

Governing and Planning for adaptive reuse of buildings: Opportunities and pitfalls

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**Net zero
and carbon
neutral
agendas**

**Economic
development,
regeneration and
entrepreneurship**

WHY?

**Historic value,
collective memory,
'place'**

**Structural change
e.g. housing crisis,
office vacancies**

HOW?

REGULATION

Planning regs –
change of use /
zoning

Building regs –
fire, energy
performance etc

GOVERNANCE

Market shaping

Partnership

Knowledge
gathering and
sharing

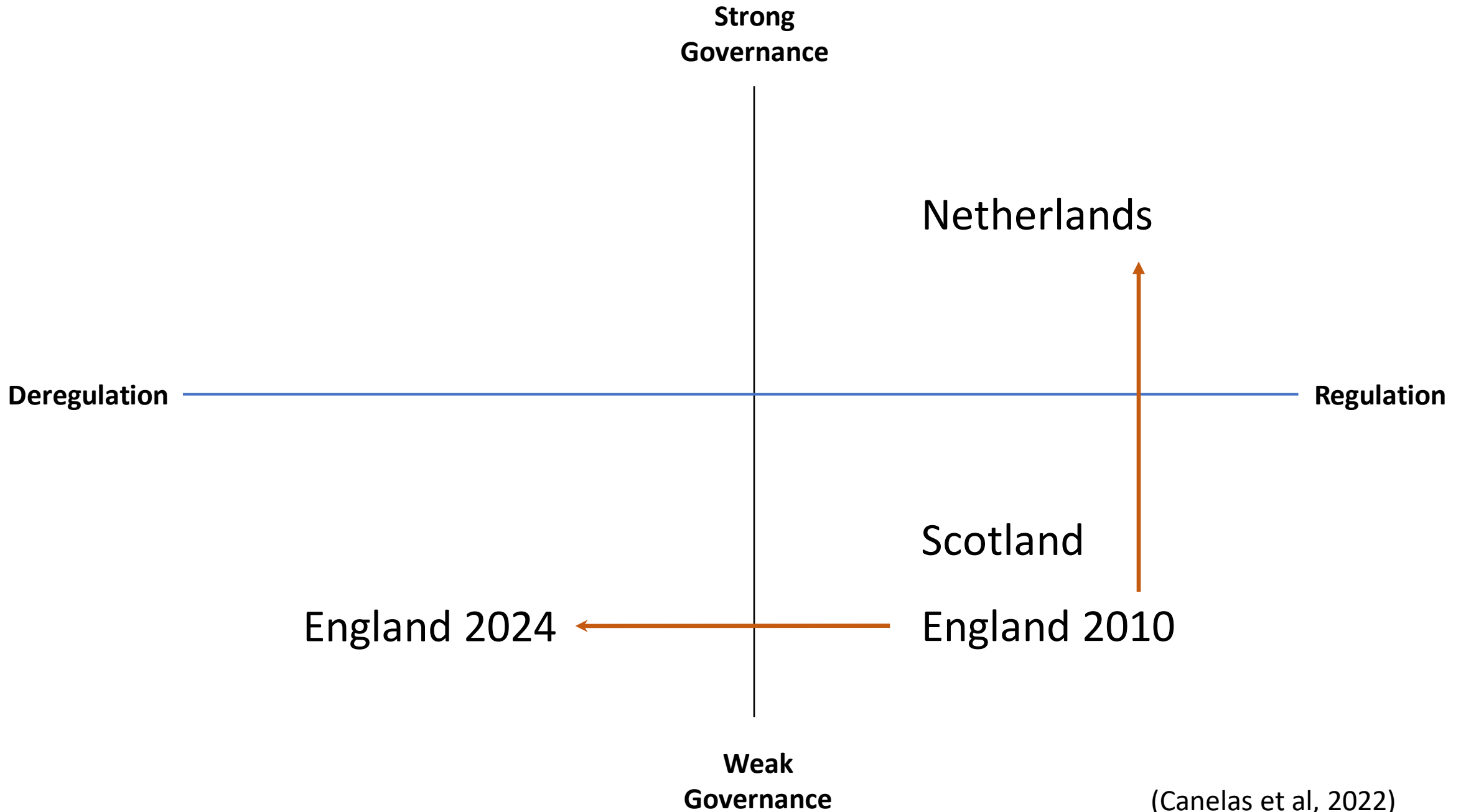
Fiscal intervention

DE-REGULATION

Market-driven

Assumes
regulation is the
problem

Only ever partial

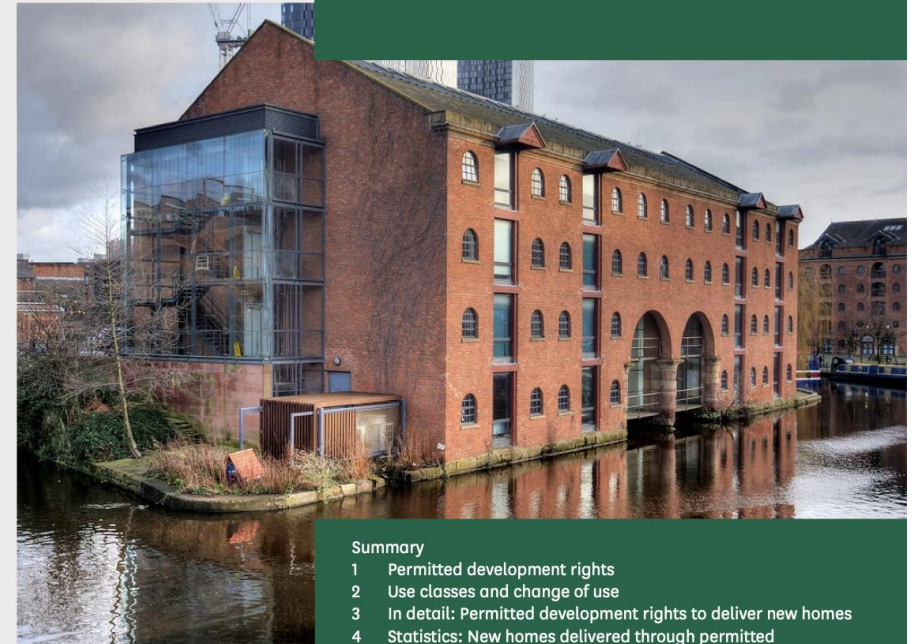


(Canelas et al, 2022)

De-regulation in England

- **Permitted development:** allows more minor development to take place without planning e.g small house extensions
- Extended since 2013 to include change of use of buildings [under system of ‘prior approval’]
- Initially office to residential
- Now all commercial to residential (Mar 2024)
- And changes within the commercial classes
- **Deregulating short-term lets** – facilitating AirBnB

Planning in England: Permitted development and change of use



Summary

- 1 Permitted development rights
- 2 Use classes and change of use
- 3 In detail: Permitted development rights to deliver new homes
- 4 Statistics: New homes delivered through permitted development rights
- 5 Views on permitted development rights to deliver new homes

Drivers: perceived opportunities

We're determined that ... everything is done to get the homes we need built ... Today's measures will mean we can tap into the potential of underused buildings to offer new homes for first-time buyers and families long into the future, breathing new life into neighbourhoods.

[Minister for Housing and Planning, 2015]

The permitted development right for the change of use from Commercial, Business and Service to residential use (Class MA) is helping to support housing delivery, diversify our high streets and support the wider economy.

[Government response to select committee report, 2023]



May 2018

Assessing the impacts of extending permitted development rights to office-to-residential change of use in England



rics.org/research

Research into the quality standard of homes delivered through change of use permitted development rights

Dr Ben Clifford, Dr Patricia Canelas, Dr Jessica Ferm and Dr Nicola Livingstone
Bartlett School of Planning, UCL

Professor Alex Lord and Dr Richard Dunning
Department of Geography and Planning, University of Liverpool

July 2020



Healthy Homes? Thirty Examples of Permitted Development Conversions

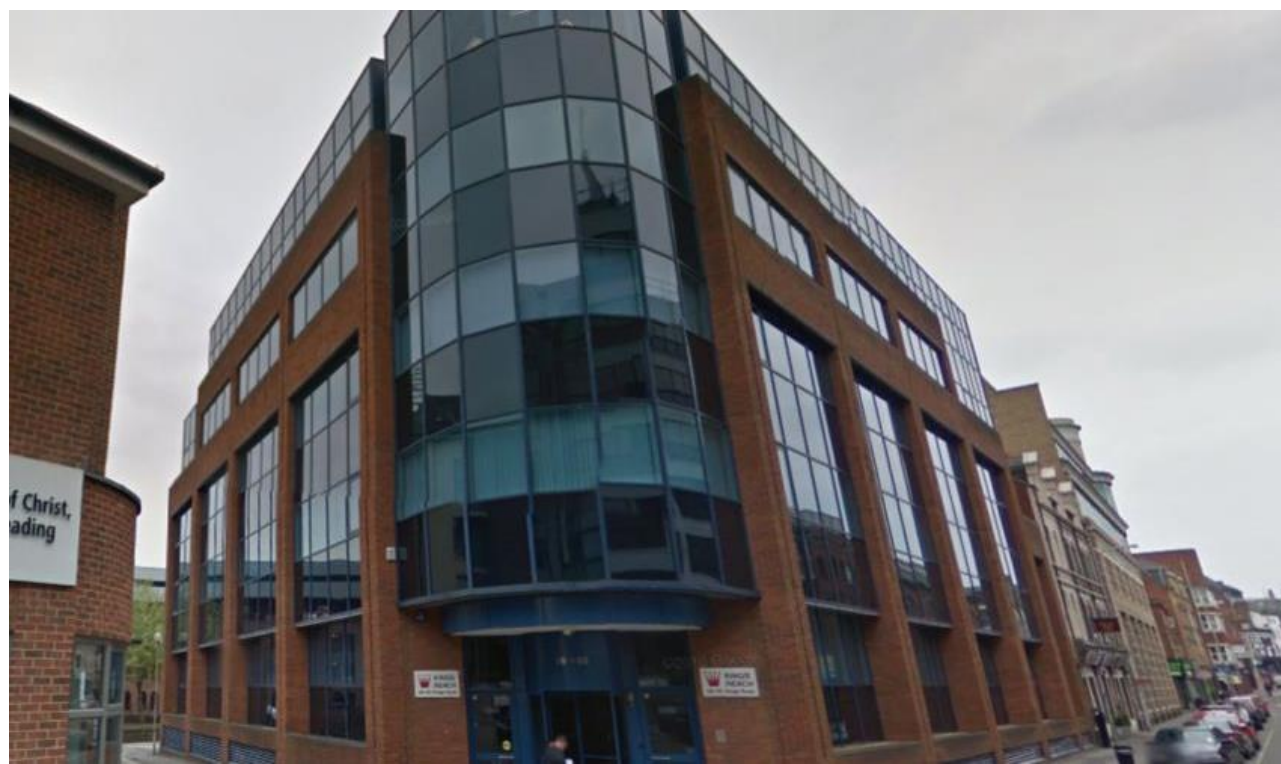


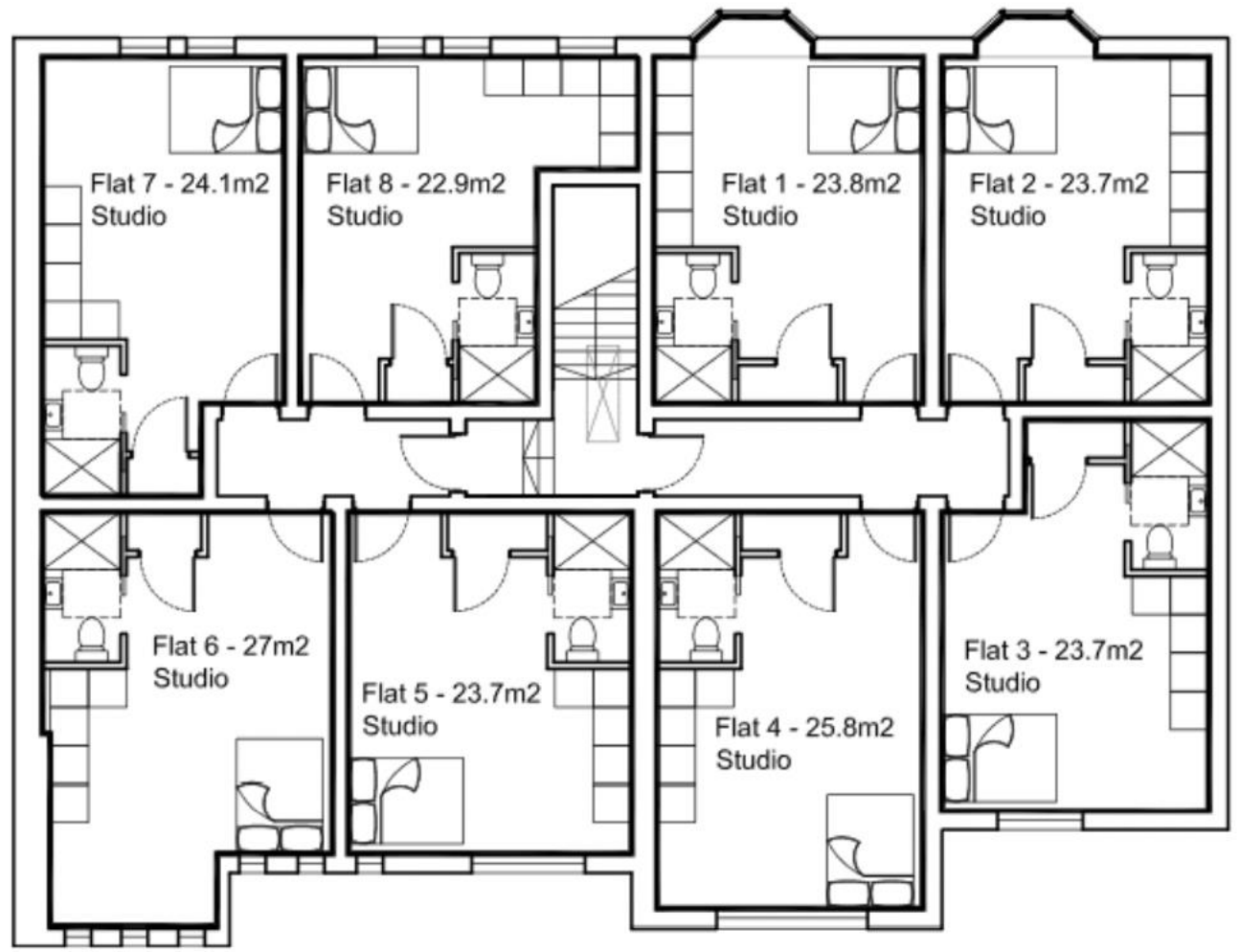
Analysis by Dr Ben Clifford, assisted by Maclean Timmer and Yanzhen Zhu with support from Dr Jessica Ferm

Bartlett School of Planning, UCL

September 2019







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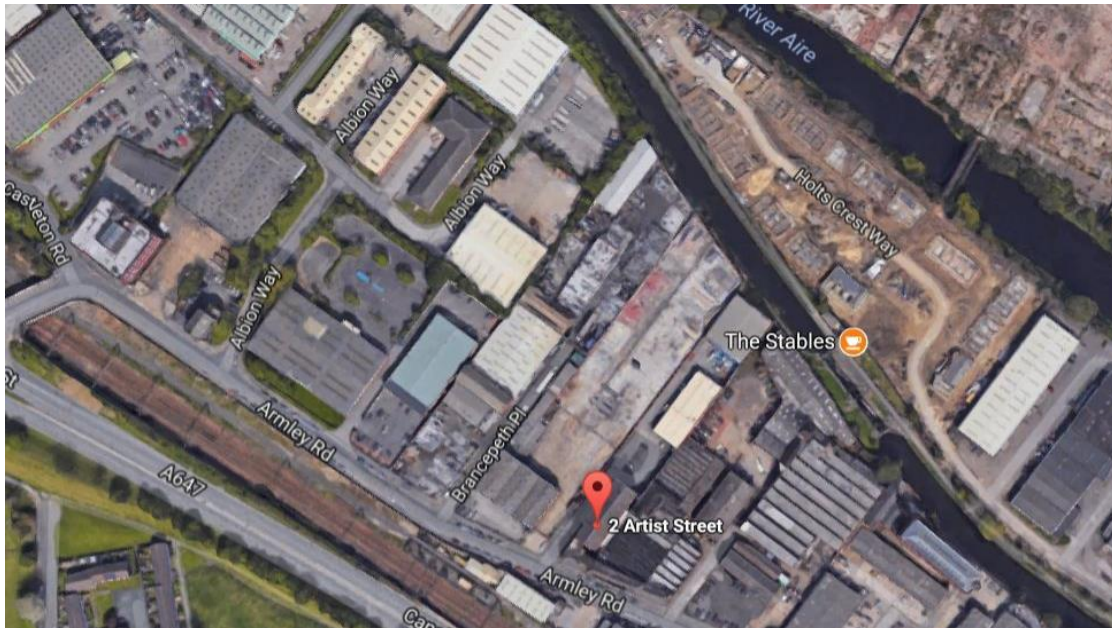
SALES

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SALES







Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

Oral evidence: Permitted Development Rights, HC 32

Monday 17 May 2021

*“What underlines the Local Government Association perspective on this is a recognition that there will be **market demand and market pressure for change of use of different types of buildings**. That is appropriate. In a mature relationship between communities, local authorities and developers, we would expect to see change of use over time. What permitted development rights are doing at the moment is **undermining local authorities’ really important role in shaping their places and supporting the delivery of affordable housing, as well as thriving high streets and spaces for businesses to operate.**”*

*“Shelter’s line on this is quite clear: **the development of new homes is never a trivial or minor matter**. We are completely against the idea that you should ever have new housing being delivered through permitted development.”*

Legislative update 2024

- The **floorspace limit removed** for the existing building changing use (of up to 1,500 sqm)
- The limitation requiring the building to be **vacant for a continuous period of at least 3 months** immediately prior to the date of the application for prior approval, will be removed entirely.
- The lack of a requirement to provide **affordable housing** via this permitted development rights route remains in place.
- The requirement to comply with **National Space Standards** also remains in place.

Conclusions

- Have focused here mostly on the question of HOW the state facilitates adaptive re-use
- **Pitfalls** of deregulatory approach pursued in England – *affordable housing and local economies*
- Housing crisis and focusing on increasing housing supply and numbers at any cost
- **Opportunities** presented by adaptive re-use compromised