**Notes and associated materials related to the research**

This project focuses on processes of development (its planning and governance) in one sub-region on the edge of the South East of England. Interviews were conducted with a range of local and regional actors (alongside a review of planning and other documents), and discussions were often focused on the detail of development.

Two particular issues deserve to be highlighted in this context, related to the data available here. The first is that the interviews were developed as discussions, rather than that being conducted in structured or semi-structured forms. A check list (attached below) was used to ensure that relevant issues were discussed in each context, but the direction of discussion was also influenced strongly by the ways in which participants responded. And, in practice, both in terms of detail and in terms of breadth, it was accepted that the discussion might go beyond the questions.

The second is that some of the issues being discussed were often confidential, or concerned with commercial matters. This means that the anonymisation process has been complex – and the data has been presented in note as well as transcribed form to reflect this. In some respects the research relies on local knowledge and the exploration of local networks. For good reasons, the anonymisation of data makes that more difficult.

Copies of the consent form associated with the project, of the project’s information sheet and of the check list of questions used are attached below.



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**Contact information**

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**Consent Form**

**Title:** *Tensions and Prospects for Sustainable Housing Growth*

1. The aims and objectives of the above study have been explained to me and I have had had the opportunity to ask questions *(please tick box)*
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason *(please tick box)*
3. I agree to take part in the above study *(please tick box)*
4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded, and for detailed notes to be taken *(please tick box)*
5. I agree to being anonymously quoted in publications *(please tick box)*
6. I understand that the researcher will hold all information and data collected securely and in confidence and that all efforts will be made to ensure that I cannot be identified as a participant in the study (except as might be required by law) and I give permission for the researchers to hold relevant personal data *(please tick box)*

**Name of participant:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**



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**Tensions and prospects for sustainable housing growth. A case study of Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes**

This sheet aims to provide you with more information about our project – what it’s about, who is involved and what we hope to produce. We hope you will find it useful – if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch (contact details are provided at the end of the sheet).

**What is this project about?**

The project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. It is a two-year project and began in January 2012. It focuses on housing growth on the edge of the South East of England through two contrasting economic and policy periods: economic growth/property boom under New Labour; followed by recession/recovery under the Coalition. It reflects back on a period of optimism about growth and sustainable communities; as well as considering the recent period of recession, retrenchment and pessimism about the possibility of delivering sustainable housing growth on a significant scale. We are interested in identifying positive possibilities as well as reflecting on tensions and challenges.

Concentrating our attention on the experience of Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes allows us to look at an area in which housing development and demand for new housing remain significant. In this context, the project aims to identify and review the plans and proposals for making sustainable urban extensions and other housing developments (both before and after 2008/9), and the extent to which they have been realised. We are interested in exploring the relationship between planning and the housing sector, the ways in which public and private interests may work together or against each other in the process of development.

**What does the research involve?**

Alongside a review of published and unpublished plans and other documents, we are undertaking interviews with a wide range of those involved in local government and other agencies, with those involved in undertaking development and with representatives of community groups.

**Who is conducting the project?**

The project team is based at the The Open University (Allan Cochrane) and the University of Northampton (Bob Colenutt and Martin Field). The team members all have knowledge, expertise and experience of researching in the areas of housing, sustainability, urban studies and geography.

**What will we produce?**

Throughout the project, we will publish updates and briefing notes on our project website. We will stage various events at which our findings will be shared with both academics and the wider community, and feedback will be obtained. Where appropriate we will also share our findings with the media, and we will use our research to write academic articles and conference papers. Ultimately, we hope our findings will inform local and national government policy.

**How can you find out more?**

Please contact Allan Cochrane for more details or with any questions at allan.cochrane@open.ac.uk or 01908 654537

More information on the project can be found at <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/tensionsandprospects/>

**Questions Check List**

**Master Copy**

Attitude of organisation (private, public or community) to housing growth/approach to growth).

Where relevant, outline strategy of organisation. The role played by targets (e.g. why set targets if they are unachievable?).

What happened. Lessons of the SUEs. Effect of recession. How have targets changed to reflect the impact of recession?

Any tensions around growth, and if so what. Tensions between agencies. Tensions within agencies. Public/private. Local/national. Residents/planners.

Resources for the provision of infrastructure/from tax or other sources

Relationship with (other) government/partnership agencies. How effective were the local delivery vehicles? Relationship with neighbouring areas/authorities.

Was Government Agency J a useful/helpful model - problems and possibilities/response to Government Agency J.

Who are the main players/developers locally? What is the role of developers? Are developers sitting on land? Relationship with private sector. Relationship between planners and developers. Why so many objections of house-builders to plans

Role of planners. Or…what can planners achieve? Power of planners/can they influence development and if so, how?

What are/were the available levers (e.g. to planners, developers)? Assets owned by/available to agency (where relevant)

Has the introduction of neighbourhood planning/localism changed things? If so, how?

What are planners/policy makers trying to do when they talk about sustainability/sustainability development? How important is the notion of social sustainability?

What have the implications been of the shift to viability as a planning criterion?

Discussion of particular cases/development sites/areas