

# Enterprise Zones in the UK since 1980

## Introduction

This policy briefing has three objectives:

- To compare the key aspects of the 'original' and 'new' Enterprise Zones ("zones").
- To summarise evaluation work done on the 'original' zones.
- To outline the current status of debate on the role and value of Enterprise Zones.

It will be of interest to:

- Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and their partners and stakeholders, including:
  - o Local authorities
  - o Businesses interested in Enterprise Zones
  - o The research and intelligence community looking to support LEPs
- Anyone interested in learning more about Enterprise Zones.
- Anyone interested in economic development and Localism.

To help readers access the large body of research and information about Enterprise Zones, an extended bibliography is included at the end of this briefing. A list of all Enterprise Zones is also provided.

## How do the 'original' Enterprise Zones compare to the 'new' ones?

Enterprise Zones were a politically sensitive issue when originally pursued in the early 1980s: the Coalition Government's plan for a new generation of Enterprise Zones is no less controversial.

Firstly, 'new' zones are compared to the 'original' ones, showing key differences and similarities in policy, incentives and objectives. This report outlines the Coalition Government's policy and objectives for their 'new' Enterprise Zone programme. The 'original' 1980s and 1990s Enterprise Zones are then described, followed by a summary of evaluations carried out into them and their recommendations for current Enterprise Zone policy.

There are both general and specific differences and similarities between the original and new Enterprise Zones. Whilst the 1980's and 1990's zones have been the subject of several evaluations, similar investigation is not yet possible for the new Enterprise Zones. Furthermore, key legislation such as the Localism Bill may change before becoming law, thereby altering the way that the 'new' Enterprise Zones will work.

The development of Local Enterprise Partnerships as a mechanism to manage, support and promote Enterprise Zones may allow individual zones to develop according to local needs. This is likely to include linkages with social and economic policy in the wider area.

It is likely, owing to the Government's Localism agenda and desire to see Local Enterprise Partnerships take the lead in economic development in their areas that evaluation of the success or failure of the 'new' zones will take time to emerge and that impacts will be different in different areas. This appears to be the case for the 'original' zones. Furthermore, economic policy will develop and this will have additional effects on the activities and outcomes of Enterprise Zones.

The following table compares key elements of the 'original' and 'new' Enterprise Zones.

1980s/1990s 'original' Enterprise Zones	Coalition Government 'New' Enterprise Zones
<i>Policy Background</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To secure physical and economic regeneration in areas resistant to improvement using existing policies and incentives or through market forces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To secure economic growth and job creation, but not specifically tackle dereliction, in areas that "have missed out in the last ten years" in terms of untapped economic potential.</li> </ul>
<i>Key Objectives</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased output and employment by reducing costs to business.</li> <li>Regeneration as a result of property-related subsidies and incentives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Securing economic growth and job creation by designating zones with reduced tax and regulatory burdens.</li> <li>Connecting Zones to wider economic strategy</li> <li>Minimising business displacement into Zones</li> </ul>
<i>Benefits and Incentives</i>	
<p><b>On industrial and commercial property;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% corporation and income tax allowances for capital expenditure.</li> <li>Exemption from Business Rates.</li> </ul> <p><b>General incentives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exemption from Development Land Tax.</li> <li>Reduced planning burdens.</li> <li>Exemption from industrial training levies and associated requirements to supply information.</li> <li>Quicker resolution of applications for certain Customs facilities.</li> <li>Fewer government requests for statistical information.</li> <li>Access to marketing and promotion.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Main incentives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business rate discounts up to £275,000 per business over a five year period.</li> <li>Local authority retention of business rate growth for at least 25 years, to deliver LEP priorities.</li> <li>Simplified planning regime, probably using Local Development Orders.</li> <li>Development of superfast broadband.</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional options</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced capital allowances for plant and machinery in the manufacturing sector.</li> <li>Tax Increment Financing for infrastructure development.</li> <li>UKTI support for inward investment and new trade opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government intends to align RGF and ERDF funding more closely to LEP and Enterprise Zone needs.</li> <li>LEP start-up and capacity fund support LEP and therefore Enterprise Zones' development.</li> </ul>
<i>Governance</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management by 'Zone Authority' usually the local authority or a development corporation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Enterprise Partnerships expected to take a strategic lead.</li> </ul>
<i>Size and Location</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to 450 hectares, on vacant land or sites in a state of decay.</li> <li>Locations throughout the United Kingdom, classifiable as urban, accessible, or rural.</li> <li>38 Zones designated between 1981 and 1996</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Between 50-150 hectares.</li> <li>11 Zones identified already in large cities / city regions.</li> <li>13 more Zones recently selected via a competitive bidding process.</li> <li>England only at this time owing to nature of devolved administration.</li> </ul>

(1) George Osborne, "We're building a better future for Britain" speech, Cardiff, 5/3/11

(2) HM Treasury and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) (2011) "Plan for Growth 2011" TSO, p37

(3) Urban Research Summary No.4 1995, Department of Environment, "Final Evaluation of Enterprise Zones" archived at: <http://bit.ly/oiESKV> (accessed 1/8/11)

# Coalition Government Enterprise Zones

## Policy background

The 'new' Enterprise Zones were originally announced in a March 2011 speech by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The 2011 Budget and joint **BIS/Treasury "Plan for Growth"** added more detail. The Government are clear that Enterprise Zones should stimulate economic growth and job creation. A principal aim is not to tackle "local dereliction." The devolved administrations would also be encouraged to consider setting up their own Enterprise Zones.<sup>(4)</sup>

It was originally intended to create 21 zones: 11 in areas chosen by the Government and 10 through a bidding process on sites put forward by LEPs. However, 13 bids were successful for the second phase, bringing the total to 24 so far.

An **Enterprise Zone Prospectus** was published in March 2011 for LEPs with an Enterprise Zone or considering bidding for one.<sup>(5)</sup>

The Government's top policy objective is to secure economic growth and considers Enterprise Zones "a powerful expression of [that] reform programme."<sup>(6)</sup> The Government has also stated that it expects the private sector to be the key player in securing growth and job creation: Enterprise Zones will support that process by operating free from barriers to growth and with reduced tax and regulatory burdens.<sup>(7)</sup>

The Government's approach hinges on 4 issues:<sup>(8)</sup>

- **Opportunity** – looking at areas with genuine economic opportunity.
- **Long-term viability** – through LEPs the government hopes to secure success beyond the period of business rate subsidy.
- **Strategic fit** – LEPs will be expected to connect Enterprise Zones to wider economic priorities.
- **Minimising displacement** – Whilst believing that competition is healthy, the Government wants to avoid localised competition and displacement in favour of foreign inward investment.

Key benefits and options available to Enterprise Zones:

- Firms that move into a zone between April 2012 and April 2015 will benefit from business rate discounts worth up to £275,000 per business over a five year period.<sup>(9)</sup> This incentive is subject to legislation contained in the **Localism Bill**.
- Local authorities will be able to retain all business rate growth within a zone for at least 25 years, for use in delivering the LEP's economic priorities. This will also ensure that the funds are spent locally.<sup>(10)</sup>

<sup>(4)</sup> HM Treasury and BIS "Plan for Growth" pp36-37

<sup>(5)</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2011) "Enterprise Zone Prospectus" TSO, p2

<sup>(6)</sup> Ibid, p2

<sup>(7)</sup> Ibid, p3

<sup>(8)</sup> Ibid, p3

<sup>(9)</sup> Mellows-Facer, M. (2011) "Standard Note SN/EP/5942: Enterprise Zones" House of Commons Library, p3

<sup>(10)</sup> Ibid, p3

<sup>(11)</sup> DCLG, pp10-11

- Planning regulation will be simplified.<sup>(11)</sup> This is likely to be done through Local Development Orders which exempt certain developments from specific planning consent.<sup>(12)</sup>
- Development of “superfast broadband” in each zone, supported by reducing regulatory burdens but using public funding if necessary.<sup>(13)</sup>

The Government will make other options available, depending on local needs. These will include:<sup>(14)</sup>

- Enhancement of capital allowances for plant and machinery in the manufacturing sector.
- Tax increment financing will allow local authorities to borrow against future increases in business rate receipts. This money will be used for infrastructure development. This incentive will require primary legislation and is being **consulted on at the moment**
- UK Trade and Investment support for inward investment and new trade opportunities.

Enterprise Zones are expected to be between 50 and 150 hectares. The Government may also accept an argument that planning regulation should be simplified beyond the Enterprise Zone area.<sup>(15)</sup>

The Government has also decided to more closely align the Regional Growth Fund and European Regional Development Fund<sup>(16)</sup> to Enterprise Zone and Local Enterprise Partnership needs.

### **Activity so far**

11 Enterprise Zones focussing on city regions and areas of particular need have been allocated already.<sup>(17)</sup> A competitive tendering process was begun to decide where the remaining 10 zones would be located. On 17 August 2011 the Government announced that 13 new zones would be designated, bringing the total to 24.<sup>(18)</sup>

More generally, LEPs are expected to take a strategic economic lead in their areas.<sup>(19)</sup>

In early 2011, DCLG commissioned the British Chamber of Commerce to set up an association of LEPs to regularly meet government ministers to discuss concerns and issues. DCLG provided £300,000 to help them set up the network. Key activity of the LEP network will include:

- Regular meeting with government ministers to discuss concerns and issues. Government funding will be spent setting up meetings and events, and on some secretarial support.
- BCC will produce an annual report for the LEP network, regular newsletters and events.

**(12)** Mellows-Facer, p3

**(13)** DCLG, p6

**(14)** Mellows-Facer, pp3-4

**(15)** DCLG, p4

**(16)** On 1 August the government announced that a recent suspension of the 2007-13 ERDF programme had been lifted: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/regeneration/1957813> (accessed 2/8/11)

**(17)** Birmingham and Solihull, the Black Country, Bristol, Leeds City Region, Liverpool Waters, London (Royal Docks), Manchester Airport, North Eastern, Nottingham, Sheffield City Region, and Teesside

**(18)** Warrington, Newquay, Gosport, Hereford, Sandwich in Kent, Harlow, Oxfordshire, Alconbury Airfield in Cambridgeshire, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Northampton, Hinckley in Leicestershire, Humber Estuary

**(19)** BIS, p13

# Enterprise Zones in the 1980s and 1990s

## Policy background

The enterprise zone concept is credited to Peter Hall, a British urban planning academic. Having viewed the rapid economic growth of several low tax, low regulation ports in Asia – such as Hong Kong and Singapore – he suggested that it might be possible to improve the economic and employment prospects of disadvantaged areas by replicating these conditions in specifically identified zones in the UK.<sup>(20)</sup> Underpinning this idea was the theory that removing barriers to business and enterprise would stimulate growth.

The Conservative Government announced its intention to create Enterprise Zones in the 1980 Budget. The zones were based on capital-based grants, rebates and built environment rather than Hall's vision of low or zero tax and regulation.<sup>(21)</sup> The first Enterprise Zone was designated in 1981. In total 38 zones were designated between 1981 and 1996, each with a lifetime of 10 years. These zones were situated throughout Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

## Objectives of the 'original' Enterprise Zones

The aim of the 'original' Enterprise Zones was to secure physical and economic regeneration in areas with problems that were resistant to solution by market forces or traditional urban and regional policy instruments.<sup>(22)</sup> The Thatcher Government believed that its Enterprise Zone policy would have positive outcomes in two key ways:<sup>(23)</sup>

- Reducing costs to business would mean that output and employment would increase.
- Property-based subsidies would regenerate deprived areas.

To this end several incentives were offered by the 'original' Enterprise Zones, including:<sup>(24)</sup>

- 100% corporation and income tax allowances for capital expenditure on industrial and commercial construction.
- Exemption from Business Rates on industrial and commercial property.
- Exemption from Development Land Tax, but this was abolished in 1984 (levied until March 1985 on the development value realised from land disposals).<sup>(25)</sup>
- Reduced planning burdens: developments that adhered to the published scheme for each zone would not require planning consent.
- Exemption from industrial training levies and associated requirements to supply information to government.
- Quicker resolution of applications for certain Customs facilities.
- Fewer government requests for statistical information.

Many zones also benefited from services such as marketing and promotion.

**(20)** Hirasuna, D. & Michael, J. (1995) "Enterprise Zones: A Review of the Economic Theory and Empirical Evidence" Minnesota House of Representatives Research Department, p7

**(21)** Larkin, K. & Wilcox, Z. (2011) "What would Maggie do?" *Centre for Cities*, p2

**(22)** Potter, J. & Moore, B. (1999) "UK Enterprise Zones and the Attraction of Inward investment" in *Urban Studies*, Vol.37(8):1279-1312, p1280

**(23)** Larkin & Wilcox p3

**(24)** Mellows-Facer, pp5-6

**(25)** Potter & Moore, p1280

Zones were generally up to 450 hectares in size, consisting of industrial land in a state of vacancy or decay.<sup>(26)</sup> By closely focussing on these small areas (though still larger than the 150 hectare maximum size of the 2011 zones) it was hoped that different aspects of the area's problems could be dealt with at the same time, demonstrate success and create long-term interest from both occupiers and developers.<sup>(27)</sup>

## **Activity and outcomes**

Each zone was run by a 'zone authority,' usually a local authority or development corporation.

A 1995 Department of Environment evaluation was carried out on 22 of the 25 zones designated in rounds one and two of the scheme.<sup>(28)</sup> The missing zones were the two Northern Ireland zones and the Isle of Dogs. The evaluation had 3 objectives:

- To assess how the zones had maintained or created economic activity.
- To identify how the zones had driven physical regeneration in their areas.
- To measure the burden to the public purse of the zones, and their cost-effectiveness

The Department's study made several key findings:

- Three distinct 'types' of zone were identified: urban, accessible, and remote.
- 5000 companies were in the zones by 1990, employing 126000 people:
  - o 59700 in the urban zones
  - o 59200 in the accessible zones
  - o 6800 in the remote zones
- About 58000 of these jobs were estimated to be additional to those that would otherwise have been created.
- Additionality was highest amongst manufacturing, lowest in retail and distribution.
- At 1994-5 prices, cost per jobs estimated to be £1700 per year therefore £17,000 in total for the life of the zone.
- At the same prices, if rate relief and allowances are taken into account, cost per job rises to £2100 per year (£21000 over ten).
- 100% rates relief tended to lead to higher rents. It was calculated that the net rates relief received by occupiers (excluding retail and retail warehousing) was approximately:
  - o 10% to 55% in urban zones
  - o 30% to 50% in accessible zones
  - o -25% to +45% in remote zones
- Between 1981-2 and 1992-3 the total public sector cost of the 22 zones was estimated at between £798million and £968million depending on how costs were calculated. The majority of this cost was incurred in the 6 urban zones. Rates relief accounted for around 46% of the overall cost, capital allowances 45% and infrastructure/land acquisition 9%.
- By 1990 approximately 2700 hectares of land had been developed and around 6 million square metres of floorspace built.
- Following de-designation and the restoration of business rates, 82% of the businesses who took part in the evaluation said there would be no effect on their current employment levels. 18% said they would reduce their staff numbers.

**(26)** *Ibid*

**(27)** *Ibid*

**(28)** Final Evaluation of Enterprise Zones

These findings do not take into account specific successes or failures of individual Enterprise Zones. During the 17 year regeneration by the London Docklands Development Corporation (for the first 10 years of which it was designated as an Enterprise Zone), the following outcomes were achieved.<sup>(29)</sup>

- Public sector cost of £3.9billion including cost of DLR and 25% cost of Jubilee Line extension.
- Every £1m of public sector spending generated 23 jobs, 8500 square metres of office space, and 7.8 housing units.
- Private sector investment of £8.7billion by March 1998.
- 24000 housing units.
- 80000 jobs .
- Jobs growth in the local authority areas hosting the Enterprise Zone:<sup>(30)</sup>
  - o During designation (1984-1991): 29.8%
  - o Immediately after de-designation (1991-1998): 17.1%
  - o Recent growth (1998-2008): 65.6%

Unsurprisingly the London location of the Isle of Dogs Enterprise Zone significantly accelerated its growth. However, Cambridge Policy Consultant's evaluation highlighted the advantages of coordinating Enterprise Zone management with a wider growth strategy.

## Evaluations carried out into the 'original' Enterprise Zones

A significant quantity of work has been produced on the effectiveness of the original Enterprise Zones. A small selection has been summarised here to highlight the main issues.

### **Urban Studies Research Paper into UK Enterprise Zones**

A 1999 piece of research titled *UK Enterprise Zones and the Attraction of Inward Investment*<sup>(31)</sup> used the data collected in the Department of Environment's 1995 evaluation to "[assess] the contribution of inward investment to economic regeneration in UK Enterprise Zones."<sup>(32)</sup>

Inward investment was a well-publicised aim of the 'original' Enterprise Zones, and this research dealt with the three concerns raised when they were first put forward:<sup>(33)</sup>

- 1) Zones may not be very good at attracting inward investment.
- 2) Inward investment in the zones might create low-skill jobs with poor salaries.
- 3) Rather than secure inward investment, local firms might simply relocate into the zones and transfer jobs rather than create new ones.

The research made the following observations:<sup>(34)</sup>

- Early evaluations made only a limited assessment of inward investment.

**(29)** Cambridge Policy Consultations (1998) "Regenerating London Docklands" London: DETR: quoted in Larkin & Wilcox, p10

**(30)** NOMIS (2011) Census of Employment-Employee analysis (1981-1991), Annual Survey Employee Analysis (1991-1998). Annual Business Inquiry Employee Analysis (1998-2008): quoted in Larkin & Wilcox, p10

**(31)** Potter & Moore

**(32)** Ibid, p1279

**(33)** Ibid, p1279

**(34)** Ibid, p1281

- The nature of investment varied significantly between zones

In responding to the three concerns over Enterprise Zones, the Urban Studies research discovered that:<sup>(35)</sup>

- Significant numbers of inward investors have come to Enterprise Zones, creating significant employment.
  - o Nearly a fifth of business and nearly a third of employment by de-designation
  - o However this has generally been from within the 'region' rather than from further away, and more so in accessible zones than urban or remote zones
- Inward investment does not necessarily create low-skill, low-pay jobs.
  - o There was speedy growth in employment
  - o Different areas have different characteristics in terms of type of job, level of skills required, and likelihood of being employed locally
- Short-distance transfers into Enterprise Zones accounted for up to a third of businesses and approximately a quarter of associated employment. These numbers were lower in accessible and remote zones.

The research concluded that:

- Inward investment can be an important factor in economic development in Enterprise Zones.
- Inward investors might not have come to the area without the advantages offered by Enterprise Zones; and,
- The role of local agencies is important in creating these conditions and maintaining them.

### **Centre for Cities View**

A February 2011 publication by the Centre for Cities<sup>(36)</sup> took a more pessimistic view. It raised several concerns over the original Enterprise Zone concept and its outcomes. Key amongst these were:

- The original imperative to regenerate areas of dereliction is no longer such a high priority.
- They did not deliver a high number of additional new jobs.
- They were expensive.
- Demand was pushed around the economy, undermining longer term UK prosperity.
- Many of the benefits were captured by property owners instead of local areas.
- Simplified planning processes were not delivered in practice, an exception being the Isle of Dogs zone.
- Goals and incentives were mismatched.
- Zones were created in areas that only had limited chances of long term success.
- Urban and accessible zones created more jobs than remote zones.

In their report they argue that the Coalition Government should reintroduce Enterprise Zones as a form of 'local growth zone' where key learning from the 'original' zones is taken into consideration, namely:

- Policies must act to minimise displacement and increase employment.
- Reductions in capital-based incentives that primarily benefit landowners.
- Ensure that planning is relaxed and also recognise that it is not a barrier to growth in all circumstances.
- Incentives should be matched to goals.
- Enterprise Zones will be most successful where there is real growth potential.

**(35)** Ibid, p1281

**(36)** Larkin & Wilcox

## Work Foundation View

The Work Foundation considered advantages and weaknesses of Enterprise Zones in their February 2001 policy paper *“Do Enterprise Zones Work?”*

They identified three key weaknesses of Enterprise Zones:<sup>(37)</sup>

- Many Enterprise Zone jobs are displaced from elsewhere.
- Little is done to promote lasting economic prosperity.
- Enterprise Zones cost up to £23000 per job created.<sup>(38)</sup>

In their view, key advantages of Enterprise Zones include:<sup>(39)</sup>

- Businesses can be attracted into a depressed area quickly.
- Economic momentum can be generated within targeted areas.
- Enterprise Zones can be a vehicle for improving competitiveness.
- Market failures in local economies can be overcome.

Lessons drawn from previous Enterprise Zones, they suggest, include:<sup>(40)</sup>

- They can attract investment quickly, although this must be balanced against the risk of a reversal once the zone is de-designated.
- Displacement of jobs into Enterprise Zones rather than creation of new ones.
- Benefits of Enterprise Zones can be short-lived.
- They question the effectiveness of tax breaks for business as a stimulus to job creation.
- Enterprise Zones may discourage the Knowledge Economy.

The Work Foundation makes three policy recommendations:<sup>(41)</sup>

- Enterprise Zones must be the right size to minimise displacement.
- They must address long-term competitiveness, with investment targeted at skills, infrastructure and regeneration.
- Enterprise Zones must have clear governance arrangements that are free from conflict between local and national government.

The full report contains a summary of Enterprise Zone evaluations. It can be found at <http://bit.ly/oMaLaY>

**(37)** Sissons & Brown, p3

**(38)** This figure comes from a 1987 PA Cambridge Economic Consultants evaluation. Potter and Moore suggest a level of £17000 in line with a 1996 study, suggesting that such a cost would be acceptable if linked to infrastructure development. See Potter and Moore p 1307

**(39)** Sissons & Brown, pp10-11

**(40)** Sissons & Brown, pp6-9

**(41)** Sissons & Brown, pp10-11

## List of all 'new' and 'original' Enterprise Zones

### **38 Enterprise Zones designated between 1981 and 1996**

Allerdale	Gateshead	North East Derbyshire
Ashfield	Glanford	Salford/Trafford
Bassetlaw	Isle of Dogs	Rotherham
Belfast	Inverclyde	Speke
Corby	Invergordon	Scunthorpe
Clydebank	Lanarkshire	Sunderland
Dearne Valley	Lower Swansea Valley	Swansea
Dudley	Mansfield	Tayside
Dudley Round Oak	Milford Haven	Telford
Delyn	Middlesbrough	Tyneside
East Durham	North West Kent	Wakefield
East Midlands	North East Lincolnshire	Wellingborough
Hartlepool	North East Lancashire	

Source: DCLG

### **24 Enterprise Zones designated during 2011 (phase 2 marked \*)**

Alconbury Airfield*(Cambs)	Hinckley* (Leics)	North Eastern (Newcastle/Tyne)
Birmingham and Solihull	Humber Estuary*	Northampton*
The Black Country	Leeds City Region	Nottingham
Bristol	Liverpool Waters	Oxfordshire* (Science Vale)
Gosport*	London (Royal Docks)	Sandwich* (Kent)
Great Yarmouth*	Lowestoft*	Sheffield City Region
Harlow*	Manchester Airport	Teesside
Hereford*	Newquay*	Warrington*

Source: BBC "New 'enterprise zones' announced around England"

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-14552193> (accessed 17/8/11)

A map of all new Enterprise Zones can be found on the DCLG website at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1968608.pdf>

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