

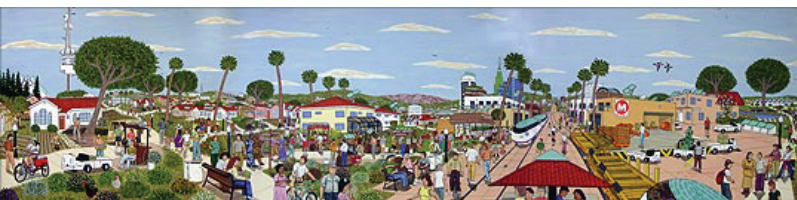
# Regeneration and Economic Development: Never the Same Again

**Just as the House of Commons will never be the same again, so our local and national economies need to plan their recovery from the present recession in a wholly different set of conditions and expectations.**

The government has recently acknowledged that economic sustainability is a prerequisite for social and environmental sustainability (Draft PPS4, published 5 May 2009), but a sustainable economy will not grow in a business as usual fashion, because...

- the demands of reducing our environmental footprint (three planets required to support the UK's way of life) have to be faced by business, government, schools, households...
- the well-established roles of places – such as the Great West Road and Hatton Garden, where SPA has been working recently - have changed and will go on changing.
- communities are seeking more autonomy (City regions and community strategies) and more of a role in the way their locality is shaped.
- there are new business opportunities in green technologies and creative industries such as the media and other new competitive advantages for the UK in the globalised economy.
- people, the primary resource of today's knowledge-led activities, are looking for new ways of working in order to express their creative potential.

***In brief any progress on “thinking global, acting local” depends on local insight and on insight that is underpinned by a willingness to see things afresh.***



For creative thinking, backed by thorough analysis, on challenging regeneration situations, contact SPA:

What does this mean for the ways in which we tackle the regeneration of important places and local economies in the UK?

- We need a finer-grained understanding of the place and its people: its history and character, what it has been good at in the past and how that quality might be used to address the challenges of today and tomorrow.
- We need to reinterpret the assets of the area - a canal and its towpath, nearby settlements and a highly conspicuous location - to assess how they can address the new challenges.
- We need to take a holistic view of the potential of sites at a local level: are there opportunities for renewable energy production (for supply to local users)...
- We need to examine solutions to transport problems other than in transport terms, e.g. by giving the local workforce priority in the allocation of new housing (as is proposed at Dunsfold Park, see below).

In several recent assignments SPA has unpicked the fabric and dynamics of localities and identified new ways to address the challenges of sustainable development:

- In Hayes, West London, and Hatton Garden, Central London, we identified sectors that offered potential for the development of small and medium enterprises.
- In Luton we identified the role of an in-town quarter in the housing, economic and retail/services markets and prepared a development brief to maximise the area's contribution to sustainability objectives.
- At Dunsfold Park in Surrey, an eco-village designed to be an exemplar of sustainable development (and supported by Friends of the Earth nationally and locally), we prepared the brief for the development of housing, employment, retailing and community services, such that self-containment of trips within the village and within the local Cranfold cluster of villages, would be maximised.
- In Brentford we are advising on an innovative range of employment activities for an 11-acre canal-side site, activities that have the potential to be both viable commercially and to contribute to the regeneration of Brentford and the Great West Road.

## Strategic Planning Advice

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