

Planning Resilient Communities in Challenging Times
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Development management: evolutionary localism?

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“Instead of planning being seen as the forum and the discipline whereby people can shape the places where they live for the better, it has become a crucible for controversy and acrimony... This Government is proposing **fundamental reform**... we have proposals which go back to first principles - not just tinkering with processes, but rebooting the way we think about planning altogether.”

(my emphasis)

Source: Greg Clark MP Minister for Decentralisation and Cities – Speech 2/2/11 on CLG website [accessed 7/9/11]



‘We want a system that is capable of reaching decisions that command public confidence and which is seen to be open and fair. A system that underpins our desire to improve productivity by being capable of reaching a proper balance between our desire for economic development and for thriving communities. A system that is clear and comprehensible, that comes to robust decisions in sensible time frames... **It is time for fundamental change.**’ [my highlighting]

(DTLR green paper, ‘Planning: delivering a fundamental change’, 2001, paragraph 1.8)



Approach

- Reviewed government and PAS outputs
- Identified and reviewed case studies
- Interviewed LPA in case study locations
- Reflected on practice and theory



Development management: origins and purpose

- Planning ‘failures’ - managerialist ‘solutions’ applied to DC process
- Dev mgt emerged post 2004 - linked to spatial planning approach
- Sought culture change in local authorities (collaborative, proactive)
- Delivering outcomes (maximise benefits and linkages)

“a tool for achieving better outcomes rather than a test of adequacy” (PAS, 2011)

What is development control as opposed to development management?

- receiving and validating a planning application;
- undertaking consultations;
- assessing against policy;
- negotiating between parties;
- preparing a recommendation report;
- issuing the decision notice; and
- enforcing against breaches

CLG's key elements of a development management service

- 1.a positive and proactive approach to place shaping
- 2.puts planning policy into action
- 3.front loading (pre-apps)
- 4.takes a proportionate approach
- 5.effective engagement
- 6.proactive delivery
- 7.monitoring & review of development management outcomes

Source:

CLG 2009 development management consultation document

Delivery mechanisms

Pre-application tasks

- receiving and validating a planning application;
- undertaking consultations;
- assessing against policy;
- negotiating between parties;
- preparing a recommendation report;
- issuing the decision notice; and
- enforcing against breaches

Post decision monitoring

Project mgt tools

What has been the reality of DM?

- Use of PD - LDO / Art. 4
- Councillor participation
- Planning Performance Agreements
- Monitoring and review
- Front loading & culture change through dissemination of best practice



Limiting factors



System failures

- Local Development Orders:
 - Resource implications to establish
 - Administration resource implications
 - Loss of fees due to reduction in application numbers
 - Limitations in application
 - Actual benefit?
- PPAs
- Resources

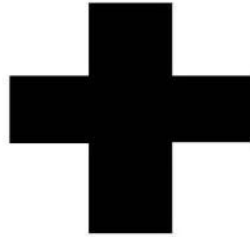


Failures in the profession

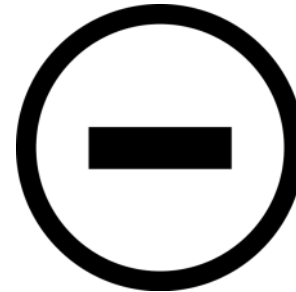
- Culture challenges:
 - Development Control departments remain
 - Developers approach the process in the same manner
 - The perception of rhetoric
 - Training and skills
 - *Resistance to change remains?*



Reflections on the DM project



- Introduced and promoted positive new tools
- Highlighted need for change in culture, skills and training
- Highlighted best practice



- Failed to identify and resolve limitations with processes in practice
- Change management approach

Development Management



Not just another name for
development control



Just another name for
development control...

“Development control must avoid placing unjustified obstacles in the way of any development...it is, and should be seen to be...part of the process of making things happen in the right place at the right time. Local planning authorities are asked therefore to pay greater regard to time and efficiency; to adopt a more positive attitude to planning applications; to facilitate development...”

Circular 22/80 (development control - policy and practice)

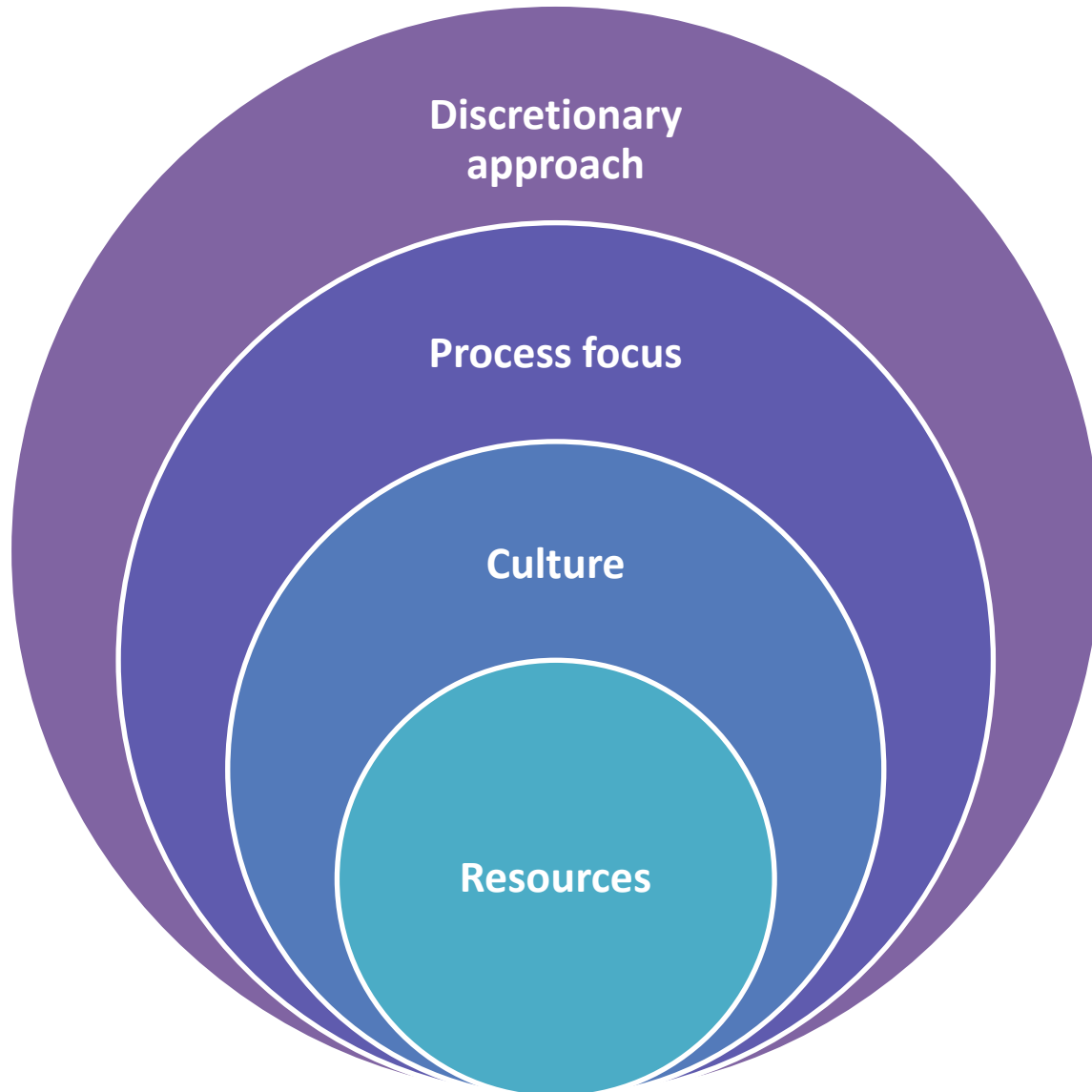


Fundamental change



...of or relating to *essential structure*, function, or facts : RADICAL <*fundamental change*>

Genuine revolution?

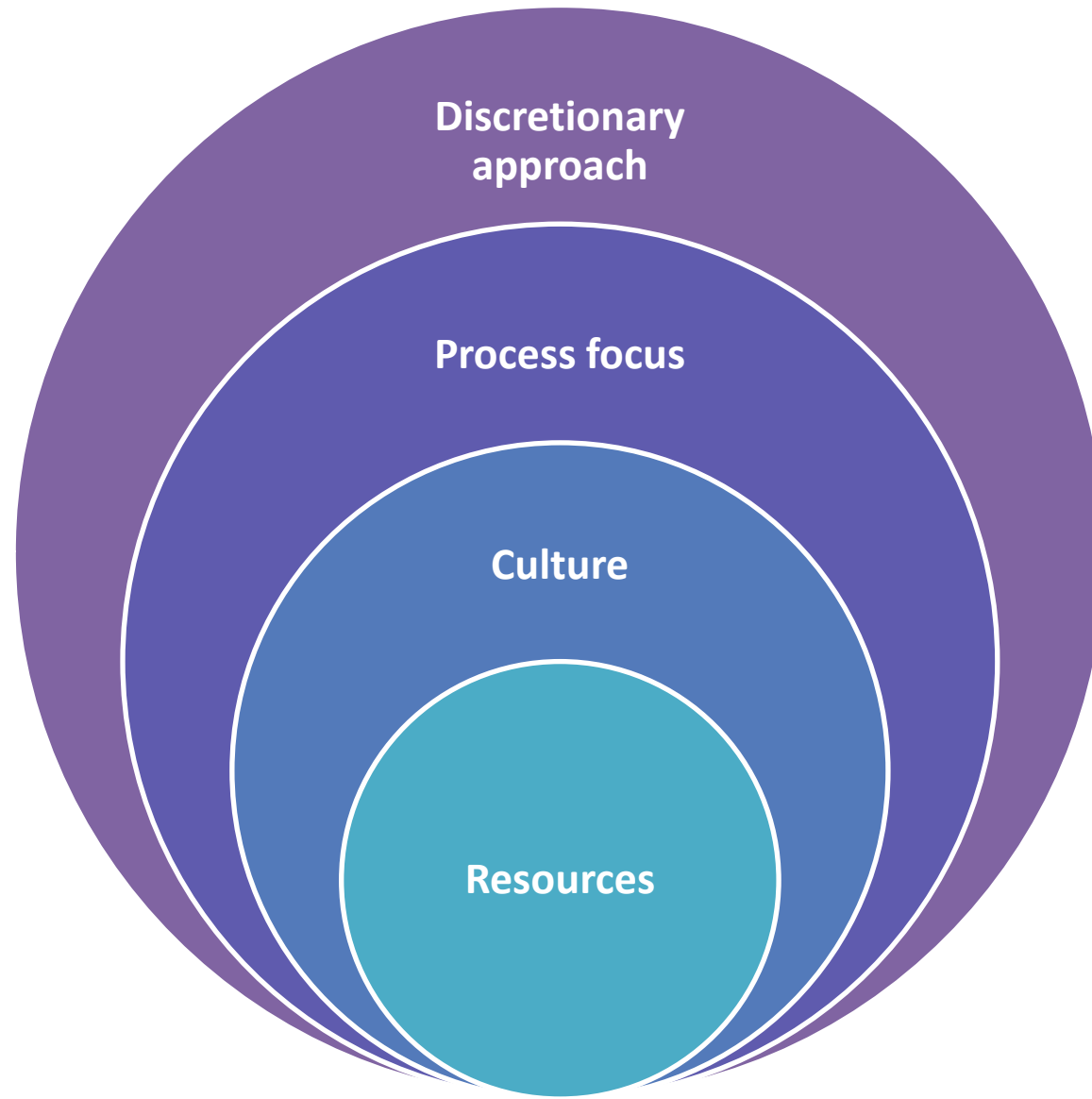




‘if development control didn’t exist it would be necessary to invent something like it’

Prof H.W.E. Davies (1980, in Town Planning Review)

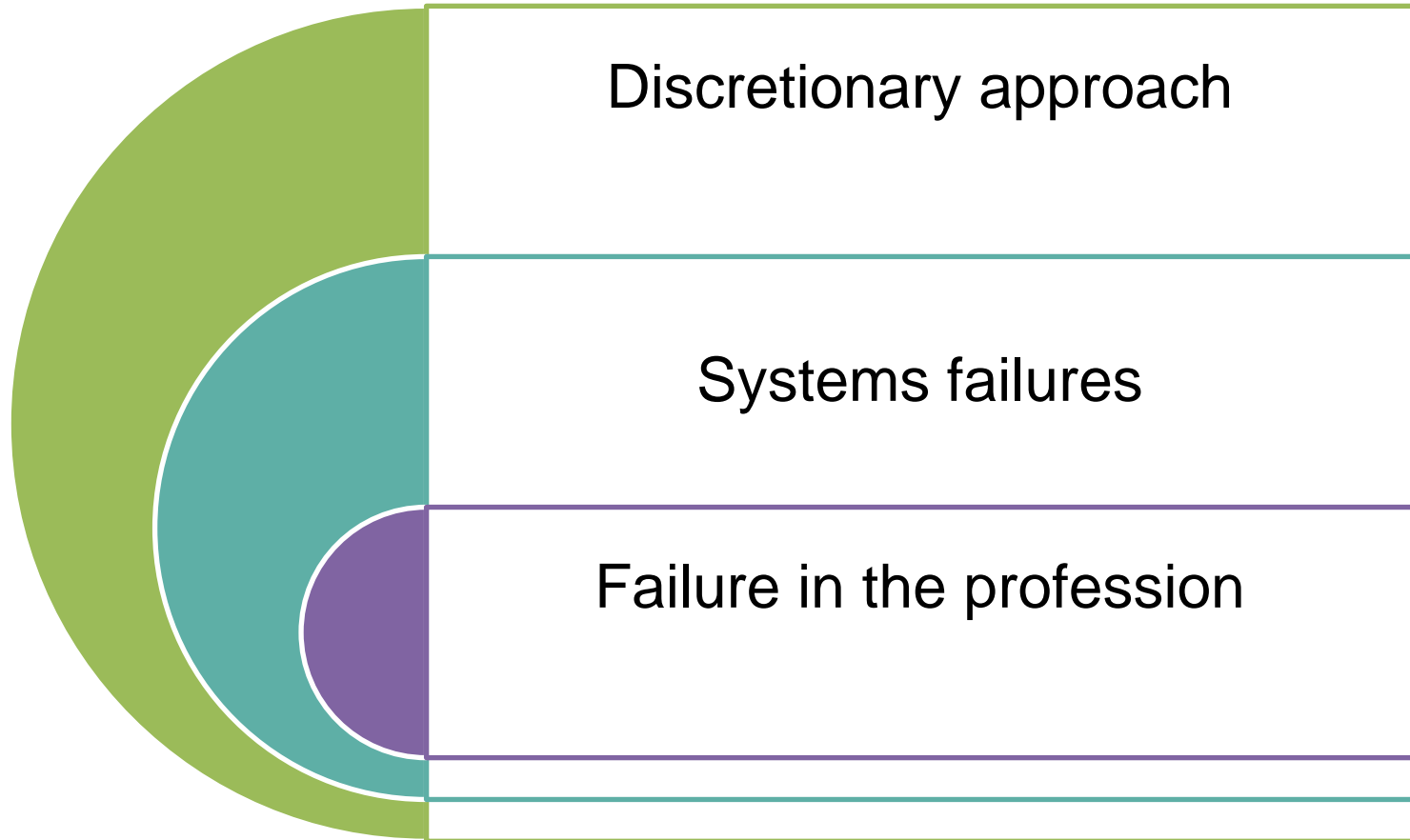
To what extent are the ConDem government bringing about revolution? Or evolution?



ConDem approach:

1. ***Plan led***
2. ***Discretionary system***
3. Front loading
4. Delivery mechanisms
5. Community orientated
6. Councillor involvement
7. Accountability - monitoring and review
8. Challenging LPA culture

Constructive evolution?





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