



Tackling Root causes Upstream of  
Unhealthy Urban Development

# Theory of Change: Public-private actors' networks in healthy urban development and investment decision- making

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- Increasing urban population suffering from chronic (non-communicable) diseases (NCDs) and co-morbidities which have societal and economic costs (productivity, health services, social security)
- Urban environmental health determinants are shaped through investments and finance capital flows originating from different parts of the world and mediated by assemblages of institutions and actors.
- Property ESG environmental and social impact performance have become a commercial real estate priority in investment risk-return appraisal, yet health-related investment assets have received less attention.
- The aim is to better understand how investors' perceptions of inward firm benefits from and outward contributions to community wellness are embedded in investment appraisal models and decision-making.

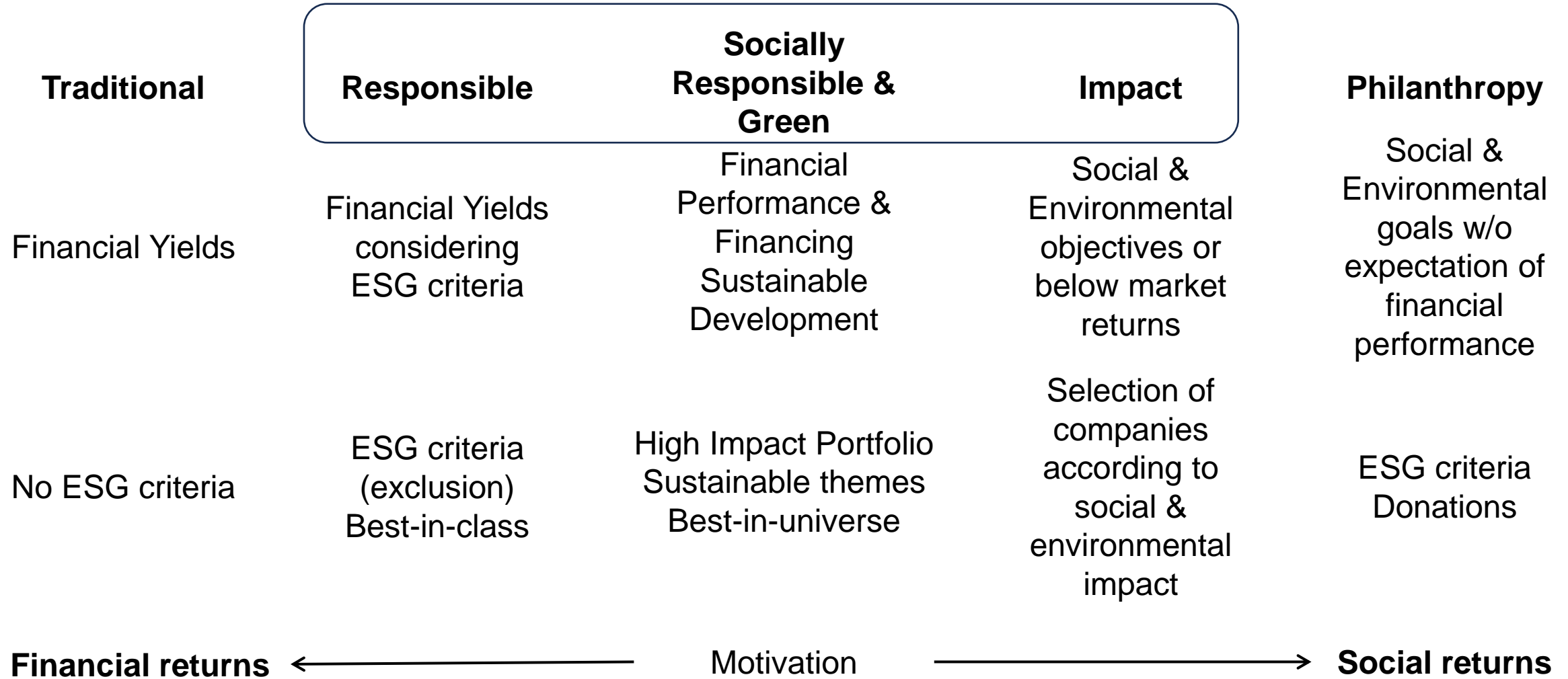
# Theoretical considerations

- Henneberry and Parris (2013, p. 229) described a fundamental distinction between two views of institutions and “of markets as institutions” that are relevant to urban land and property development: the ‘rational’ and the ‘social/normative’ perspectives (Rothstein, 1996; Lowndes, 2002).
- Rational institutionalism regards institutions “as a sum of individual utility maximising behaviours, framing but not affecting those behaviours”, whereas social/normative institutionalism sees institutions as both “emerging from and moulding individual [actor] and group [organisational] (re)actions” (Henneberry and Parris, 2013, p. 229).
- The social/normative perspective integrates the social and economic dimensions of the urban development process by examining the institutional forms, relationships and dynamics of land and property development (Hodgson, 1998, 2006).
- Correspondingly, land and property markets have come to be understood as orchestrated dynamically by diverse actors and interests within specific socio-cultural, economic, political and legal contexts (Keogh et al., 1999).

- Production and reproduction of the urban environment
  - a social and cultural process shaped
  - regulated by practices and ‘collective action’ of a complex assemblage of private and public institutions and social actors.
- Little is known about
  - Competing constructs of health benefits between private and public stakeholders
  - How their decision-making influence upstream and downstream in the urban (re)production process
- Research focus
  - To review the complexity of actor interactions in the (re)production of healthy urban environment using a systems approach
- Sample
  - Real estate service providers, investment companies and public authorities associated with mixed-use schemes in UK city case studies, Bristol and Manchester.
- Expected contribution
  - improved transparency in the disclosure of health information in investment appraisals and decisions for the benefit of both private and public stakeholders (Latour, 1990).

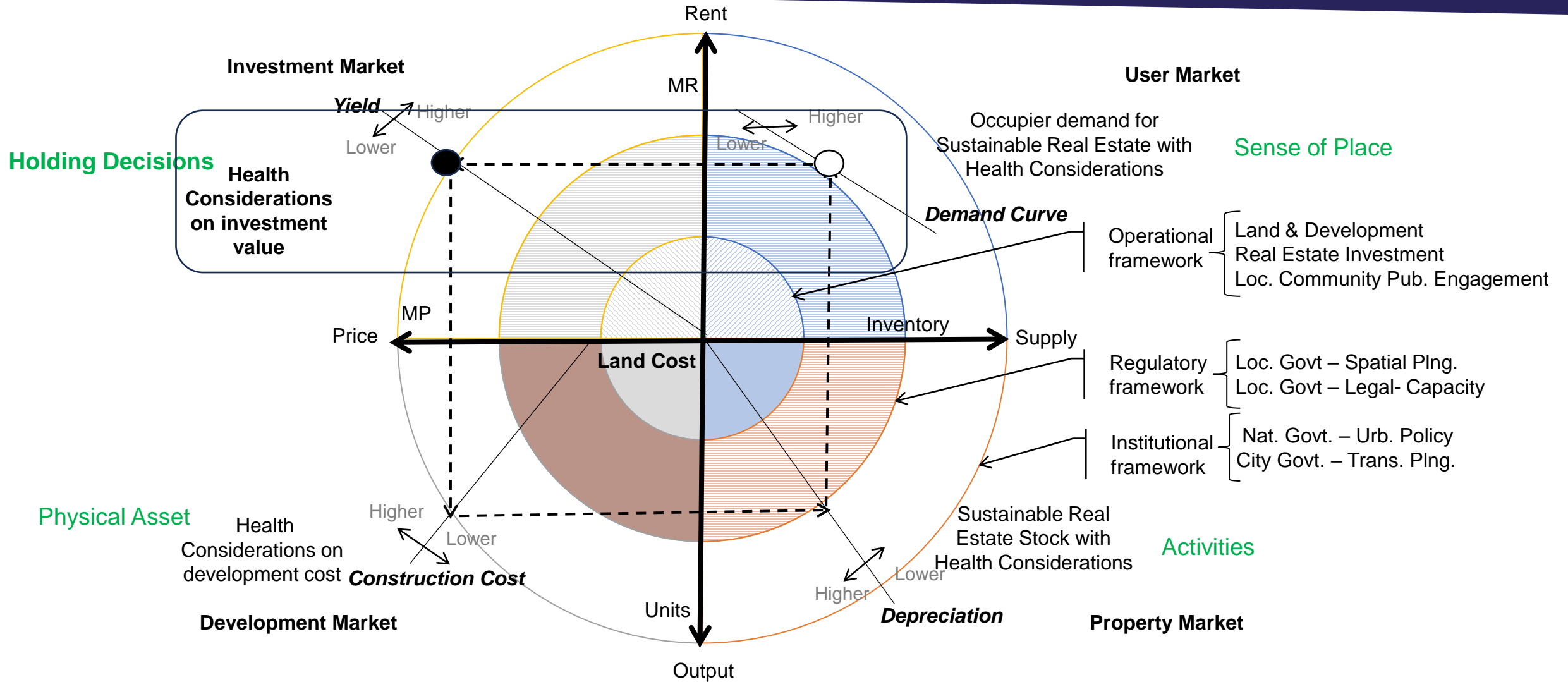
# Investor types by sustainability consideration

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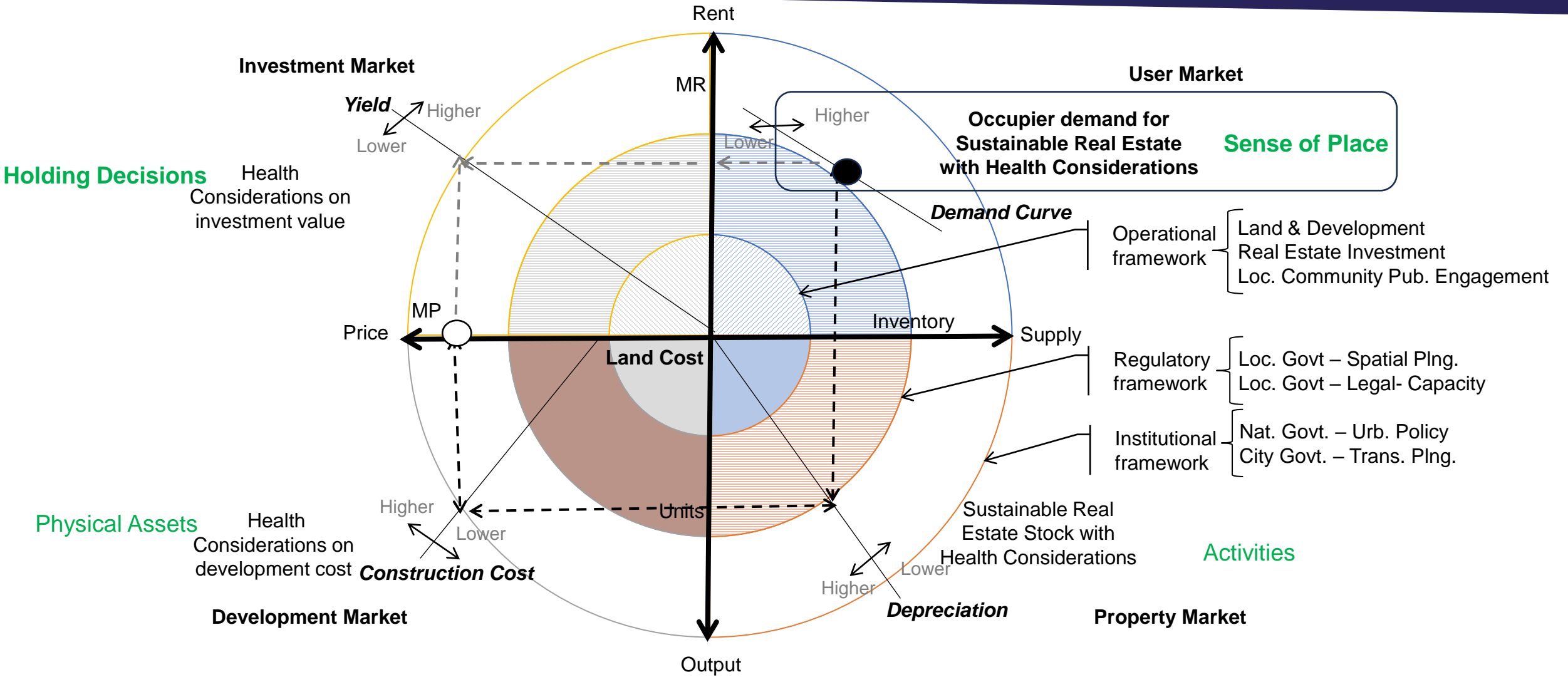
# ESG investor approach

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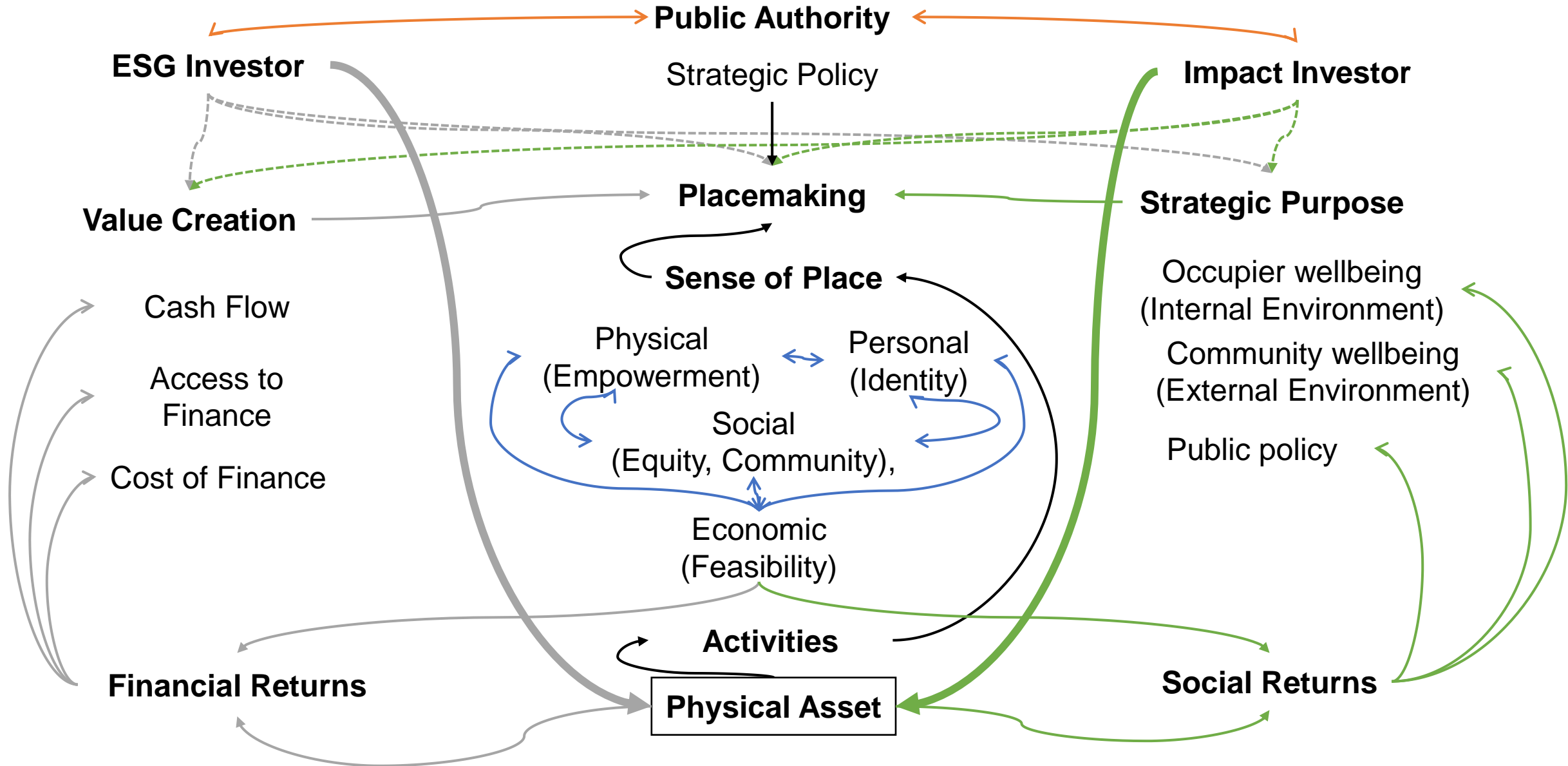
# Impact investor approach

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# Complex system of health considerations in investment decisions

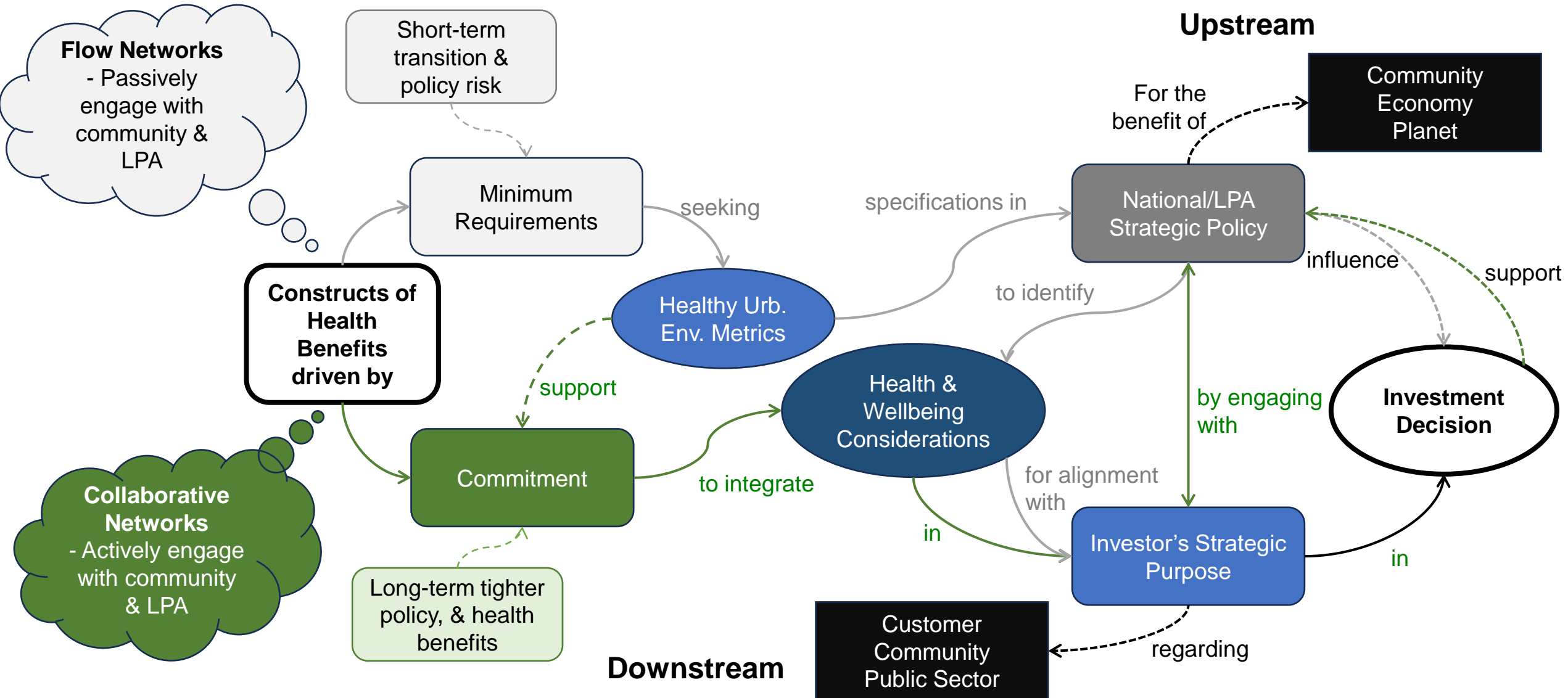
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# Actor networks in investment decision

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- **Upstream root causes – strategic policy**
  - National design guidance/ codes
  - Master Plans
  - Neighbourhood or Community Plans
- Regulatory framework (upstream)
  - Provide guidance to achieve wider policy objectives
  - Facilitate pre-planning meetings to enhance likelihood of securing planning permission over shorter timescale
- Operational framework
  - Concerned about clarity of planning requirements
    - Variations across LPAs, contexts and timeframes
    - Effect of nature of LPA organisational structures – silos & political influence

- **Downstream root causes**
- **Reactive**
  - Driven by minimum requirements to secure planning permission
  - Engage with LA officers to understand planning requirements and monitor alignment with elected decision-makers
- **Proactive**
  - Plan for long-term considering prospects of regulation only get tighter and more stringent
  - Establish extent to which legal scrutiny of ESG fundamentals could influence health considerations in investment decisions
    - Internal action
      - Engage with communities
      - Engage with customers
      - Establish how upstream strategic policies are embedded in internal organisational policies viz-a-viz business goals – value creation and strategic purpose
    - External action
      - Engage with LPA officers to better understand scope for extending consideration of ESG fundamentals **beyond** minimum planning requirements

- Investor construct of health benefits influenced by nature of expected returns
  - Financial returns – due to fiduciary obligation
  - Social returns – community empowerment
- Divergent investor application of actor networks in engagement with stakeholders
  - Flow networks
    - Reactive to stakeholder expectations
    - Independent engagement
    - Intended to establish minimum requirements & political alignment to secure planning permission
  - Collaborative networks
    - Proactive beyond stakeholder expectations
    - Collective engagement
    - Extend scope of health considerations beyond stakeholder expectations

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