

NLP has advised on the economics of development for nearly 50 years. This update contains news of recent economics commissions.

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Economic costs of Major Hazard sites

NLP were asked by the Health & Safety Executive to investigate the economic costs of the land use restrictions imposed around major hazard sites, such as gas holders, petrochemical plants, pipelines and some chemical factories. The study will draw on case studies from around the UK, and consultation with local planning authorities, to develop a methodology that can be used to assess the impact of these restrictions on land and property values. It will also inform the HSE's responses on planning proposals and any consideration of changes to consultation areas around hazard sites.



Restrictions around hazard sites can impose economic costs

Local Economic Assessment

In August, CLG published draft guidance on Local Economic Assessment (LEA) to explain what the new statutory LEA duty is intended to achieve, how assessments should be progressed and what they should contain. This LEA duty is expected to commence in April 2010, with first assessments to be completed within 6-9 months. Any updating should be scheduled to coincide with the release of new Census data by 2013 at the earliest. NLP outlined the implications of Local Economic Assessment for clients at a seminar in Newcastle in July.

The Co-operative Group Headquarters, Manchester

In July, NLP submitted a socio-economic assessment of the Co-operative Group's proposed landmark headquarters building in Manchester.

This considered the scheme's contribution to wider economic regeneration and its potential to attract further investment to the city centre. Construction employment and the effect of consolidating many jobs close to the city centre were also assessed.

Once developed, this landmark building will be the largest commercial office building in Manchester accommodating 3,500 staff, marking the first phase of redevelopment and regeneration of the Group's eight hectare site.



Visualisation of Co-operative Group HQ courtesy of 3D Reid Architects



The age of the train

The economic benefit to Tyne and Wear of an advanced manufacturing facility for the UK's largest order of high speed electronic trains was assessed by NLP. Several sites nationally are being considered by Hitachi Trains, which won the £7.5bn contract, and NLP examined the employment and investment benefits of locating in Gateshead. Wider strategic benefits assessed included potential to enhance economic performance in the sub-region and tackling under-employment in manufacturing driven by the current recession.



Welbeck colliery, Bassetlaw

Shaping economic futures in Bassetlaw

NLP completed three studies over the summer for Bassetlaw Council. The first, a Growth Study for the colliery town of Harworth/Bircotes defined its economic and housing potential, including synergies with nearby Robin Hood airport. A feasibility study for Welbeck Colliery, near Mansfield, examined potential after-uses for the site, which is facing closure.

NLP evaluated the potential for a range of uses – including green energy, rail-related industry, residential and mixed use against policy, market demand, and infrastructure factors. Finally, NLP's employment land review assessed the supply and demand for employment space, identifying shortfalls in provision, and recommendations for land release.

A fresh outlook on surviving the downturn

NLP presented papers at a number of conferences and seminars over the summer, tracking the progress of the recession and its implications for policy makers. At a packed breakout session at the RTPi conference in June, NLP presented a 'Survival Kit' to help planners and economic development practitioners respond to the downturn and plan for recovery. NLP's quarterly economic outlook in August was widely welcomed by clients looking for a succinct and insightful perspective on the possible implications of an uncertain economic landscape.

Unpacking the Sub-National Review

On behalf of CLG and BERR (now BIS), NLP facilitated a workshop in May on the future role and content of single regional strategy. The event was attended by representatives of regional planning bodies, Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) from every English region. The workshop helped inform the government's consultation Policy Statement released in August.



Business jet at Farnborough

Safe landing for local house prices

NLP research for Rushmoor Council examined the impact of Farnborough Airport on residential property prices nearby. This followed an earlier NLP economic impact study of the UK's only dedicated business aviation airport, and reviewed international research on airport impacts on property values, coupled with analysis of local house price patterns within and outside the airport flight path.

A unitary perspective on market delivery

NLP is providing economic advice a number of the new unitary councils that emerged in April 2009 following local government reorganisation. NLP's employment land study for Cornwall Council draws together evidence previously prepared for former districts but takes a strategic view of the County's commercial property market and functional economic areas. Meanwhile, a study for the Luton and South Bedfordshire growth area will assess the types and quantities of employment space achievable from new strategic sites and existing industrial areas. These studies reflect the greater focus on market deliverability and economic development issues at a more strategic scale.

Creative prosperity

To support proposals for 'move-on' accommodation for creative businesses in Gateshead, NLP examined the important role that this sector can play in delivering economic growth. NLP analysis showed that growth in creative industries has outstripped other sectors in recent years, so that attracting a greater proportion of such businesses could enhance local economic performance. Creative industries also have spin-off effects on competitiveness, acting as 'early adopters' of innovative technologies that then 'spill over' into other industries.



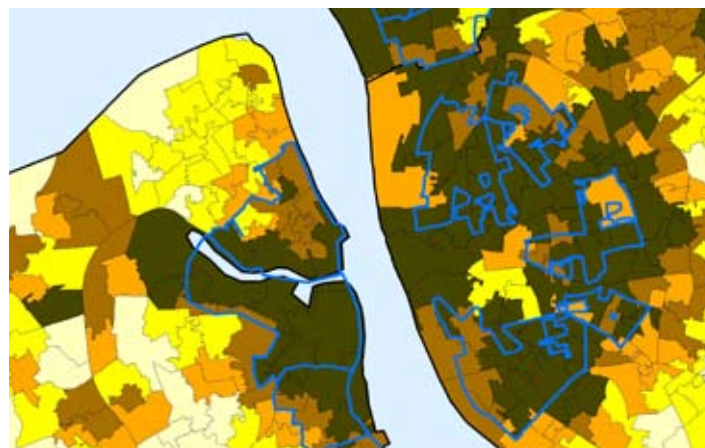
Creative Industries Centre, 3 Acre Park, Gateshead
Image courtesy of Hopper Howe Sadler Architects

Matching Homes and Jobs in the Peterborough Sub-Region

In August, NLP completed this study considering the alignment of employment and housing to bridge the gap between economic and household growth in the evidence bases of four local authorities - Peterborough, South Kesteven, South Holland, and Rutland - spanning two regions. NLP examined the implications of future development on employment sites for the amount, type, tenure, and distribution of new housing, taking account of migration and commuting factors.

Assessing regeneration outcomes in Liverpool

NLP is helping the NewHeartlands Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder to review changes in long term regeneration outcomes over the life of the programme, including demographic, housing, economic and social indicators. The NLP study includes a review of the impact of the major financial and housing market changes during 2007-09. This work will help NewHeartlands develop its business case for future investment to support long term regeneration.



NewHeartlands - analysis of job seekers allowance claimants