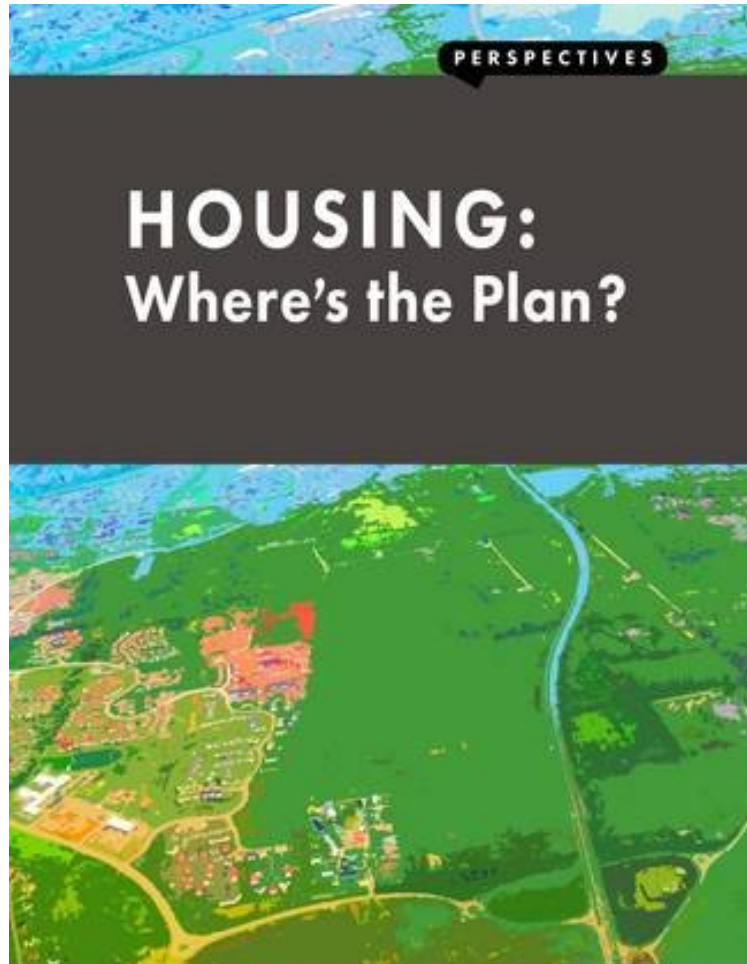


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## Housing: Where's the Plan? (Perspectives)

*Kate Barker*

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**Kate Barker : Housing: Where's the Plan? (Perspectives)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Housing: Where's the Plan? (Perspectives):

Housing matters a great deal. The present housing market has worked well for many of us (who have enjoyed the

steeply rising values of our homes) which is why change, especially new building, is resisted. But for increasing numbers it now works less well as home ownership is out of reach, and for many years it has been commonly felt that there is a 'housing crisis' in Britain. Reforms are urgently needed to avoid a growing human cost. With so many conflicting views in evidence and a balance to be struck between growth and conservation, what housing market outcomes might be regarded as a success for policymakers? This short book attempts to give at least some answers, concluding with a list of criteria by which success might be judged along with a list of policy recommendations. Along the way a number of 'myths' are identified - either ideas about the UK housing market or possible solutions to the housing issue - that the author argues are mistaken. She argues that we need to be realistic, and not simplistic, about what mix of outcomes can be achieved. There are many national policy aims, including decent homes for all, protection of the green belt, better design of buildings and places, the avoidance of house price volatility, and intergenerational fairness. At the local level, planning provokes conflict and strong feelings. We also have an existing housing stock that is arguably, at least in part, wrongly located, and some of the housing we do have is of poor quality. For anyone with an interest in housing, this is an authoritative, accessible and constructive contribution to a debate that is likely to rumble on until the cows come home.

The apparent inability to build more housing is the UK's biggest policy failure. The system of land-use planning that largely explains what has happened generates indefensible economic distortions. Yet this is far more than just an economic policy failure. It is also a profoundly social one, since it thwarts family formation, the foundation of a fulfilled and purposive life. Kate Barker provides both a clear analysis of the problem and sensible, albeit modest, reforms. These represent the very least that needs to be done. Martin Wolf, Financial Times No one can speak to the housing supply issues facing the UK with the same authority as Kate Barker. This clear concise analysis of UK housing issues makes a series of policy recommendations that are both feasible and desirable. An excellent account of the state of UK housing - admirable in its coherence, clarity and precision. David Miles, Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee This succinct presentation of the housing challenge we have ourselves managed to create sets out clearly the inter- and intragenerational debate required. Politics is stuck between those for whom the current system works and those for whom it does not. This is the strongest description of this dilemma I have seen for a while. It must be read and debated - or read with despair. Bridget Rosewell, Senior Partner, Volterra Partners About the Author Dame Kate Barker is a former member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee. She led two influential policy reviews in the mid 2000s: one on housing supply and one on planning. Among other roles, she is now a senior adviser at Credit Suisse and a non-executive director of Taylor Wimpey plc and the Yorkshire Building Society.