The Location of Development

This is the largest study of its kind. It maps and analyses the location of permissions for over 220,000 new homes in 12 fast-growing city-regions between 2012 and 2017.

The UK faces a number of long-term challenges. Many of our towns and cities lag behind their European counterparts in terms of economic productivity, while the benefits of growth are spread unevenly across society. An ageing population is placing an increasing strain on healthcare systems, while problems like obesity and air pollution are on the rise. Climate change is creating new environmental risks, and making radical emissions reductions and adaptation measures ever more necessary.

Planning is about delivering sustainable development, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) includes a wide range of economic, social and environmental objectives which include boosting economic growth, promoting sustainable transport, tackling climate change and improving public health.

Planning helps to deliver these objectives by ensuring that development supports sustainable settlement patterns and urban form. But to help us measure performance, we need better data and analysis on the location and scale of planning permissions for new housing.

This study maps planning permissions for schemes of 50+ houses in twelve fast-growing city-regions. Our analysis shows the scale of housing permissions and their location in relation to major employment clusters, railway stations the existing built-up area.

These metrics can help us to understand some of the spatial factors that influence the sustainability of development patterns.

The twelve city-regions have a combined population of 11.4 million in 2016, up by 5% since 2012. They contain over 5.25 million jobs, an increase of 11% since 2011. Between 2012 and 2017, planning permission was granted for over 300,000 new houses in the city-regions. 73% of these permissions were on sites of 50+ houses, representing. It is these major sites which are included in the spatial analysis.

Key findings

The study was divided into two rounds to capture how patterns of development have changed since the NPPF came into force in 2012.

Round One: Jan 2012 to Sep 2015 (45 months)

Total number of schemes mapped: **704**

Total number of housing units: **165,607**

Round Two: Oct 2015 to Sep 2017 (24 months)
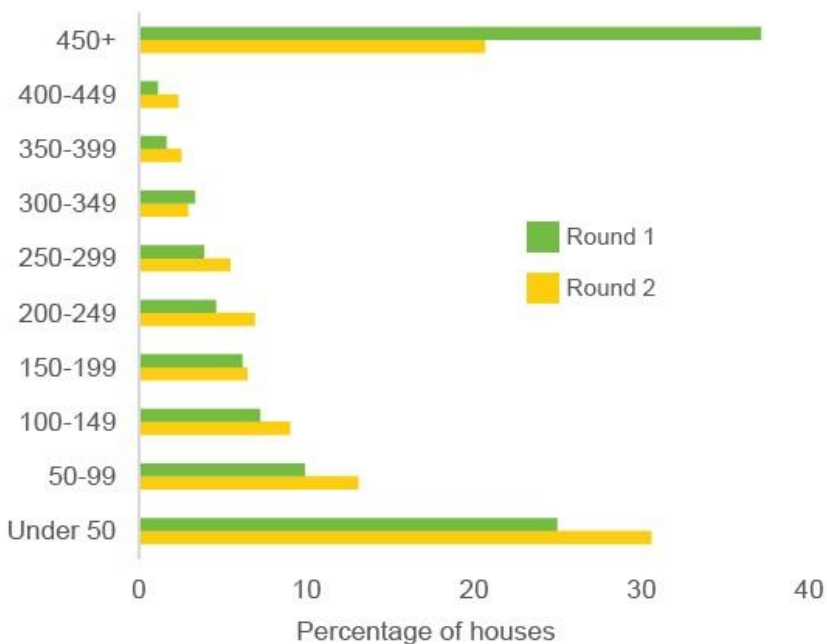
Total number schemes mapped: **336**

Total number of housing units: **61,149**

Across the city-regions, we found that new housing is being located relatively close to jobs. In both rounds of the study, 74% of permissions were within 10km of a major employment cluster. The proportion of permitted houses located over 20km from a major employment cluster decreased from 5% to 3%.

We also found that, across the city-regions, the majority of new housing is not being permitted within easy walking or cycling distance of a railway, metro or underground station. However, the proportion of permissions within 800 metres of a station increased from 14% to 20% over the course of the study.

Across the city-regions, the proportion of permissions located within existing built-up areas increased from 46% to 68% over the course of the study, and more were delivered on smaller schemes.
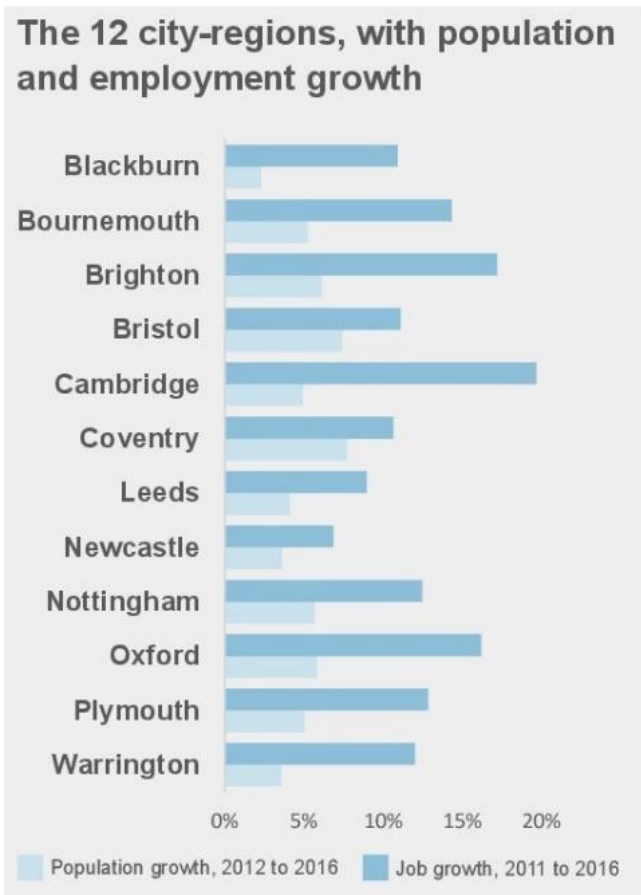

% of homes granted permitted by scheme size

Are housing permissions close to major areas of employment?

Jan 2012 to Sep 2015

73%

Oct 2015 to Sep 2017

74%

- Over 20km
- 10km to 20km
- Under 10km

Are housing permissions close to railway stations?

14%

20%

- Over 2km
- 800m to 2km
- Under 800m

Are housing permissions located within the built-up area?

46%

68%

- Outside built-up area
- Green belt
- Within built-up area

Spatial analysis covering permissions on sites with 50 or more houses

The 12 city-regions, with population and employment growth

Blackburn
Bournemouth
Brighton
Bristol
Cambridge
Coventry
Leeds
Newcastle
Nottingham
Oxford
Plymouth
Warrington

0%   5%   10%   15%   20%

- Population growth, 2012 to 2016
- Job growth, 2011 to 2016

You can download an A3 infographic with key data, maps and spatial analysis for each of the city-regions included in the study.
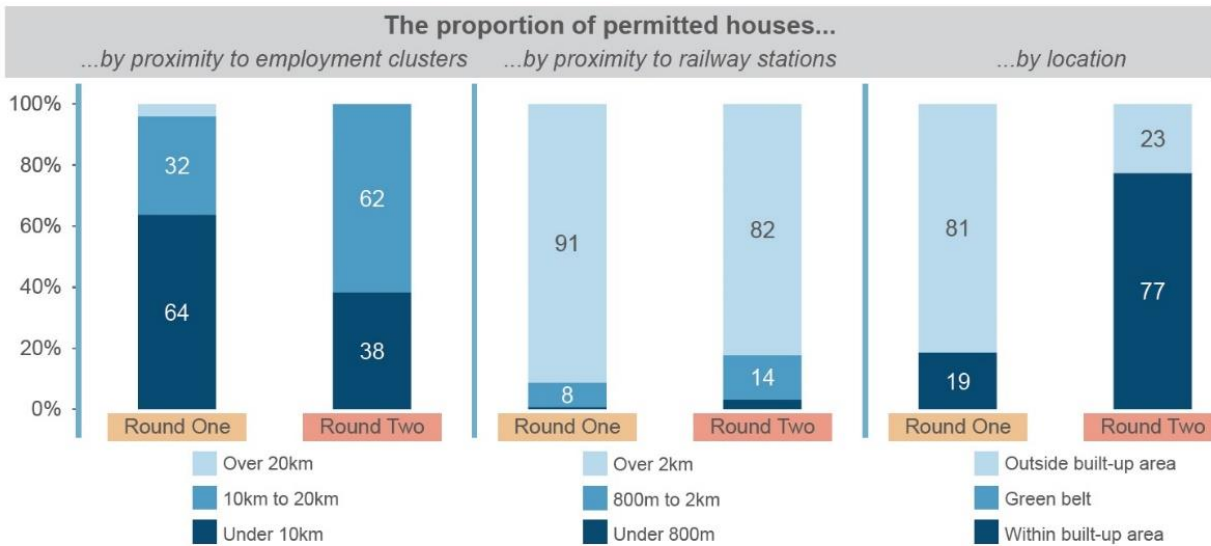
The infographics contain:

- Data on population and job growth for each local authority
- Maps of planning permissions granted between 2012 and 2017
- The average number of permissions granted per month in each local authority
- The proximity of permitted houses to employment clusters and railway stations
- The proportion of permitted houses located with the existing urban area
- A breakdown of planning permissions by scheme size

Find out more
rtpi.org.uk/locationofdevelopment

City-region analysis - Oxford
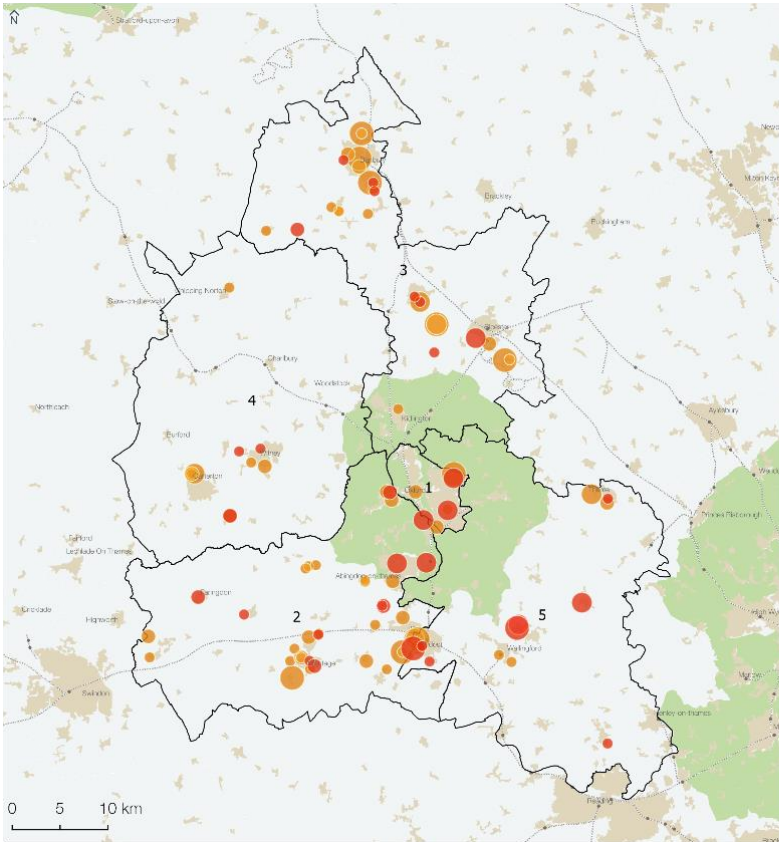
Oxford

Planning Permissions
2015-2017 (no. of units)
- ● 50 - 99
- ● 100 - 199
- ● 200 - 299
- ● 300 +
- ○ Planning Permissions
  2012-2015 (no. of units)
- Railway
- Rail Station
- Urban Area
- Green Belt
- National Parks
- District boundary
1 - Oxford
2 - Vale of White Horse
3 - Cherwell
4 - West Oxfordshire
5 - South Oxfordshire

The proportion of permitted houses...

...by proximity to employment clusters

	Round One	Round Two
Over 20km		
10km to 20km	32	62
Under 10km	64	38

...by proximity to railway stations

	Round One	Round Two
Over 2km	91	82
800m to 2km		
Under 800m	8	14

...by location

	Round One	Round Two
Outside built-up area	81	23
Green belt		
Within built-up area	19	77

For the full version of the report

www.rtpi.org.uk/locationofdevelopment

Find out more
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