



# Spatial Economics Research Centre

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## Sustainable Development and Local Plans

The UK government is to introduce a [presumption in favour of sustainable development](#) in to the planning system. In practice, what this means is that there will be a presumption in favour of development providing that it is consistent with a Local Plan.

This will encourage councils to keep their local plans updated and will give developers certainty. This is a good thing. Some have pointed out that this doesn't get us very far in terms of [defining sustainable development](#). Whether or not this leads to more or less development and whether this new development is in any sense sustainable will then, of course, depend on the local plan.

Some commentators are reading these changes as a green light for development. In practice unresolved tensions at the heart of the government's approach to [planning, nature and economic growth](#) mean it is difficult to say which way the balance will swing.

Posted by [Prof Henry G. Overman](#) on [Friday, June 17, 2011](#)

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