of a plan having an ongoing impact in these case studies is Durham where, although Cathedral City cannot be said to have been implemented in any meaningful sense, it certainly had an influence. Here the City Council was prepared to back Sharp’s recommendations and fight the County Council over the road line: indeed the City Council continued to employ Sharp as a consultant, in an often uneasy relationship, until 1962. It also had a national influence, being widely and favourably reviewed, and essentially launched Sharp’s career as a replanning ‘expert’. Abercrombie’s reputation was insufficient to reassure some sarcastic reviewers, however: ‘no doubt the people of Warwick are proud of their plan – they have now been planned, actually been planned (they don’t know what that means but it sounds good) by one of the greatest names in planning’ [121].

Overall, then, these small towns did reflect national concerns in contemporary planning. There was little that was unique to the scale of the settlement. The engagement of expensive consultants probably ensured that the plans – and indeed the towns – were in line with current professional concerns; with the possible exception of Williams-Ellis, whose partner Lionel Brett noted that he was engaged to ‘bring him up to date’ [122]. Perhaps, in fact, some of the solutions proposed were outside the scope of the resources of these towns. But perhaps the major factor limiting the direct influence of most of these plans was the removal of planning powers from the bulk of
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does not mean that the small towns of the 1940s were untouched by the spirit of reconstruction. Some concepts did persist; some proposals were implemented in one form or another, perhaps decades later; but it is hard to disagree that these towns saw little return from their expensive, and sometimes protracted, period of ‘reconstruction planning’. Perhaps the bandwagon was not worth jumping upon?
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Acknowledgement

The project on the Thomas Sharp archive at the University of Newcastle, *Town and townscape: the work and life of Thomas Sharp*, was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.
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Table 1: Small towns and their characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Bombed?</th>
<th>Area (acres)</th>
<th>Rates</th>
<th>Rateable value (£)</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher/ date/cover price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bewdley</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>4,279</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3,757</td>
<td>14/10</td>
<td>18,655</td>
<td>Williams-Ellis</td>
<td>Not published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudbury</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>7,007</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1,925</td>
<td>15/-</td>
<td>33,449</td>
<td>Jeremiah</td>
<td>Batsford, 1949, 12/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abergavenny</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>8,608</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2,398</td>
<td>19/11</td>
<td>50,716</td>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Not published</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bideford</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>9,442</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4,068</td>
<td>10/6</td>
<td>64,286</td>
<td>Sims</td>
<td>Not published</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chichester</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>14,912</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>2,869</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td>159,102</td>
<td>Sharp</td>
<td>Southern Publishing,1949, 7/6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>18,147</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4,029</td>
<td>Not</td>
<td>121,234</td>
<td>Sharp</td>
<td>Architectural</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<th>Damage</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher, Date</th>
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<td>Todmorden</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>22,222</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>12,790</td>
<td>Sharp</td>
<td>Borough Council, 1946, 2/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal</td>
<td>Port/Historic</td>
<td>23,500 (1938 est)</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>2,919</td>
<td>13/10</td>
<td>152,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farnham</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>23,500 (est in plan)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6,687</td>
<td>16/-</td>
<td>126,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King’s Lynn</td>
<td>Port/Historic</td>
<td>23,528</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6,687</td>
<td>16/-</td>
<td>126,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>24,450</td>
<td>Baedeker raid</td>
<td>4,703</td>
<td>10/9</td>
<td>216,332</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salisbury</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>2,845</td>
<td>11/-</td>
<td>262,754</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>26,537</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4,755</td>
<td>12/6</td>
<td>338,520</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leamington Spa</td>
<td>“Resort”/historic</td>
<td>29,669</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2,833</td>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>313,293</td>
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40
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<th>Size</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>30,754</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7,184</td>
<td>11/-</td>
<td>509,788</td>
<td>Jellicoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>31,248</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>1,871</td>
<td>17/-</td>
<td>133,407</td>
<td>No borough-wide ‘plan’: housing issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunton</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>31,640</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2,434</td>
<td>11/6</td>
<td>236,973</td>
<td>Sharp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stourbridge</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>33,150</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4,214</td>
<td>14/6</td>
<td>181,656</td>
<td>Alwyn Lloyd &amp; Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macclesfield</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>34,902</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4,641</td>
<td>14/9</td>
<td>203,546</td>
<td>Dobson Corporation, 1944, free</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tunbridge Wells</td>
<td>“Resort”/Historic</td>
<td>35,365</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6,634</td>
<td>11/5</td>
<td>475,523</td>
<td>Spalding (Tunbridge Wells Civic Association)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weston super</td>
<td>Resort</td>
<td>41,000 (1939 est)</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>7,006</td>
<td>11/-</td>
<td>416,592</td>
<td>Williams-Ellis et al.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowestoft</td>
<td>Port</td>
<td>41,768</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>5,640</td>
<td>15/6</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Southgate 1942; Borough Engineer 1944;</td>
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</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rateable Value</th>
<th>Rates</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nuneaton</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>46,305</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>11,767</td>
<td>16/6</td>
<td>Moon &amp; Gibberd ( apparently not published</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>47,863</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4,142</td>
<td>14/5</td>
<td>Greenwood (City Engineer &amp; Surveyor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worcester</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>50,497</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5,394</td>
<td>12/-</td>
<td>Minoprio &amp; Spencely (City Council, 1946, 10/-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Yarmouth</td>
<td>Port/historic</td>
<td>54,220</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>4,534</td>
<td>18/-</td>
<td>Parker (Borough Council, 1943, 1/-)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastbourne</td>
<td>Resort</td>
<td>57,435</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>9/-</td>
<td>Local Committee report (Not formally published)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: population, area, rates and rateable values taken from *Municipal Year Book* 1945; other details from P.J. Larkham and K.D. Lilley, 2001, *op. cit.* [9]. Population refers to 1931 Census. Rates refer to general rates (excludes special levies). Includes some towns where replanning activity did not lead to formal ‘plans’. Although many places suffered small-scale raids, damage is only noted where it led to large-scale replanning using the Declaratory Order procedure.