

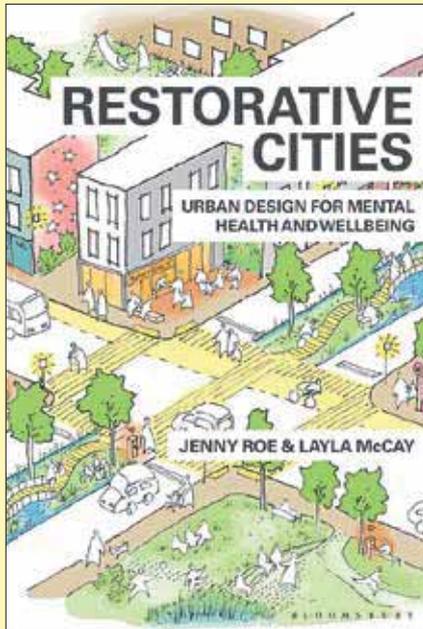
160 **URBAN
DESIGN**

Autumn 2021
Urban Design Group Journal
ISSN 1750 712X

**FUTURE
NEIGHBOURHOODS**



**URBAN
DESIGN
GROUP**



NEWS FROM THE UDG CHAIR

Since the last issue of *Urban Design* was published, design quality is back at the top of the agenda. The new NPPF and *National Model Design Code* have been published and the Office of Place inaugurated, all with the objective of delivering better quality development.

In the same period, Place Alliance published its survey into design skills in local authorities across England. The results are sobering, although not unexpected. Compared to the last survey in 2017, the number of urban designers and architects in local planning authorities has stabilised, although it remains disappointing:

- two fifths of local planning authorities still have no access to urban design advice
- almost two thirds have no access to landscape advice, and
- three quarters have no access to architectural advice.

The study also found that there is significant use of consultants and agency staff, while the in-house design capabilities of local authorities have declined. This naturally leads us to look at the responsibilities of those who work as consultants and in particular our Recognised Practitioners in Urban Design.

We are a broad church and not a chartered professional body, and therefore do not have a code of conduct for our members and Recognised Practitioners. However, since its formation in 1978, the UDG has successfully campaigned to firmly place urban design on the national agenda and improve the quality of environments. It has built a strong ethos and reputation around

universally accepted principles. These include creating a positive legacy of sustainably located, well-designed developments:

- where the needs of people and nature come first
- where communities can make sustainable transport choices using public transport and active travel instead of private cars
- where people can live healthily and well, and
- where active, low-carbon lifestyles are designed-in.

Achieving these objectives is complex and many factors are at play. We may find ourselves in situations where the objectives do not meet day-to-day reality, and where the completed development or masterplan falls short of our ambitions. Some of our Recognised Practitioners may even work on developments that others may perceive as being contrary to the above aims. As a consultant myself, it would be hypocritical not to acknowledge that there are many obstacles to good development and sometimes things don't go our way. This can be for many reasons, including client objectives, commercial considerations, land ownerships, political and community pressures, and highway regulations.

Many critical decisions that influence design quality are also taken out of the hands of urban designers. For example, we have little power when it comes to site allocations and are often appointed to make the most of an allocated site. Other aspects can be difficult to influence too, such as the provision of strategic cycle and public transport linkages beyond the site, or the design of highway infrastructure. Most of us will have experienced the arrival of the dreaded oversized roundabout on the edge of our masterplans for a new 'sustainable neighbourhood', or a 'high street' that turns into an over-engineered highway, making a mockery of the original vision.

Urban design's sometimes limited sphere of influence should not mean that we give up our ambition or decline responsibility. On every project we must do our best to drive quality up, promote best practice and challenge decisions that may undermine a high quality development. We must try to persuade clients, agencies and stakeholders to pursue best practice and use our creativity to bring about positive change. I hope that an interest in delivering high quality places in line with the broad principles set

out above will unite us and act as our moral compass.

On a different note, and as always, a monthly roundup of our events and campaigns is on our website. Two events are worthy of mention:

- the launch of the book *Restorative Cities: Urban Design for Mental Health and Well-being* by Jenny Roe and Layla McCay. This subject is close to my heart and I believe that a combined focus on health, well-being and climate change will help us to deliver more equal and fairer places; and
- the relaunch of the National Urban Design Awards; at the time of writing I don't know the finalists, but I am excited about this year's awards. The new categories and evaluation criteria have given us strong shortlists. The UDG team and volunteers have worked hard and done an amazing job to promote the awards and as a result we have received more entries than ever before. With anticipation we wait and see who the winners will be.

GET IN TOUCH, GET INVOLVED

I would like to invite all our members to share ideas and proposals of how we can make it easier to deliver good places. If you have ideas for an urban design event, research, collaboration opportunities or would like to get involved, please get in touch with us at: administration@udg.co.uk

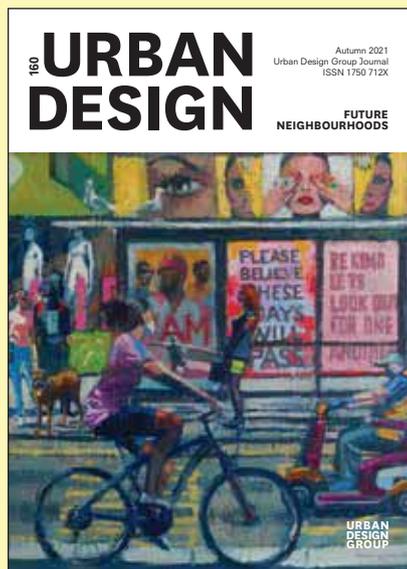
I hope you enjoy the Journal. ●

Katja Stille, Chair of the Urban Design Group and Director at Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design

DIARY OF EVENTS

Until further notice it will not be possible to run live events with an audience at The Gallery. There is however an online programme of events.

Please check the UDG website for details www.udg.org.uk



Urban Design Group

70 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EJ
T 020 7250 0892
E administration@udg.org.uk
W www.udg.org.uk

Office

Robert Huxford, Director
Jacqueline Swanson, Manager
Connie Dales, Events & Membership
Coordinator
Ken Suriyachat, Administrator

CHAIR Katja Stille

TREASURER Christopher Martin
SECRETARY Paul Reynolds
PATRONS Irena Bauman, Alan Baxter,
Dickon Robinson, Lindsey Whitelaw
and John Worthington
TRUSTEES Arnold Linden, Marcus
Wilshire, Janet Tibbalds, Marion Roberts

Editorial Board

Patricia Aelbrecht, Matthew Carmona,
Richard Cole, Richard Crappsley,
Amanda Gregor, Tim Hagyard,
Joe Holyoak, Sebastian Loew, Daniela
Lucchese, Jane Manning, Chris Martin,
Malcolm Moor, Geoff Noble,
Judith Ryser, Louise Thomas

Editors

Louise Thomas (this issue)
louisethomas@tdrc.co.uk
Sebastian Loew
sebastianloew@btinternet.com
Book Review Editor
Richard Cole

Design

Claudia Schenk, trockenbrot
www.trockenbrot.com

Printing Henry Ling Ltd

© Urban Design Group ISSN 1750 712X

Advertising enquiries

Please contact the UDG office

Contents

This issue has been kindly sponsored by
PTE Architects

COVER

Peckham, London, *Bus Stop on Rye Lane*,
acrylic and ink on paper by Mark Pearson
(Detail)

UPDATE

- 3 — Manual for Streets 3 – A Review and Reflection
- 4 — Character and Local Distinctiveness
- 4 — Logistics: The forgotten foundation of urban design and planning
- 5 — Recent Past Events
- 5 — Urban Design Skills in Local Authorities
- 6 — Andy Karski 1947-2021
- 6 — Savills Urban Design Graduate Scheme 2022
- 7 — My Favourite Plan: Stefan Kruczowski
- 8 — Urban Design Library #39
- 9 — Climate Change Global Digest
- 10 — Behind the Image: Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre, Athens

STUDENT WORK

- 12 — Material Re-use in Urban Regeneration: The Concept of Circularity, Raphael Saillard

VIEWPOINTS

- 14 — Community Mobilisation and Resilience in São Paulo, Colin Dunigan
- 16 — The ABC of Quality Sustainable Design, Laura Alvarez
- 18 — Urbantech – Will it Revolutionise Urban Design? Malcolm Moor

TOPIC: FUTURE NEIGHBOURHOODS

- 20 — The New Post-Corona Neighbourhood, Jon Rowland, guest topic editor
- 23 — The Legacies of COVID-19 and the Force for Change, Richard Pickering
- 26 — Beyond Net-Zero: Creating Climate-Positive Neighbourhoods, Matt Lally and Christopher Pountney
- 30 — Social Value and New Neighbourhoods, Joanna Rowelle
- 33 — The Pliable City, Roger Evans
- 37 — Post-COVID Cities or Suburbs? David Rudlin
- 40 — Dragons, Drawbridges and Big Bubbles, Ambrose Tsui and Stefan Kruczowski
- 44 — The OxCam Arc in a Post-COVID World, Victoria Lee
- 48 — The Parisian 15-Minute City, Didier Couval-Grima
- 52 — The New Post-Corona Neighbourhood, Jon Rowland

BOOK REVIEWS

- 56 — Designing Streets for Kids, NACTO and Global Designing Cities Initiative
- 56 — Dublin by Design, Architecture and the City, Noel Brady and Sandra O'Connell
- 57 — Lessons from the British and French New Towns: Paradise lost? David Fée, Bob Colenutt, Sabine Coady Schäbitz
- 57 — Urban Playground, How child-friendly planning and design can save cities, Tim Gill

58 — PRACTICE INDEX

64 — EDUCATION INDEX

ENDPIECE

- 65 — Leaving the front, Joe Holyoak

FUTURE ISSUES

UD161 Scandinavia
UD162 Landscape and Design

The Future has Come Early

As this issue of *Urban Design* goes to print, COVID-19 remains a major concern, although the sentiment here in the UK is that we have probably weathered the worst of the storm, as we are encouraged to go back to work in offices and live with the virus, rather than retreat from it.

However, this is not the case around the world and there is uncertainty around what will happen as the winter approaches. Experiences in the last 18 months have revealed a great deal about what is important for our physical and mental health, which we had lost sight of in recent years. For many, the lockdowns and restrictions were times of great social isolation, loneliness, a lack of purpose, or little access to basic day-to-day needs; for others, there were periods of great pressure, being overwhelmed or having to go out in unsafe environments. It would therefore be disappointing if we didn't fully grasp the opportunity to reflect on what we have learned about how we would prefer to live and work.

What has risen to the surface as positive experiences, amidst all of this, are also the fundamentals of good urban design. These are:

- the benefits of being in public space walking and cycling
- easy access to goods and services locally without the need to travel by car
- opportunities for a range of social contacts
- sufficient space at home, whether for work, leisure or day-to-day living
- the importance of contact with nature, plus
- access to technology to underpin our modern lifestyles.

Curated by Jon Rowland, this issue explores Future Neighbourhoods, learning from pandemic experiences to design better places. It is often quoted that the pandemic has simply accelerated changes that were inevitable, such as the

adoption of new technology, the decline of town centres and the need to better address social value. Housing standards, access to open space, long commutes to work and social inequality have also been significantly questioned. It is time for a recalibration of priorities and to learn lessons, which the contributors explore in different ways.

Malcolm Moor's viewpoint (p.18) looks at the relationship between data, digital systems and urban design: are they in competition or complementary? Will urban design be rendered quirky and obsolete in the face of a more scientific approach to data gathering and presentation?

Another important reminder of urban design's core principles lies in the circular economy and the value of existing places, whether buildings or spaces. Regenerating, reusing, recycling and reducing the need for new materials are at the heart of good place-based design, and student Raphael Saillard sets out his dissertation work devising and testing a toolkit to help decision-makers do far more (p.12). This is another topic that is constantly advancing and *Urban Design* will certainly delve into it, in the coming year. ●

Louise Thomas, independent urban designer and joint editor

HOW TO JOIN

To join the Urban Design Group, visit www.udg.org.uk and see the benefits of taking out an annual membership.

- Individual (UK and international) £55
- UK student / concession £35
- Recognised Practitioner in Urban Design £85
- Small practice (<5 professional staff) £275
- Large practice (>5 professional staff) £495
- Education £275
- Local Authority £100
- UK Library £90
- International Library £110



1

Manual for Streets 3 – A Review and Reflection

The Department for Transport is funding a revision of the publication *Manual for Streets* (2007). The work is being undertaken by consultants WSP and managed by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation. In March and May 2021 the UDG convened well-attended events, with 11 speakers providing an opportunity for the urban design community to discuss it and comment.

Glen Higgs (WSP) described how the new manual intended for publication in 2022, would update earlier versions and add easier navigation and useability. It would take an outcomes-based approach with targets for more social and equitable streets, providing a framework for assessing proposals and a starting point for discussions across different disciplines.

UDG Director Robert Huxford covered the legal framework for street design and use. He stressed that the *Equalities Act 2010* enshrined in law the principle that people are at the top of the street user hierarchy, since due regard must be paid to people's needs based on protected characteristics such as age, gender and disability. Under common law, precedents have established a duty of care to all road users, both careful and negligent, and conferred not only a right of movement, but a right of place for people to use the highway for any purpose that did not amount to a public or private nuisance.

Jeremy Leach, chair of London Living Streets, talked about the consequences of not designing for people first, as shown by the clustering of casualties around linear high streets and junctions where people and traffic meet. Taking 20mph as the default maximum speed limit in built-up areas was key to achieving zero fatal and serious road casualties as part of Action Vision Zero. He called for the revision of the manual to address worrying rises in rat-running traffic on neighbourhood streets caused by the increased use of SatNav.

Graham Smith called for guidance to be provided for the design of main roads, especially narrow main roads (e.g. 24ft or

7.3m carriageways) which are hostile to cyclists and pedestrians. He gave examples from Europe where innovative designs reduce vehicle speeds and provide sufficient carriageway widths for cyclists. In the UK standard practice has led to high speeds, severance and crossing points that involve a significant element of risk for vulnerable road users.

'Elephants in the room' were introduced by Stefan Kruczkowski, namely urban designers' lack of power in the development process, regional investment issues, highway authorities' focus on vehicles rather than place-making, and the pressures of limited time and resources. Investment in public transport is particularly important for giving many housing schemes a chance to be sustainable, but is often absent.

Focusing on micro-climate, air quality and urban heat islands, Julie Fatcher called for urban climate knowledge to be embedded into design. Street alignment, width, tree planting and the heights of buildings were factors in allowing natural airflows and providing shade. As cities like London are two or three times more likely to exceed 35°C temperatures than non-urban areas, it is important to incorporate mitigation strategies into street design.

Colin Davis saw the *Manual for Streets* (MfS) review as an opportunity to bridge gaps between urban designers and highway engineers. The often-used *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB) was written as a set of instructions, contrasting with the more open and philosophical style of the often-disregarded MfS. The requirements of the DMRB can be met with measurements and tick-boxes, and this ease of use has made it engineers' preferred document. The new manual needed to have weight, bring place and movement together, be easy for highway engineers and local councillors to understand and use, have principles backed by evidence, and aim to replace DMRB for all roads other than motorways and segregated roads.

Kenny Aitken, introduced Scotland's *National Roads Development Guide*. Written in collaboration with 27 roads authorities, it included a place versus movement diagram to enable easy implementation. Aitken showed how the guide was launched to ensure adoption, how variations for different authorities are reviewed and registered, and how six-monthly review groups are held to make

changes and general improvements.

Brenda Puech talked about inclusive design and the importance of rectifying existing street problems. The new manual should engage with the place function of residential streets, aim to phase out on-street car parking, engage with a broader range of community stakeholders, make space for soft measures such as greening, and 'people parking' permits to use kerbsides for outdoor meetings.

Tim Pharoah, an author of MfS1, saw two options for the new manual: to be revolutionary or evolutionary. The revolutionary approach would bring climate strategy to the forefront as an issue which needs to be treated as an emergency rather than just a consideration. He proposed that this should be the focus for the new manual, instead of guidance on aesthetics. The evolutionary approach would focus on details such as 20mph limits as the norm, designing in micro-mobility and shared vehicles, and putting a stop to pavement parking.

Phil Jones, also an MfS1 author, focussed on how to ensure that the new manual is put into regular use by local authorities. The document needed to be aimed at highway engineers, showing what is good and demonstrating costs and benefits in a way that lets them defend innovative decisions. Carrots and sticks were important, including a strong policy backing, and, taking the example of Active Travel England, making central government funding conditional on compliance with the new manual.

For more information, see the UDG's briefing note on *Street Design Standards – Current and Withdrawn Practice* <https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/manuals/street-design-standards> ●

Robert Huxford, Director, Urban Design Group, with help from Imogen Huxford

1 A DMRB roundabout compromising a new neighbourhood and next to a primary school: an example of vehicle-optimised design putting others at risk



Character and Local Distinctiveness. What does it mean?

Webinar, 15 April 2021

Chaired by Scott Elliott Adams, three speakers from different backgrounds expressed their views on what makes the character and local distinctiveness of a place, to guide better design. Citing examples from his writing, Chuck Wolf, a former lawyer from the

USA, proposed a context trilogy: sustainable cities culture, urbanism without efforts, and visualising a better city. For him cities are constantly changing, and so are their characters and how they are assessed; these challenge the notion of authenticity.

Jon Cooper (Oxford Brookes University) explained how to measure the character of streets depending on their visual texture; this could become the basis of measures to incorporate in a design code to grasp the composite whole, reflecting the DNA of a place. He showed a video of the tool he had developed for this purpose. It aimed to measure change of visual texture and degree of variedness, but the impression was one of uniformity, and the audience was not convinced of the usefulness of this rather complex and detailed digital visual texture analysis. The consensus seemed to be that such computer tools could not replace getting inspiration and design clues from site visits.

Rob Cowan preferred his *PlaceCheck* method for designs: asking three questions during site visits and hearing what people like, dislike and want to change in a place gives ample clues to designers. This raises the issue of whether the judgement of a professional designer, developer or politician is more valuable than that of a local inhabitant. Also places were not only made of physical fabric but of much more, including for instance cultural events.

The following discussion explored what constituted the character and distinctiveness of place and whether they were due to materials, architecture, history, culture or people, or were too subjective to achieve or even seek consensus. Rob Cowan conceived them as a compromise between subjectivity based on own values, and objective clues which could be identified and taken into account in future design. Nevertheless, even these could be relative as to how and when they were judged or valued. Architecture depends on the time of building but taste regarding architectural style changes. Wolf opted for a more moral judgement opposing subjectivity to collective fairness, while Cooper insisted on the universal characteristics of quality of space, measurable objectively and shared globally.

The event concluded with a surprise quiz by Robert Huxford, who asked everyone to guess, using the characteristics of townscapes in photos, where they were of. Interestingly, in many cases the landscape gave greater clues than the character of the built environment. Even more challenging was to guess where the pictures from the 1950s were taken – a great way to confront the essence of place. ●

Judith Ryser, researcher, journalist, writer and urban affairs consultant to Fundacion Metropoli, Madrid



Logistics: The forgotten foundation of urban design and planning

Webinar, 26 May 2021

More than 100 people joined this webinar on logistics; its objective was to explore the implications of accommodating contemporary logistics facilities in new design guidance.

Robert Huxford began with a historic perspective on how urban design has been dominated by the requirements of increasingly large logistics vehicles, and the need to rebalance road design for a broader range of users in the forthcoming *Manual for Streets*. Ian Brooker and Chris Douglas (Jacob and

WSP respectively) presented innovative technologies for revolutionising street design for more sustainable use. Hannah Smart (Edge Urban Design) and Gary Young (Place 54 architects) presented alternative local, bottom-up visions of how to incorporate localised distribution hubs. Waste management was also included, and David Milner (Create Streets) joined the discussion.

This event was very successful as Amanda Reynolds, a lively chair, involved participants throughout the presentations. The chat also provided a great source of ideas, examples and references.

The highlights were the large number of practical and pragmatic solutions put into practice during the pandemic to accommodate greater logistics activities under very constrained conditions. Speakers showed how both high and low tech solutions were implemented even before the pandemic, strategically in large cities, at the neighbourhood level and in different environments. Creating local logistics neighbourhood hubs involved local volunteers, but there was also recognition of existing roles like convenience shops, which provide space for collection, or the need to revive similar functions, held by sub-post offices in the past.

The proposals put forward were with the awareness that, for example, communal bins needed communal behaviour,

allocating parking spaces for more communal uses would encounter resistance, and current statutory rules for the use of the public realm may restrict such alternatives. Nevertheless, the belief was voiced that we can create the future, and do not have to just accept it.

Selected references from the chat:

- Robot system in Milton Keynes www.star-ship.xyz/
- Underground delivery in Kings Cross London [www.kingscross.co.uk/granary Neighbourhood logistics hubs](http://www.kingscross.co.uk/granary-Neighbourhood-logistics-hubs) www.thegreentlc.uk
- Volunteer engagement in hubs www.transitionstreets.org.uk Initiatives in Cork city
- www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/news-room/latest-news/cork-city-council-awarded-public-service-innovation-funding-for-city-cargo-bike-fleet.html
- Smaller vehicles for waste collection, mobility hub guidance <https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Mobility-Hub-Guide-241019-final.pdf>
- Combining delivery with other sustainable activities <https://ngcnetwork.wordpress.com> and
- Integrated logistics issues <https://place54architects.com/market-garden-city-gary-young> ●

Judith Ryser

Recent Past Events

The following webinars are available to watch again on the UDG website

WALKING AND CYCLING TO AND FROM RAILWAY STATIONS

16 June 2021

Getting to a railway station can be difficult: the railway line itself can act as a barrier, with limited connections including dingy tunnels, poorly maintained and badly lit footbridges creating no-go zones. The streets to the station are often very busy, polluted and unattractive routes. Station forecourts are designed around the needs of taxis and car parking rather than passengers. This webinar looked at best practice in providing high quality access to stations, offering passengers arriving on foot, by bicycle or bus, safe, comfortable, attractive and direct routes in order to favour railway use over cars.

EVOLUTION OF THE CITY: ALEPPO

24 June 2021

This was the first in a series of international events to develop our understanding of how towns and cities develop in response to environment, economy, politics and culture. This webinar looked at Aleppo, one of the oldest cities in the world. Its origins go back 6,000 years and it has witnessed many different civilisations rise and fall, each one leaving its mark: Amorite, Hittite, Phoenician, Greek, Macedonian, Roman, Sassanian, Islamic, Ottoman, French, and finally 21st century corporate global. These influences can be seen in the morphology of Aleppo, and the way it works today.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DESIGN OFFICERS NETWORK MEETING

1 July 2021

This was the first meeting of a new initiative for officers working in the public sector involved in urban design, highways, planning, conservation, landscape, waste management, utilities, lighting, parks and more. It considered peer-to-peer support across local authorities, sharing common problems and solutions, and updates on legislation, guidance and best practice.

LONDON BOROUGH HEALTHY STREETS SCORECARD 2021

6 July 2021

Which London boroughs are delivering healthy streets? This webinar heard about the London-wide coalition of transport and environment campaigners' publication of the 2021 London boroughs' *Healthy Streets Scorecard*. For the third year running, the Scorecard Coalition compares London boroughs' actions taken to promote active and sustainable travel in line with the Mayor's Transport Strategy targets. The scoring includes London's Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, safe cycle routes, action on 20mph, Controlled Parking Zones and School Streets.

SPORT/ PUBLIC EVENTS + URBAN DESIGN

15 July 2021

Sports and public events play a major role in the life of towns and cities, with people travelling locally, nationally or even internationally, to participate, support or celebrate. This webinar discussed planning, place-making and design issues using scenarios from India where there has been unlimited scope for designing around public use and an enhanced user experience. ●

Urban Design Skills in Local Authorities

Webinar, 22 July 2021

Concerns about the depletion of urban design skills in local authorities are not new. Chairing this well-attended online meeting, Laura Alvarez (Nottingham City Council) said the subject cropped up at almost every professional event. Recruitment was stalling, training budgets had been cut and officers still in post were considered too hard-pressed to be indulged in the luxury of CPD.

In 2017, Place Alliance undertook a survey of English local authorities. It made bleak reading, confirming that most authorities had little or no access to specialist design staff. Worse, there were wide geographical variations, with a disturbing link between badly designed places (as shown in successive housing quality audits) and low staffing skills.

Four years on, Place Alliance have returned to the field. Their 2021 report *The Design Deficit* was summarised by its lead author, Professor Matthew Carmona of the Bartlett School of Planning. Using a Freedom of Information request, Place Alliance were able to get a high response (71 per cent) from local authorities. The figures revealed a position little better than in 2017, with low numbers of in-house urban designers. Landscape architects had reduced further. Public

engagement in design was still taking a back seat and design review remained patchy. At the present rate of progress, it would take until 2077 before each local authority has at least one urban designer. In attempting to cope, too much was falling on the shoulders of hard-pressed planners or conservation officers. Local authorities have become dependent on consultants, who offer high skills but at a price, and inevitably lack the local knowledge of in-house staff.

Place Alliance also revealed concerns about training: CPD budgets have been slashed, and training limited to design awareness rather than substantial skills development.

Three days before the launch of *The Design Deficit* report, the Government had issued a new *National Planning Policy Framework*, which for the first time requires local planning authorities to prepare design guides or codes, in line with the *National Design Guide* and *National Model Design Code*. The new Office for Place – launched at the same time – is on hand to provide general encouragement and support.

The audience was keen to hear how this new requirement for local authorities would be resourced. Responding to the Place Alliance report, Joanna Averley (MHCLG's Chief Planner) and Nicholas Boys Smith (Chair of the Office for Place) welcomed the hard evidence on local authorities, and both seemed relieved that the position had at least stabilised. Boys Smith thought it was not just a matter of staff numbers; too much planning time is taken on reactive development

control and not enough on strategic planning (including, presumably plan-making, coding and guidance). He contrasted the UK with regimes in other countries, where more prescriptive zoning and mandatory plans are commonplace, but with less time-consuming development control. The system needed to change to ensure better use of the resources that we have. Boys Smith also thought that design quality was not just a matter of staffing, but reflected an economic imperative in deprived areas, a drive towards development at all costs that trumped investment in design.

The session ended with a historical perspective from Alan Stones, formerly of Essex County Council. Alan described the positive work that a well-resourced, multi-disciplinary team could achieve, pointing to the influential *Essex Design Guide* as an example.

The Place Alliance report concludes with firm recommendations for central government, the Office for Place and senior staff in local authorities. Over the coming months, their willingness to act will be watched closely.

Funded by the Urban Design Group and supported by the Design Council, the report is available at <https://placealliance.org.uk/research/design-deficit/> ●

Geoff Noble, urban designer and heritage consultant



Andy Karksi 1947-2021

Andy Karski, who died aged 74, was a kind, influential and enthusiastic planner. He was a lifelong supporter of the Urban Design Group.

Andy spent over 30 years leading good practice and teaching. He had a very clear ethical code about the role and purpose of planning and urban design. He broke down silos and saw planning and urban design as a coherent whole.

Andy was born in Poland and spend some of his early life in Australia before

moving to Ealing in London. He trained as a planner at Manchester University, graduating in 1970. Following time at Llewelyn Davies, and as a well-respected senior lecturer in planning and urban design at the Polytechnic of Central London (now the University of Westminster), Andy joined Tibbalds Partnership in 1985, where he stayed until his retirement. His key works included local and regional planning in Milton Keynes, the Covent Garden Area Action plan in the mid-1980s, and the Solidaire Beirut rebuild plan of the early 1990s.

He firmly believed that good planning was indivisible from good design. To him, planning was about real places, clear strategies and achieving positive change. He wanted to make a difference and was not keen on working on reports that would just sit on a shelf.

Andy was very sociable and easy to get on with. Everyone you would meet when out with Andy was delighted to see him and to catch up. To many of us working with him it seemed that he had former students and protégés in every local authority across the country. He had great pride in his former students, colleagues past and present, and his family.

Andy made a huge contribution to good practice in planning and urban design, although he was never keen to be in the limelight, especially if it stopped him from

getting on with his work making policy or shaping places. He was involved in spatial planning and strategic urban design through CABE, was a strong supporter of the RTPI, an Academician and director of the Academy of Urbanism, and together with Janet Tibbalds strongly supported the Francis Tibbalds Trust.

Whilst Andy was a very committed town planner in the broadest sense, he also had a very strong love of the sea, and he would often describe how he only became a planner after he was not able to join the Royal Navy. He took any opportunity to take a boat trip or cruise to explore a new place or part of the world, with his wife Jenny. Projects near the water, a harbour or a seaside location were often his favourites. He loved drawing and didn't see any reason why this wasn't something a planner should be doing. Andy's interview in 2011 in *Planning* magazine *The Reluctant Optimist* captures his energy, commitment and positive view on what planning can achieve.

I was fortunate to have known him as my mentor, always supportive, offering encouragement and opportunities to learn. It is with great sadness that I am writing this obituary and my thoughts are with his wife Jenny, their three sons Michael, Alex and Steve and their children. ●

Katja Stille, Chair of the Urban Design Group



Savills Urban Design Graduate Scheme 2022

As employers and practitioners, it is essential that we create a clear pathway for newly qualified urban designers to develop a broad range of place-making skills, and offer them opportunities to flourish and design places of the future. Savills Urban Design Studio launches its 2022 national graduate programme this October. As part of the scheme we provide a two-year initial programme to help develop urban design knowledge and skills through engaging in a variety of project scales and interventions. This ensures a sound foundation for future

career paths as urban design professionals and helps to work towards becoming an Urban Design Group (UDG) Recognised Practitioner. The launch of the programme will invite applications for a new intake of graduates throughout 2022. This initiative has now been running for 12 years and is part of the Savills graduate programme that won The Times Graduate Employer of the Year award for property 14 years in a row. It is a testament to the importance and value we place on supporting graduates.

The shortlisting process includes a

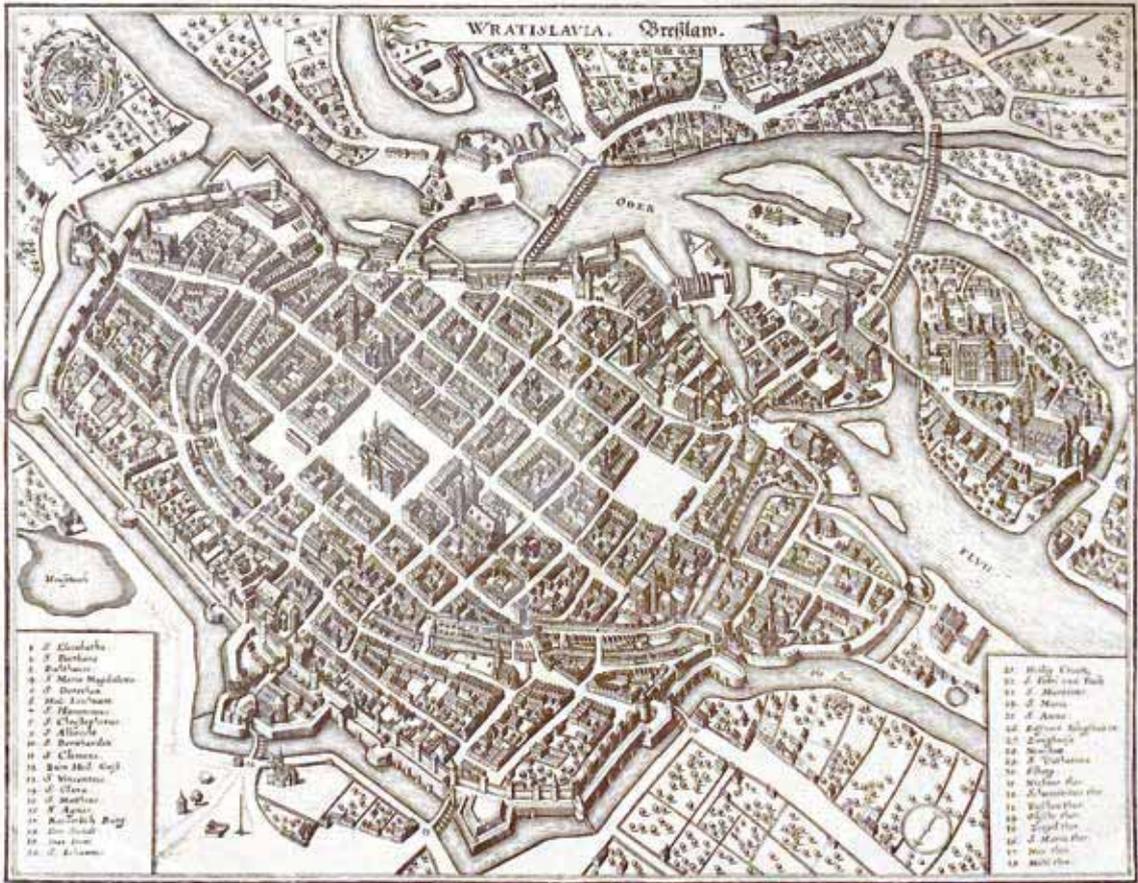
day-long workshop event in London where we see applicants work together to develop a masterplan for a site as they would in a real life situation, assessing the constraints and opportunities, working together to create ideas and presenting their schemes. We make the event a fun day and Robert Huxford, the UDG's Director, joins us to help explain more about the group, and how to work towards Recognised Practitioner status.

The successful graduates will have the opportunity to be involved in projects across the country, covering brownfield and greenfield projects, new communities, regeneration and mixed use developments. They will also be involved in community engagement events. We not only ensure that they get the training needed for their profession as designers, but also help them with broader life skills such as presentation or business development. Above all, by working in our national studio we ensure that the graduates develop their confidence and continue to enjoy being creative urban designers. ●

Peter Frankum, Director, Head of Urban Design Studio, Savills

See www.savills.co.uk/graduates or contact graduaterecruitment@savills.com

Follow us on twitter @SavillsGraduate



My Favourite Plan: Stefan Kruczkowski

Wrocław c1650, Source: Unknown



WHY I LIKE IT...

A wonderful find from a street market beside the Brandenburg Gate in 2017 is my plan of choice. As I leafed through a box of antique plans, I came across this delightful plan of Wrocław. Located in Poland's Silesia region, I first visited the town in the late 1990s.

Dated c1650, the plan is an axonometric representation of what is now known as the Old Town. With its rich detailing, the plan not only shows the sequence of streets and

spaces but the composition of the individual blocks, allowing fascinating glimpses into their core, as well as the scale and detail of individual buildings. Wrocław's 13th century medieval market square and its Gothic town house can be clearly seen, with the tower visible across neighbouring rooftops. It is almost an early version of what Google Maps 3D offers us today, although much more impressive when you think what would have been involved in the 17th century to create such an exquisite plan.

WHAT TO LEARN FROM IT...

In recent years, the government has been strengthening the value it places on urban design within the planning system and produced new publications to support that. The use of regulatory tools such as design codes that involve local communities and other stakeholders in the design of places is being encouraged. Those who attend public consultation events will know how difficult it can be for a non-designer/ planner to read, interpret and visualise a layout plan. How can we create codes that are clear, concise and easily understood, particularly when we know many local authorities have little or no in-house design expertise? It is easy to imagine using an axonometric with notations to codify, for instance, an infill to an existing urban block – and how easy this would be for non-designers/ planners to understand.

Looking back at the Wrocław plan, one begins to realise the wealth of information it contains. If it were a representation of an unbuilt place, it could be regarded as a form of urban coding. It clearly shows the movement

network, the sequence of streets and spaces, building to building and building to street relationships. It shows heights, roof form, public and private spaces. If a coding process wanted to omit any reference to architectural style, building elevations could be simplified and only show doors to the street, remaining silent on window proportions and other details that might suggest a particular architectural style. ●

Current position

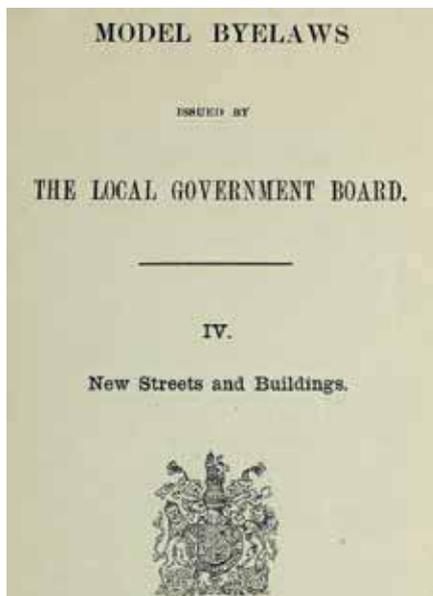
Owner of Urban Design Doctor Ltd providing support and advice to local authorities, Homes England, Design Midlands and Design West. Previously Principal Urban Designer, North West Leicestershire District Council; CABE Enabler; Design Council Built Environment Expert.

Education

BA (Hons) Urban Planning & Management, Diploma in Town Planning, University of Nottingham PhD, Nottingham Trent University Graduate School

Ambitions

To see a new generation of urban designers working for local authorities across the country, perhaps being mentored by experienced local government designers. Without a new generation, the local government urban designer will become an extinct species and no one will be left to implement government design quality aspirations on the ground.



Urban Design Library #39

Model Byelaws, IV New Streets and Buildings, issued by the Local Government Board 1877

Poor public health was a major concern in 19th century England, caused by outbreaks of diseases such as tuberculosis and cholera, as well as fire and the poor construction of buildings. Half of all deaths were due to infection, and the life expectancy of children born into labourers' families in industrial cities fell to less than 20 years of age. The scientific understanding of the spread of disease and the promotion of good health was limited, and was influenced by a view that the causes were overcrowding, bad air (miasma) damp, and a lack of light.

In response, the *Model Byelaws* were created as an integrated system of building control, street and urban design, together with public health measures that governed development in England from the mid-1870s for the next half century. Their significance is immense: over a third of today's houses in England and around a quarter of the current total length of urban streets were built in compliance with the Byelaws.

The *Model Byelaws* were part of the *Public Health Act 1875*, which enabled local authorities to determine how a landowner developed an estate by dictating the layout of streets and the erection of buildings. The Act also created powers to regulate parks, pleasure grounds, mortuaries and slaughterhouses, to control lodging houses, and to create systems of sewers. Necessary work was to be funded by rates and loans. Local authorities were expected to implement the Act by creating byelaws, subject to approval by the Local Government Board. The Board produced a set of model byelaws to aid that process. The Royal Institute of British

Architects was involved in providing advice on the Byelaws for new streets and buildings. Private publishers produced guides to the *Model Byelaws*, adding explanations, case law and local variations approved by the Local Government Board. Successive editions of the byelaws provided new and amended clauses reflecting new legislation (e.g. *Public Health Acts Amendment Act of 1890*) and advances in best practice.

REACTIONS TO THE MODEL BYELAWS

There were objections to the *Model Byelaws*; in 1901, *Country Life* magazine for example, ran a campaign against them and portraying them as vexatious and oppressive, adding unnecessarily to the number of officials paid from rates. The campaign characterised the Local Government Board as reactionary and bureaucratic, and protested that the Byelaws added unreasonably to the cost of building, promoted the deadliest monotony, destroyed all traditional building design, stultified invention and prevented improvement. One cynical argument was that the new standards made it impossible to construct cheap houses for labourers, leading to the construction of fewer houses and therefore increasing overcrowding and disease. There was also resistance to political interference and additional taxation. Even so, one of the main arguments for making improvements was economic: disease created orphans and families that were then dependent on poor relief, which was paid from the rates.

REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

There are strong parallels between the 19th and 21st centuries. Ignorance continues to be a huge barrier with concerns taking decades to be recognised and addressed. While science has advanced greatly, even in the 21st century it has taken time to explain the principal means of transmission of SARS Coronavirus II, leading to mistakes in epidemic control and a void in our knowledge, filled by denial and quackery. Politicians and the public remain blasé about long term threats such as biosecurity and climate change.

Tensions between the private and public sectors persist. There is conflict between those who demand regulation and those who advocate a *laissez-faire* approach. Some companies trade on their reputation, while others try to get away with doing little. The *Model Byelaws* were criticised for promoting monotony, but the authors of the monotony were housebuilders motivated solely by profit. In 2021, pursuit of profit leads water companies to discharge untreated sewage into coastal waters and rivers, and housebuilders to build housing that falls far short of zero-carbon standards. Windowless housing, now possible thanks to permitted development regulations, was prohibited by the *Model Byelaws*. There seems to be an eternal cycle of regulation followed by deregulation, followed by disaster and re-regulation.

The 1875 Act called for 'fit and proper persons' to be employed by local authorities. Professional standards and skills are an issue today, highlighted by the 2021 *Urban Design Skills Survey*, and brought into sharp focus by the Grenfell fire and the subsequent public inquiry. At the very least, a local authority needs to have sufficient in-house expertise to enable it to act as a 'competent client'.

Epidemic diseases cast a shadow over the 19th century, and in preceding centuries too. We forget that the Black Death was not a one-off outbreak, but a recurrent epidemic which, along with other diseases, reduced the population to such a degree that no new towns were built for two centuries. To think in terms of a post-pandemic world is to ignore history. When we plan, design and build, we must have pandemic resilience in mind.

Perhaps the main lesson to draw from the era of the *Model Byelaws* is that, although it took 50 years to respond to public health crises, when the measures were followed, they were effective; deaths from infectious diseases fell progressively and a century of good health followed. Yet despite obvious benefits, people campaigned against public health measures in the 19th century and people do so in the 21st century. For anyone thinking about campaigning for public health, zero-carbon, active travel or beauty: don't expect quick results and be prepared to continue long after the first victory. ●

Robert Huxford, Director, Urban Design Group, with grateful thanks to Judith Ryser

READ ON

MHCLG, Building Regulations, Approved Documents A to R
DfT/CLG (2007), *Manual for Streets*, Thomas Telford
CIHT (2010), *Manual for Streets 2: Wider Application of the Principles Highways England/ DfT (updated 2020)*, *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges*
Water UK (2018), *Sewers for Adoption, A Design and Construction Guide for Developers*
CIRIA (2015), *The SuDS Manual, C753*
MHCLG (2021), *National Model Design Code*
Local authority design guides and standards.

Climate Change Digest Global

This edition highlights work that will be emerging at COP26 in November, and new research and guidance.

NEW RESEARCH AND GUIDANCE

CCC: Independent Assessment of UK Risk

The Climate Change Committee (CCC) has published two key documents: the first is an assessment of risk highlighting the key impacts of climate change and the need for action to prepare for these. One of the headline risks is overheating in the existing building stock which the CCC says needs much more serious and urgent action. The report states that there is 'good evidence that around 20 per cent of homes already overheat even outside heatwave events. The risks of heat-related deaths are projected to triple by the 2050s without additional adaptation'. A specific briefing on housing is provided alongside the report.

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/independent-assessment-of-uk-climate-risk/>

<https://www.ukclimaterisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CCRA3-Briefing-Housing.pdf>

The second report is a progress report and provides a comprehensive overview of the UK Government's progress to-date on reducing emissions and adapting to climate change. The assessment again emphasises the 'large deficit in the delivery of adaptation' and the risks to health and well-being of overheating buildings. New building regulations and planning reform are suggested as part of the answer, but it is clear that much more action is needed to overhaul the existing stock.

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/2021-progress-report-to-parliament/>

Meridian Water/ UKGBC Playbook

The Playbook developed through the Meridian Water scheme as part of the UKGBC Foreground programme has been launched. It has been developed as a 'living' Miro

board, and is intended as a collaborative resource for use by local authorities and their partners. It provides guidance on development and investment models, procurement approaches and community engagement/ local supply models, alongside 34 case studies providing much needed precedents on how to do things differently.

<https://www.bristolhousingfestival.org.uk/projects/2020/04/ukgbc>

https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_IC4jRns=

UKGBC Delivering Nature based solutions

A series of publications have been launched emphasising the role of landscape and nature in tackling the climate crisis. The first of these is UKGBC's report *Principles for delivering urban Nature-based Solutions* which seeks to establish more ambitious targets for nature-based solutions, climate resilience and environmental net gain. Six principles are set out to inform design and delivery. For urban designers, the headline findings on p12-13 will be useful with up-to-date figures on the benefits and costs of each intervention.

<https://www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/principles-for-delivering-urban-nature-based-solutions/>

Natural England – The Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool

This tool uses a habitat-based approach to consider the direct impact of land use change across 18 ecosystem services. Part of its role is to 'expand net gain approaches to include wider Natural Capital benefits such as flood protection, recreation and improved water and air quality'. Natural England is looking for projects to take part in more in-depth evaluation of the tool. It is a precursor to the future Environmental Net Gain calculator requiring developments to deliver 'betterment' such as surface water quality, air quality, health and well-being.

<http://nepubprod.appspot.com/publication/6414097026646016>

BREAKTHROUGH PROJECTS

Little Factory // La Petite Fabrique

A publicly-funded research and development team called the Ecological Transition Gateway has used bio-house design principles to deliver two school libraries and a classroom

as part of a school extension in Paris. It is the first time that many of these building techniques have been used including using wood, straw and cardboard for the building structure and insulation.

<https://passerelle-ecologique.paris/la-petite-fabrique/>

COP26

UKGBC Whole Life Carbon Road Map.

The UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) is one of several European Green Building Councils developing national whole life carbon roadmaps under the #BuildingLife project. To be launched at COP26, the Road Map will set out clear sector-based carbon allowances, targets and actions.

<https://www.ukgbc.org/ukgbc-work/net-zero-whole-life-carbon-roadmap/>

Race to Zero

The United Nations are inviting cities, regions, businesses and investors to join the Race to Zero campaign in the run up to COP26. Wales and Scotland have already signed up, and your business or organisation could join too.

<https://unfccc.int/climate-action/race-to-zero-campaign>

Renewable Nation: Pathways to a Zero Carbon Britain

Good Energy, one of the UK's renewable electricity companies, has been working with the Energy Systems Catapult to look at how the UK could reach zero emissions by 2050. Their report details six pathway options, and focuses on the differences between two key options: the Baseline scenario, taking an orthodox approach to net-zero, and Zero Carbon Britain, a high renewables world informed by lessons learned in other scenarios. The report sets out key findings, principles and recommendations, including 'doing the known now', or 'addressing Britain's very low rates of energy efficiency in buildings; removing barriers to mature renewable technologies; and increasing net-zero innovation funding to 1.5 per cent of GDP.'

<https://www.goodenergy.co.uk/business/exclusive/renewable-nation>

Jane Manning with Joanna Wright, Mitch Cooke and Julie Fletcher



CCC Assessment of Risk



CCC Housing briefing



CCC Progress report



La Petite Fabrique



Renewable Nation

For key sources of information and further reading. Simply hold your smartphone over the QR code whilst in camera mode and you will be taken to the relevant web page.



Natural England tool



Net zero roadmap



Playbook launch



Playbook Miro board



Race to Zero



UKGBC Nature based solutions

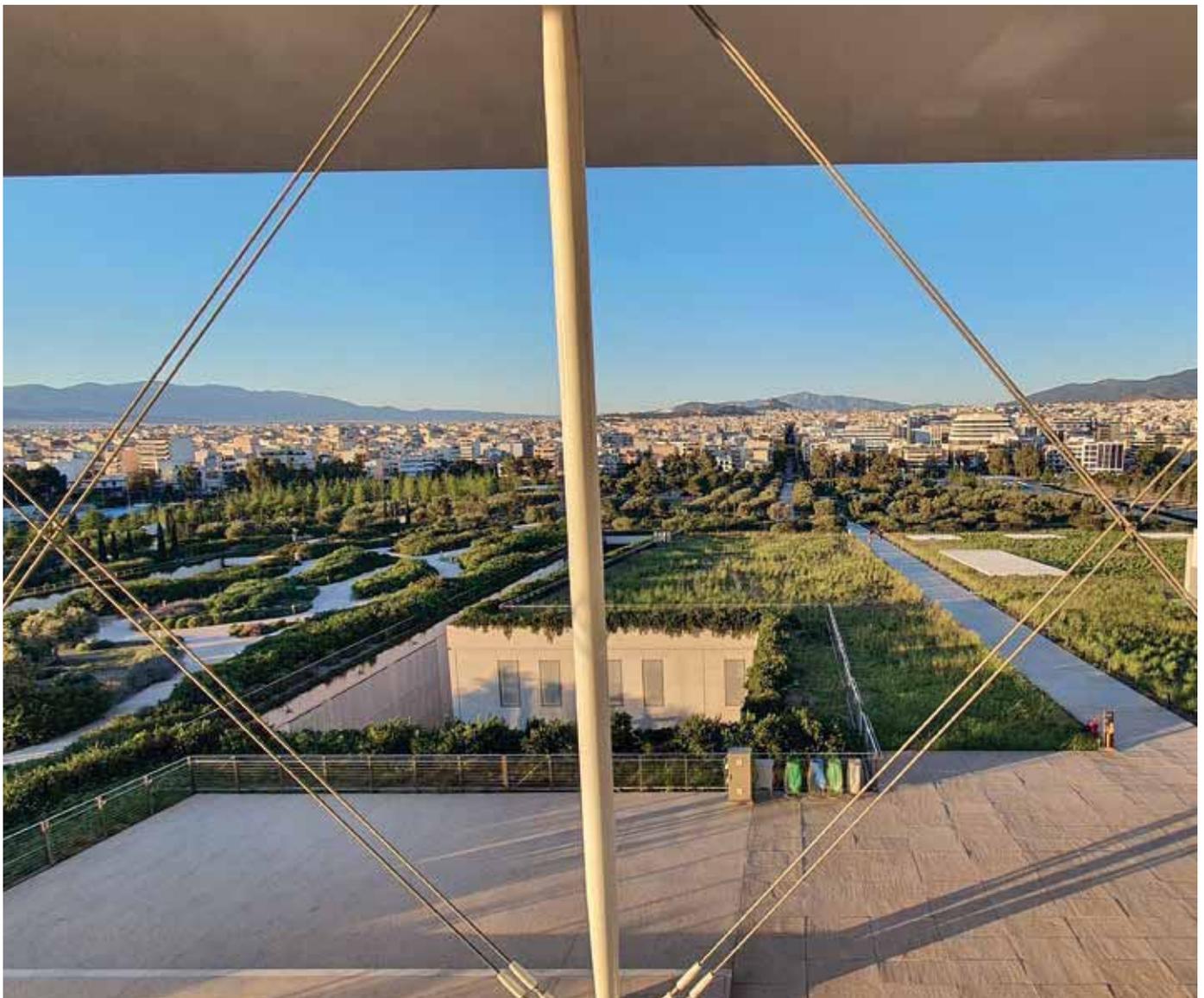
Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre, Athens

A former 2004 Olympic Games car park has been transformed into a cultural and educational destination by Renzo Piano Building Workshop. It houses the National Library of Greece and the National Opera beneath a sloped park.

In each issue of *Behind the Image*, one of our contributors visits a contemporary public space from around the world. The photography tries to reveal an alternative perspective on a familiar precedent, famous space or place. These images illustrate how the

public space works in practice: exploring its features (designed and unintended), and the way it relates to the surrounding context. ●

Lionel Eid, George Garofalakis,
Rosie Garvey and Alice Strang



Axis and views: the scheme was developed by creating an artificial hill at the southern edge of the site, providing spectacular views towards the sea in one direction and the city centre on the other. The Esplanade is the main axis of the site in the north-south direction which conceptually links the Acropolis and the Temple of Zeus with the sea.



An enormous visual respite: the sloping park rising up to 32metres above sea level, is populated with indigenous Greek flora. Designed by Deborah Nevis & Associates, this landscape, which runs on top of the roof of the opera house and library, softens the roofscape of the new buildings and creates an enormous visual respite by providing a generous green open space at the edge of the built-up city.



Activities: dispersed through the park are areas of activities for all ages such as urban gymnasiums and small playgrounds.



Fronting the sea: located near one of Athens' oldest ports, an elevated pedestrian bridge connects the site to the seaside – overcoming the physical and visual barrier of a major highway.



Responding to climate: the glass-walled reading room at the top of the building is located underneath a canopy, providing essential shade to it as well as to the spectacular terrace which is publicly accessible.

Details: the palette of materials used for paving and surfaces across the site mirrors the slightly coarse texture and pale colour of concrete typically used across the city.

Material Reuse in Urban Regeneration: The Concept of Circularity

Raphael Saillard explains how a toolkit approach can help better decision-making for developers and designers

In his 1969 book *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth*, R Buckminster Fuller compares the Earth to a spaceship. Indeed, our planet is a limited ecosystem with limited resources and has been orbiting in space for several million years. From this point of view, our survival as a species depends on the good use and management of this heritage.

In 1972, a group of scientists named The Club of Rome published a study, *The Limits to Growth*, that used computer simulations to produce scenarios on the interactions between the Earth and human systems. They showed that unlimited growth was not sustainable and could reach the end of Earth's capacity in a median scenario by 2050. In 2019, Earth Overshoot Day occurred on July 29 which means that everything taken from the Earth after this date depletes its ecosystem's ability to recreate the resources taken for human consumption. For example, the equivalent of 20 Eiffel Towers per hour are used for metal consumption, and one Olympic-sized pool of concrete is poured every 15 seconds. Scientists and academics are warning us against this ever-approaching deadline with a new discipline called collapseology, explained by Servigne and Stevens in *How Everything Can Collapse: A Manual for Our Times* (2020). With more than half of the world's population living in cities, humans are at the front line of this environmental crisis.

CIRCULARITY & WASTE

While the term circularity covers a lot of concepts and good practice, many are about material lifecycles. Recycling, reusing and reducing have been at the core of good resource management for some time, with material reuse being one of the most intricate issues in the reduction of waste, exploitation of resources and awareness of good practice.

The construction industry is responsible for 40 per cent of overall green-house gas emissions, 45 per cent of controlled waste and 50 per cent of material consumption, according to EU statistics published in 2019. The built environment plays a key role in exacerbating the scarcity of resources worldwide and its consumption of raw materials could double within the next 40 years

based on projections by the OECD in 2018.

Material reuse as part of a circular economy strategy can significantly decrease the negative impacts that construction generates on natural resources, as well as the level of waste production. This research sought answers on how to maximise material reuse in urban regeneration projects through the circular economy concept, how to limit resource exploitation and waste production, improve the resilience of the local economy and add character from heritage elements.

BERMONDSEY BISCUIT FACTORY

The choice of a test site in London – the Biscuit Factory in Bermondsey – was guided by two intentions that bring together the implementation of material reuse and the circular economy (CE) in urban regeneration. Firstly, the site presents a strong identity with the remains of the old factory buildings. It contains resources to implement material reuse, as well as some heritage value for an urban regeneration project.

Secondly, the site is owned by the Grosvenor Group. Land owners of this nature are part of what is known in England as the great estates. They have a long-term vision for their assets, and are attached to heritage and cultural conservation. As developers, they would be more inclined to experiment with material reuse on their estates to add substantial value to their properties, as well as paving the way for exemplary practices.

THE TOOLKIT

The design toolkit developed here is a step-by-step process to implement material reuse in urban regeneration projects. It impacts all stages of construction from design to operation, and includes key design principles from a literature review. The toolkit aims to find the optimal solution on material reuse at every stage of the process. The loop can be started again at the end of a development, working as a circular process of decision-making.

The first phase of the toolkit is diagnostic to decide which process to adopt and implement for each element. Deconstruction is the second stage, implementing material passports for reclaimed elements. Each material is either transformed for reuse, recycled or re-purposed depending on its

condition. The third stage is the Catalogue of Possibilities taken from the case studies, such as Actlab. It aims to create construction certifications for reclaimed elements. It also proposes to train skilled workers on reuse practices and maximise the reuse spectrum. It is a transitory phase that advertises reuse to the local community.

The construction stage follows the design principles of Design for disassembly (Dfd) and Reversability. The lifecycle assessment of a product starts when the material is used. It aims to reuse waste produced by the construction industry on-site thanks to a resource centre. The operation and use phase optimises the material lifecycle by implementing new features or reusing waste materials as urban space features.

Reuse practices must involve all stakeholders, including developers, who can adapt their projects to the materials and building stock available. Engineers and manufacturers can propose products that are suited for Dfd, with elements that can be reclaimed and recycled. Urban designers and architects can design spaces that are reversible and made of reclaimed elements. Urban design has a key role to play in experimenting with the many possibilities of reuse and demonstrating its innovative aspects rather than its constraints.

Design adds sensitivity and creativity to reuse. It is the visible features that will change the way that people look at sustainability. Creating identity and quality with reclaimed elements is at the forefront of raising awareness on the paradigm shift that the circular economy represents. Constraints are transformed into opportunities. ●

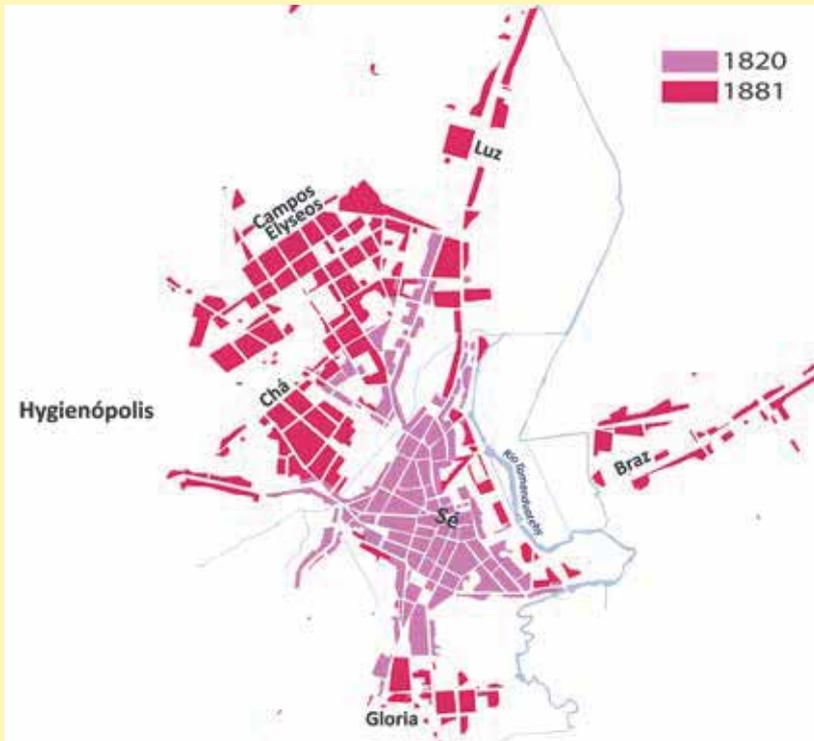
Raphael Saillard

This project was undertaken as part of the MSC in Urban Design and City Planning at the Bartlett School of Planning, UCL

1 The Design Toolkit and the five steps in the process

Community Mobilisation and Resilience in São Paulo

Colin Dunigan reports on issues at the epicentre of the Coronavirus



1

The world has changed dramatically over the past year with the relentless spread of the Coronavirus. This 'globalisation of disease' is having profound impacts on the livelihoods of the urban poor and particularly those working in the informal sector. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that the expected number of people in food insecurity in 2020 will increase from 135 million to 265 million due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This health pandemic is therefore turning into a hunger pandemic in many marginalised communities suffering extreme food insecurity and a lack of social safety nets.

The impact on the urban poor was acutely felt particularly in India during the first wave of the pandemic. Day labourers, unable to survive in the city during the lockdown, were forced to travel hundreds of kilometres on foot or on crowded buses to reach their rural villages. By spring 2021, the global epicentre of the Coronavirus had moved to India. A perfect storm of mass gatherings at religious festivals, political rallies, polling stations, low vaccination rates and new mutations of the virus meant that it spread rapidly through the country, overwhelming the healthcare system. There is also increasing concern that migrants working in Indian cities, returning to their home

countries during the latest surge of Coronavirus cases, are spreading the virus across the Indian subcontinent.

This article explores the historical roots of the 'hygienisation' of cities, how the Coronavirus is spreading through 'hubs of infection' in Latin America too, and the vulnerability of *favelas* to the virus. It also examines how one community in São Paulo has been mobilising and showing self-reliance and resilience in the global epicentre of the pandemic in Brazil.

PANDEMICS AND THE 'HYGIENISATION' OF CITIES

Epidemics have been hugely influential in shaping cities. In São Paulo, fearing disease and contamination and following the natural growth of the city, the wealthy started to move out of the city centre and into newly developed neighbourhoods such as Hygienópolis (literally, 'hygienic city'). According to a recent study of gentrification and urban displacement in Brazilian cities by Jeff Garmany and Matthew Richmond, the concept of *higienização* (hygienisation) emerged to reflect a particular form of postcolonial urban development. Hygienism not only changed the ways that urban poverty and informality were conceptualised in Brazil: it helped to establish the favela as

a place of contagion, hazardous to the city if not quarantined and eradicated.

Sonia Shah's recent book *Pandemic – Tracking Contagions from Cholera to Ebola and Beyond* (2016) also examines the global dissemination of pathogens through canals, steamships and jet airplanes, and the amplification of epidemics in the global metropolis. Parallels are drawn between cholera – which decimated slum communities such as Five Points in New York in the mid-19th century – and the new diseases that stalk us today.

HUBS OF INFECTION

Brazil is now considered to be the global epicentre of the Coronavirus and its health system is collapsing. Many fear that Latin America's urban food markets have helped to spread COVID-19 across the region. For many years, cities have been known to be incubators and gateways for the worldwide spread of infections. A 2015 study from Uppsala University in Sweden also found that megacities and megaregions that are super-connected are the incubators of pandemic outbreaks. This raises the question of whether it is mobility and increased transport connectivity that contribute to the diffusion of infectious diseases, rather than densely populated areas.

THE VULNERABILITY OF FAVELAS

The rapid expansion and *autoconstrução* (i.e. self-building) of *favelas* on the periphery of São Paulo and within the metropolitan region, has created the largest megaregion in Latin America. The driving forces behind self-building include central slum evictions, the impact of housing legislation and economic policy, and the expansion of transport networks; and the pull factors arise from rapid industrial expansion, intense poverty in the rural interior, and intra-urban migration. Contemporary problems of urban mobility and social exclusion on the periphery also crystallise São Paulo's inequalities which are exacerbated by high levels of urban crime, violence and poverty. The result is low mobility amongst the poor urban population, and their consequent social and spatial isolation in areas farthest from job centres.

Paraisópolis is the second largest favela in São Paulo and the fifth largest in the country, and together with the largest *favela* in the city (Heliópolis) formed the first ring of peri-urban *favelas* in the city. The *favela* is



2



3

home to over 100,000 people and is surrounded by high-rise condominiums or fortified enclaves in the wealthy district of Morumbi.

Urban space in Latin America's metropolises has been undergoing a deep transformation with the rapid expansion of gated communities or fortified enclaves. In Morumbi's case, many of the original *favelas* in the late 1960s and her book *Favela* (2010) re-examining these communities three decades later, also finds that the frame of reference for *favela* residents is not the millionaires in the neighbourhoods that surround them, but the impoverished rural families that they had left behind. In stark contrast to the well-to-do areas where no one knew their neighbours, she found that in Rio's *favelas* most people knew each other by name and took care of each other in times of crisis. The mutual support networks were part of survival mechanisms that the poor could count on to reduce the vulnerability of living on the edge.

By 2016, Paraisópolis had the highest population density in the country with over 45 thousand inhabitants per square kilometre. This high population density makes the community particularly vulnerable to the rapid spread of the Coronavirus, as crowded spaces and cramped living conditions make social distancing nearly impossible. Points of contamination also match public transport routes in São Paulo.

COMMUNITY MOBILISATION IN PARAIÓSÓPOLIS

During the pandemic, this *favela* has shown its resilience tailoring assistance to its specific environment and community's needs. The community has mobilised itself without assistance from the municipal government, and 400 new 'street presidents' became responsible for helping their neighbours secure food, aid and health care. The street presidents monitor the health of 50 families each, and 240 volunteers have been trained as emergency first responders. Two community kitchens have been set up by Paraisópolis Women's Association, a community organisation established in 2006,

- 1 In the late nineteenth century, the upper classes moved to the new neighbourhood of Hygienópolis
- 2 Socio-spatial segregation restructure and fragment the city creating a deep density divide
- 3 Self-building in Jardim da Paz peri-urban *favela* in Perus, Sao Paulo
- 4 Hot spots of contamination match public transport routes
- 5 Migration means there is a strong rural imprint on the population.



4



5

and they have been serving thousands of meals to those in need since the beginning of the pandemic. All resources are also purchased locally to empower the 14,000 small businesses operating there. The community kitchen is resourced through donations and with money from an online crowd-funding campaign, and networks of community organisations from myriad *favelas* have also set up similar virtual platforms and crowd-funding initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS

Communities across Latin America and *favelas* such as Paraisópolis have been mobilising and showing self-reliance and resilience during a global health crisis. They have an immense capacity to self-organise, identify their needs and tailor innovative low-cost solutions. The phenomenon of migration is also important in the formation of São Paulo's *favelas* and there is a strong rural imprint on the population. By self-building their own neighbourhoods, they also show a dynamism in founding and improving their settlements, and they have a strong tie to their dwelling and neighbourhood.

Paraisópolis has a history of community and organisation which has manifested itself clearly during the pandemic. It is these community and social networks which are increasingly important to the livelihood strategies of the urban poor and urban social sustainability on the periphery. The Coronavirus however does not discriminate or respect borders and has permeated deep into the interior of the country. The distribution of vaccines to remote riverside communities and indigenous populations has been a particular challenging issue in Amazonas state. It is hoped that this community's resilience, organisation and solidarity can be replicated across the region to curb the spread of the virus. ●

Colin Dunigan, Senior Urban Design Officer, West Suffolk Council

This article is based on university research on Latin American urbanisation and recent research on pandemics, urbanisation and the impacts on marginalised communities.

The ABC Of Quality Sustainable Design: Accountability, Balance and Collaboration

Laura Alvarez brings quality assurance and sustainable development together



1

The word sustainability has dominated the built environment discourse for decades but many are still unsure what it means and why it is so relevant to our industry. If we developed places in a more considered way, we would begin by understanding the ecosystem first, and contemplate how our intervention could impact on life in the long-term. But this approach is rare.

If, as designers, we could be certain that we had done our very best to achieve balanced design solutions with minimal negative impact across all aspects of sustainability, we could be satisfied that we have achieved a high quality result. Design quality and sustainability are so intrinsically related that it is often difficult to separate the two.

DESIGN QUALITY

Let's begin the debate about quality by exploring why we see poor design so often and so broadly across the globe. Some might immediately think about a lack of skills and sound approaches to designing quality.

However, besides the issues of knowledge, experience and ability, there is also the very important issue of defining quality.

The best way to understand the concept in any field or application is to begin with the quality assurance premise. This states that quality has to be present in the characteristics of the product, in our case a building or a place, and that it also has to be present in the process to arrive to that result, in this case the design process.

To ensure that quality is consistent, the process needs to be sound, clear and prescriptive. Evaluations against set criteria can then take place on both the object produced and the process itself. After regular evaluations or audits, the process can be revised as necessary to improve the quality of the next product. This is the key to quality control: an open, cyclical and continuous process of appraisal and update. If this way of working is not within the culture of those involved, quality can be hugely compromised.

In practice, many designers pay little attention to the process, which is mainly

dictated by clients and authorities. Even when designers might consider the whole lifespan of buildings from construction to end of life, they often have little power to influence what happens after the proposal is signed off. I have seen excellent designers producing poor results through no fault of their own. This is why achieving quality development with high sustainability credentials must become the responsibility of everyone involved.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

René Passet's spheres of sustainable development (1979) have been globally accepted for decades and are broadly applied in the industry. He asserted that sustainability is formed by three spheres: economy, environment and society. If we consider all three in equal measure, we can arrive at balanced decisions that minimise negative impacts on the planet.

As we tend to trade in monetary terms, the only sphere we can measure with some accuracy is the economy sphere. We can put a price on things and add it up in a spreadsheet. We can decide how to make that cost smaller or higher by adding and removing items from the list. We can establish maximum budgets based on our affordability and financial resources. Everything we do – and not do – can be measured by its economic cost, but there are not many ways of costing the other spheres.

This puts any negotiators seeking other values in a very difficult position, because they are comparing quantifiable monetary currency with something intangible. This lack of multiple currencies impacts on the sustainable credentials of developments. In addition, whilst there are many tools to aid the consideration of relevant aspects of all three spheres, we are not obliged or inclined to apply them.

THE ABC OF QUALITY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

I am proposing a different way of approaching design that brings together all the key concepts of quality and sustainability: the ABC of Quality Sustainable Design.

The concept is based on the idea that in order to appraise the delivery of a variable, this has to be accounted for; that good design requires all variables to be balanced in

1 The ABC approach of accountability, balance and collaboration ensures quality in environmental, economic and social sustainability

2 Sneinton, Nottingham: the Bentink Manvers Kingston Court towers recently transformed

3 Sneinton Market, Nottingham: a revitalised creative quarter

order to achieve the best possible solution; and that balancing decisions can only happen if there is good collaboration between fields.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The starting point is to situate the design in the Sustainable Development Zone labelled 'S' in Passet's diagram. The main characteristic of that central zone is that it encompasses all three spheres – economy, environment and society – in equal measure.

All of the building's lifespan stages, from design to disposal, need strategies that account for the three spheres of sustainable development, and this applies to both the built product and the process. This way, all agencies and parties involved would need to make all three spheres count somehow, recording measures and assessing assets, gains and commodities as much as they would normally consider financial budgets.

BALANCE

The only way to achieve more balanced judgements is to have a balanced measure. If decision-makers can clearly see the weight of all three spheres, they have a greater chance of making more informed choices that ultimately lead to more balanced results. This way, overall value for money could be clearly expressed without the risk of over-compromising on any of the spheres. This approach evidences the importance of negotiation skills and how designers need to be trained in working with trade-offs during the design process. For instance, planning officers might want a low building but they might accept an extra storey if that means providing larger green spaces.

COLLABORATION

The caveat with this approach is that, in order to negotiate trade-offs, agencies and experts from all three spheres need to work closely together. Crucially, all parties need to make their goals very clear, debate each other's expectations and create a shared vision from the outset. Along the way, everyone involved should refer back to that vision, evaluating the scheme against it to make sure that cuts or changes have not over-compromised any of the spheres.

This approach should become part of the design process, applied and repeated at all stages, for example during cost reviews and major design revisions.



2

THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We know how the sustainability agenda has developed since the 1970s. Initially, the industry tried to protect the natural environment; later on, innovative economic models began to emerge and, finally, the most recent outside the box thinking reflected the reality of climate change and the need to prepare for what it might bring. The idea of resilience, asset management and adaptation have dominated the scene. Gradually, the industry as a whole has focused on each one of the spheres, trying to understand them and coming up with tools to put that new thinking into practice.

The next step seems more than obvious: joining all the pieces by bringing all the knowledge together, and combining tools and areas of expertise to achieve more balanced solutions. But this would involve conglomerating different cultures, ways of working, goals and ethos. The task is a challenge, more so since areas of expertise are developed largely in isolation from each other, creating field-specific languages and focusing on very particular challenges. The best way to co-ordinate it all is through collaboration and mutual understanding. This will require a vast amount of skill and the development of new tools and software. The built environment fields will need to develop areas of expertise that are only just emerging. Landscape, nature and the social, perceptual and psychological dimensions of place will no longer be an optional nice to have and might even become additional planning requirements.

Balancing means applying a dynamic model, recognising that things change when we alter other factors. This is rather appropriate because it is the way that ecosystems work. Understanding how systems work means looking at what links all the pieces together, how the components affect one another and how things constantly change



3

and move around. Eventually, we will begin to realise that the drive for quality and sustainable credentials depends hugely on the system that we work in and the methods we use. Then the process will be as important as the built product: relations and exchanges will matter as much as what we build.

As we become more used to measuring the three spheres, asset management will be far better understood. We will know that making the most of what we have is an essential survival skill; this will mean that every time we implement change, we will carefully think about the implications of our interventions – good and bad – and the additional benefits that we can draw from them. Here is where the industry will begin to apply simpler, more cost-effective ways to achieve multiple gains without increasing investment, but simply by exerting more thought. Artificial intelligence will develop to help us link all of the variables that we could impact on through development: public health, education, culture, inclusion, economic growth and so on.

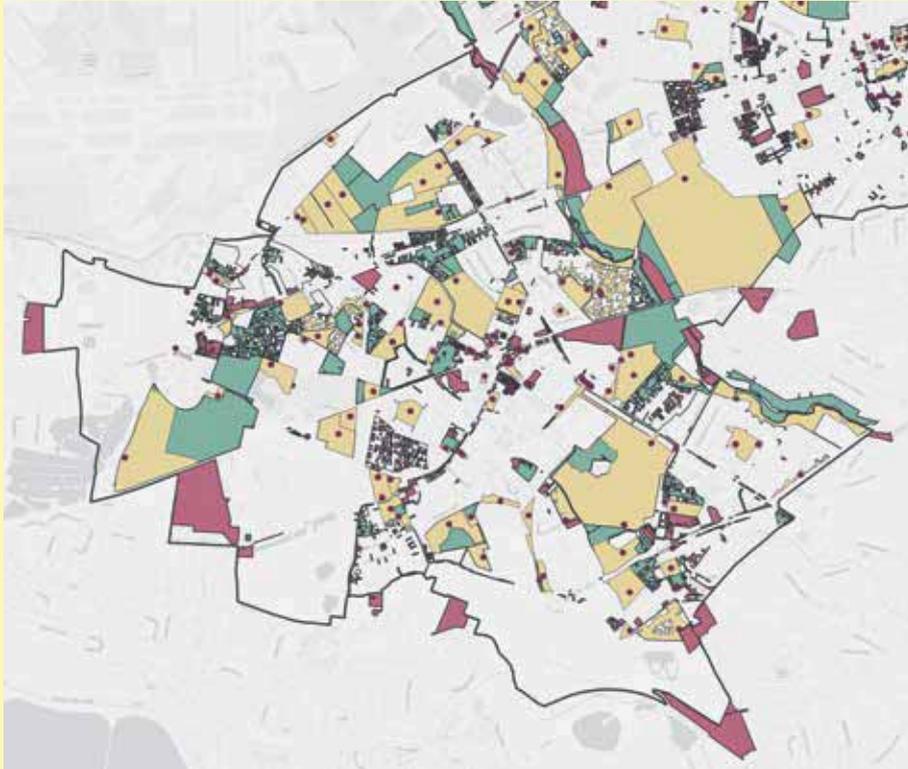
As these facets of the built environment develop, we will see the role of many agencies changing radically and the distribution of power re-balancing organically. I am particularly interested in the role of planning as a vehicle to bring together the highly technical with the social and psychological aspects of place.

If the very real and highly problematic current lack of applicable skills were addressed from a new perspective, the skills gap could ironically become an advantage. This could be the starting point of a culture change that accepts the inevitable re-definition of roles and powers and could lead us to a more sustainable future. ●

Laura Alvarez, Senior Principal Urban Design and Conservation Officer, Nottingham City Council, co-founding Director, alkiki healthy, happy, places, and UDG East Midlands convenor.

Urbantech – Will it Revolutionise Urban Design?

Malcolm Moor asks whether it is time for urban design to engage with the new tools available



1

In this overview of how digital technology or urbantech is being increasingly deployed to find innovative and rapid solutions for urban issues, I pose some key questions for urban designers. Are we as designers in danger of being edged out by new data-driven technology? How can we incorporate it into our working practices without losing design control? How should urban design training adapt to meet the challenge?

The term 'digital' embraces much wider issues than the acronym IT which was mainly concerned with computer technology; digital encompasses technology's broader role in society. The first Government Digital Strategy Advisor, Tom Loosemore, defined digital as 'applying the culture, processes, business models and technologies of the internet era to respond to people's raised expectations'. The pandemic has certainly heightened awareness of how our surroundings have an impact on our lives, and so this is a crucial time for urban design to help realise society's raised expectations. If digital technology can help to respond to these challenges, we should be investigating what technology is available and how to make best use of it.

The uptake of new technology is difficult to predict. It grows in stages in the form of an S curve following Bill Gates' dictum: 'We

tend to overestimate change in the short term and underestimate it long term'. This trend is demonstrated by the apparent slow take-up in the seven years since the publication of *Urban Design 132* on Data, Technology and Urban Design edited by Polly Turton, which addressed the development of data and technology for planning. There is now a proliferation of more advanced user-friendly digital technology applicable for urban issues, but adoption by urban designers appears patchy.

WHY ARE WE NOT EMBRACING THIS CHANGE?

A recent study by EY showed that 71 per cent of enterprises had accelerated their existing digital transformation plans; however, unless urban designers speed up the adoption of digital technology, they could be at risk of being left behind by digital specialists. The government has already put digital at the centre of its future economic policy, and has funded a number of accelerator incubators to speed up the creation of new tech businesses. These include the umbrella Future Cities Catapult as well as Geovation set up by the Land Registry and Ordnance Survey, with a mission to expand the use of location information in the UK's innovation community.

This has spawned several urbantech start-ups, particularly in London described as the critical node in the UK tech ecosystem by *Wired Magazine*. Bohub in Copenhagen is the rapidly expanding Nordic Tech Hub and is becoming a rival centre. The UK is also home to the Open Data Institute, promoting access to open and reliable data, including in the built environment, and has launched the Data Institutions Register to form a living repository of data institutions. Open and reliably managed data will be the main driver of the democratisation of urbantech worldwide, which the UK is helping to facilitate.

COULD URBANTECH REPLACE URBAN DESIGNERS?

A proliferation of urbantech start-ups are promoting their data-driven problem-solving capabilities directly to private and public sector clients, heightening the risk that urban design is bypassed as key decisions are taken elsewhere. Urban design is an iterative process where concepts are generated and tested against multiple programme and site criteria through progressive development stages, a process ideally suited to the faster processing power of digital technology. An online search reveals a multitude of new tech-based initiatives using innovative technology. These can deliver cheaper and quicker services to both the public and private sectors, using algorithms to sift out and answer specific property and place-related questions. They fall into two groups: rapid processors of huge amounts of place and mobility related data, currently the remit of town and transport planners, and detailed site and built form apps that can model and render numerous 3D massing options which can be dropped into prepared city templates; these are moving into the space occupied by architects and urban designers.

Site data processors include:

- **Urban Intelligence** – data-driven services providing a curated guide to relevant local authority planning information leading to faster assessments of the potential of land and property.
- **Urbano** – a cross-disciplinary project of the Environmental Systems Lab of the College of Architecture at Cornell University, investigating the intersections of architectural design, sustainability and building performance simulation.
- **Sidewalk Labs** – an innovation organisation run by Alphabet Inc tackling issues such

1 London Borough of Hounslow: Urban Intelligence were commissioned to complete a database of development opportunities for the emerging local plan 2 and 3 AccuCities CAD Level 3 model of proposed development superimposed on a 3D model of London, and some of the tools available.

as efficient transportation and energy use. The interactive 3D modelling and rendering platforms:

- **Plan.City** – the city design and planning app by AccuCities. Architects, developers and urban planners can rapidly evaluate a development site, visualise and evaluate proposed designs, and check these against a variety of planning restrictions.
- **VuCity** – a continually updated interactive 3D digital city platform for visualisations of massing, and daylight modelling for architects and developers.
- **Swiftera** – geospatial images which are continuously updating aerial photos from space for detailed site information.



2



3

CAN WE WORK WITH, RATHER THAN COMPETE WITH URBANTECH?

We should not be in competition with urbantech but should both recognize and appreciate its role in place-making. There are many towns and cities which we would like to engage with if we had more time and resources. Time can be lost due to multiple reasons: variations to briefs or reductions in budgets, or changes in the political and economic context, leading to abortive design work. Other delays can result from changes in site ownership, often with a new design team appointed and the risk of design history being lost.

A method of ensuring that all work done can be harnessed by subsequent designers would require creating a continuous secure data log or 'a golden thread of information'. This innovation was recommended in the Hackitt report on the Grenfell Inquiry to secure a digital record of all data and design decisions throughout the lifetime of a project. This would make more effective use of resources as previous work would always be accessible and design reasons clearly identified.

In *Urban Design 157* on Research in Practice Nicholas Goddard described how Arup has developed a similar tool called 'parametric design' which enables designers to react in real time to changes in land use, building typologies and massing. Tools like this which allow master plan models to respond to change without revisiting earlier work will reduce abortive work, enabling more time to be spent on design development as well as extending our ability to cover more places.

WHAT WILL NEW DESIGN TEAMS LOOK LIKE?

Most design teams comprise a multi-disciplinary range of consultants covering town planning, urban design, transport and landscape, chaired by the client's representative. Some sites also need specialists covering sustainability, drainage and ecology and each input advice as required. Should we be adding digital specialists to these teams, so that we can all focus on what we do best, or will each of us need to be trained to incorporate digital into our own work?

Certainly, both digital professionals and urban designers need to understand each other. Whilst tracing a clean site plan by hand might appear inefficient to a digital professional, to me it is critical to the creative process and to develop my deeper understanding of the site at the outset. I suspect that some of our reluctance to engage may be a fear that we will lose design control and may, in a worse-case scenario, lead to producing homogenous designs with little sense of identity or place.

New forms of hybrid working need to evolve, incorporating our existing skills, particularly those in place-making, enhanced by the new tech accessing more data to inform our designs. This will include the use of social media and other online sources to extend public engagement and deepen local consultation. Urban design practitioners have told me that this is an exciting time to be in urban design with so many new tools to improve designers' skill sets. Working on real projects with tech developers, trialling and evaluating different urbantech, will steer the direction that we want tech to develop rather than us playing catch-up.

CAN URBAN DESIGN TRAINING MEET THE CHALLENGE?

Academia needs to be at the forefront of change by incorporating urbantech modules in courses, to meet the raised expectations of students wanting to engage with new technology to expand their skill base and further their careers. Understanding where to find and use appropriate data whilst also being able to generate and model proposals in 3D will soon be essential skills. Introducing more tech modules in urban design courses may have the added benefit of attracting a more diverse range of students from a wider range of backgrounds to join the profession. Upskilling will include training through both ongoing professional development and university courses.

A new Masters Course in UrbanTech at the New York City campus of Cornell Tech University states: 'Our goal is to shape the field of urban tech with a human centered approach that focusses first on the people that use the technology'. I agree with their focus on the users, as graduates will need to demonstrate a hands-on knowledge of tech, as well as traditional urban design skills, to progress in the profession. Broadening our skill base will help urban design to continually improve its ability to stay relevant in this new environment, while raising overall standards to benefit more communities. ●

Malcolm Moor, Malcolm Moor, urban designer and joint editor *Urban Design Futures* (2006)

Colleagues with experience of urbantech who wish to collaborate on future articles or a special issue of *Urban Design* are welcome to get in touch: malcolmmoora@aol.com



Visualisation of proposals for Perry Barr, Birmingham by Arup

The New Post-Corona Neighbourhood

Ten years ago in issue 115 of this journal, *21st Century Suburbs*, I set out a series of ten emerging principles and suggested a philosophical approach for 21st century suburban housing. Since then much has happened, and then again very little has happened. Pandemic, technical, digital and societal changes have taken place, but little has changed to reflect them in the nature and form of the built environment, and housing in particular. In 2020, Matthew Carmona has led the Place Alliance to re-run CABE's *Housing Audit*, the outcome of which considered that only 26 per cent of new housing environments were of very good or good quality. So housing has not improved, and neither has our design approach. Are we wasting our time, treading professional water? Will the return to 'normality' mean the continuation of the same settlement and housing typologies, or has the pandemic exposed what we already knew – that we were building the wrong neighbourhoods in the wrong places, supported by the wrong policies and delivered by the wrong developers?

There has been a lot of discussion about the 15-minute city arising from the work of Jan Gehl, Carlos Moreno and Wulf Daseking. In this country this idea is more like a 20-minute neighbourhood: there is a difference in interpretation. Perhaps it would be worth defining district and neighbourhood; the city is seen as a series of political districts or *quartiers*, while the district is more geographic or administrative, and comprises several neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood conjures up a social dimension; one talks of neighbourliness not districtness. The 20-minute neighbourhood's size is governed by a nominal walking time of 20 minutes and within it are most of the necessities for work, leisure, amenity space

and community facilities, in other words what is needed to make a neighbourhood a social entity and a place, and not just a dormitory.

Whilst this may be easy in existing locations, and the experience of Didier Couval-Grima in Paris is worth noting, there has been much discussion about how urban designers and planners can use this concept in new urban extensions. We may need to consider the neighbourhood as part of a larger aggregation: after all, neighbourhoods grow into districts, which in turn grow into towns or cities. Are neighbourhoods part of urban extensions, or the goal? How many neighbourhoods provide the requisite facilities? URBED's 2014 *Wolfson Economics Prize* report talks about greenfield development as a series of neighbourhood 'snowflakes' that make up the strategic expansion of a city with its existing service and movement infrastructure.

Will we miss the opportunity that the pandemic provides to find a way of changing how we, as urban designers do things, or are we in fact somewhat powerless in the face of a very centralised system of decision-making, emasculated local power, risk management, increasing uncertainty, and what Janet Morphet has called 'institutional indeterminacy'? We are in danger of forgetting the voice of good urban design. It is very helpful that Andy von Bradsky and David Rudlin are raising the flag of urban design in the form of the MHCLG's *National Design Guide* (2021), the *National Model Design Code* (2021) and other guidance, and emphasising the importance of an integrated and interdependent approach to the built environment; but there is still much to do.

Have we wasted the last two years by not looking at how we want to live in the 21st century, in the light of families stuck in flats with no balconies, dwellings with no elasticity for home-working, space standards that assume we only sleep in our houses, and no sense of a living neighbourhood or place, belonging, or distinctiveness?

We have to change. As Benjamin Zephaniah has pointed out, COVID-19 is a wake-up-call, and we shouldn't think of returning to a pre-pandemic normality as that in effect resulted in this pandemic. So in this issue, we are suggesting that we learn from what we have been doing. Let's remember Jane Jacobs' mixed use diversity, local economic eco-systems, compactness, and family-sized apartments. As she said, '...does anybody suppose that the answers to any of the great questions that worry us today are going to come out of homogenous settlements?'

The UDG is in a unique position to act as an active progenitor, bringing together a variety of interdisciplinary strands to put forward a more appropriate philosophy for the design and development of new neighbourhoods. This isn't the start of the debate, but it could help to direct the way that urban designers can affect the quality of the built environment for the better.

In this issue, a number of thinkers, commentators and practitioners present their views of how we could take advantage of this period of change. Richard Pickering sets the scene with a view of the future property market and the implications of the lifestyle changes that have taken place due to the pandemic. Matt Lally and Chris Pountney explore the other looming catastrophe – climate change – and how it and the pandemic might be

addressed. Roger Evans calls for resilience and the need to unpick much of our planning and design systems. Joanna Rowelle considers some of the soft urban design structures that need to be put in place to ensure that social value is prioritised over economic factors, while David Rudlin looks at what the new normality might mean.

Looking at urban design opportunities in a post-pandemic world, Ambrose Tsui and Stefan Kruczkowski compare Hong Kong's development intensity with what is seen by some as the profligate waste of space in UK settlement patterns. Victoria Lee writes about the importance of using infrastructure as a way of setting the development agenda and creating better connectivity. Didier Couval-Grima dissects experiences in the *quartiers* of Paris where the 15-minute city is not only the policy of Mayor Anne Hidalgo, but is now being implemented. Lastly I conclude with a call for a more active urban design charter and a wider debate on how we get to the new post-Corona neighbourhood. ●

Jon Rowland, guest topic editor, urban designer and masterplanner, architect, anthropologist, author, director of JRUD Ltd and owner of Jon Rowland Art.

REFERENCES

- Jon Rowland, Steven Bee, Esther Caplin, Dr Nicholas Falk, Janet Sutherland, Stephen Gallagher, 2019, *Better Housing for the 21st Century*, AoU
- David Rudlin, Dr Nicholas Falk, Jon Rowland, Pete Redman, *Uxchester Garden City: Wolfson Economics Prize 2014*, URBED
- Janet Morphet, *Applying Leadership and Management in Theory and Practice*, 2015, Bristol
- MHCLG 2021, National Design Guide, National Model Design Code, *Guidance Notes for Design Codes*
- Jane Jacobs, 1972 (original 1961) *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Penguin.

The Legacies of COVID-19 and the Force for Change

Richard Pickering looks at how the neighbourhood will be altered



1

When looked at through the lens of a lifetime, the pace of urban change can feel glacial and inert. However, this confining perspective ignores a series of massive and disruptive changes to cities that have taken place over the course of history. If we journey back in time, we see events such as the birth of agriculture, the creation of city walls, the industrial shift, and massive suburbanisation in the past century. These events have changed human history and radically affected the design of cities and neighbourhoods. We stand on the cusp of what will be an equally impactful change, one that was well-trailed but, in the post-COVID-19 landscape, will develop much more rapidly than previously expected.

Historic changes to the urban environment tend to be driven by two things: firstly, there needs to be a want to change, and secondly a vehicle to achieve it. The want typically arises from social shifts and is driven either by ideological progression or by dissatisfaction with the status quo. Meanwhile, the vehicle for change – that which makes social shifts possible – almost always comes from new technology. New technology comes from new knowledge, and new knowledge comes through experimentation and innovation, which is accelerated in response to need.

THE RISE OF THE SUBURBS

An example of this is perhaps the biggest change to urban form in modern history due to the massive suburbanisation of the

first half of the last century. There was a social desire for change: cities were overcrowded, unsanitary and polluted. A burgeoning middle class was dissatisfied, and the equalisation of income was not matched by better living conditions. Enter a solution: the Bessemer process combined with the steam engine gave rise to the passenger railway, allowing the middle classes to escape the squalor of the city to new leafy suburbs, detached houses and peaceful neighbourhoods, whilst still remaining connected to their sources of income. The footprint of many big cities doubled or tripled within just 50 years of the introduction of rail.

Fast forward to the present day. Again, we see large-scale dissatisfaction with big cities. Since the financial crisis, easy monetary policy combined with a chronic undersupply of new homes has seen housing costs spiral upwards. Meanwhile, underinvestment in infrastructure, pollution, crime and a poor public realm have reduced the value of cities. The solution to

1 The passenger railway radically reshaped our neighbourhoods. Image from Retro AdArchives / Alamy Stock Photo



2

the previous problem, commuting, has now become a problem in itself. Combined with the fact that we are working longer hours than in recent history, the commute adds further time penalties that have made our lives worse. Enter a solution: digital communications technology has been growing in importance over 25 years. In 1995, the internet was for a niche; now it is ubiquitous, and its influence is still growing exponentially. Today everything can be done remotely: shopping, working, and even socialising. The fact that we all needed to adapt to enforced distance over the past year has radically accelerated this trend. This, rather than public health impacts, will be a defining legacy of COVID-19 and the force for change (both positive and negative) in the coming years.

THE FUTURE OF WORK

The advent of digitalisation now threatens to break the concept of distance entirely. Again, this will create positives and negatives. What appears certain is that many white-collar workers will no longer be in the office five days a week, but maybe two or three days. This means that on other days, they will be at home in their neighbourhoods, connecting to their workplaces through digital means. Having dispensed with their commutes, workers will have more free time and money to spend locally and are unlikely to travel significant distances on these days. We have seen this already last year. As normal options were removed, people relied more on local shops and became more active in their local communities, and this is likely to persist. However this is a change for middle class office workers who are only a small percentage of people in the UK; others like nurses, shop assistants, teachers and bus drivers will still need to travel to work. Nevertheless, office workers do command disproportionate spend and influence. We should expect to see the re-emergence of local amenities to support this change, and this feels like a positive step for local neighbourhoods.

The nuance is important. Those who have found working from home the easiest over the past year have been those that have long commutes, big homes and young families. They have taken back the hours spent travelling, have had sufficient space to work at home, and valued the longer time with their families. For those in their early 20s, living in inner urban locations and sharing a small apartment with a group of friends, working from home has been a real challenge. The commute was always less of an issue, social contact, excitement and being in the buzz of the city were key drivers, but due to accommodation issues, their ability to work was compromised. This group might well be back in the office five days a week amplifying the split between young and blue-collar inner urban neighbourhoods, and old and white-collar ex-urbs.

2 Digitalisation threatens to break the concept of distance entirely

THE ROLE OF CITY CENTRES

Digitisation is also affecting other activities. The brown cardboard packages arriving on doorsteps at an accelerated rate over the past year will prove an additively convenient way of shopping. It feels inevitable that this will continue to eat into the physical share of retail. Again, nuance is important, and this applies to both working and shopping. We buy things online largely to resolve functional needs. It is the boring bits of work and shopping that are being digitised, which means that the elements reserved for the physical world should in theory be more exciting. In shops this means shopping experiences, retail theatre and brand engagement. In work this means interactive tasks, social networking and activities that benefit from combinational thinking.

These exciting activities will remain in city centres. Visions of the 15-minute city where we dismantle amenity into chunks and distribute them widely into walkable quarters are utopian and run contrary to established economic principles. Major culture or amenity provision like cinemas and hospitals are reliant on large catchments and the scale of economies that only city centres or dense urban quarters can provide. Meanwhile, the majority of people live in two-storey suburbs where the urban form and occupational density have already literally been set in stone by physical development and legal title. Whilst these are likely to be given new vibrancy in the form of for example more cafés, and hopefully better supported community projects and public realm, they simply cannot support the larger amenities that would be needed for a true 15-minute city.

Hence the city centre will remain the exciting focal point for society. As some forms of work are sucked out to the home, the city centre will become more concentrated on interaction, and the traditional boundaries of offices, shops and leisure will start to blur. Already, we are seeing the emergence of new hybrid typologies including co-working venues and retail cross-over formats. Rather than internal-facing corporate prisons, the office of the future will be more permeable, particularly at ground floor to reflect the new work model and the new purpose of the office as a creative hub.

Indeed, the home itself now also becomes a hybrid asset, needing to address the needs of being both somewhere to sleep and somewhere to work. At the moment, few home workers have a home office. Some will permanently convert their dining rooms or broom cupboards to offices; others might build extensions or upsize. For many who live in flats, this will be more challenging, and will exacerbate existing inequalities, although these might be tempered by

the fact that office workers who live in flats (again, typically younger people) tend to have shorter commutes and benefit less from working from home in any event.

DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

Finally, digitisation will not just affect the economics of cities, it will embed the fabric and operation of neighbourhoods. Over the past year, physical connections within neighbourhoods have been augmented by digital ones. Apps like *nextdoor* have provided a new way to interact with neighbours. Over time the exponential rise in internet-connected devices will provide a vehicle for the automated delivery of public services; furthermore digital connectivity will provide greater neighbourhood participation in local democracy and planning.

Much about the future remains as obscure and uncertain as ever. However, what does feel certain in the post-COVID-19 landscape is that change will be delivered more rapidly. Counter to commentary about the dehumanising nature of technology, its impact in this context is as the enabler of a more human society, built around more flexible and more individually tailored ways of living. This is a good thing. In the meantime, change can be disruptive on many levels.

CHANGE AND OBSOLESCENCE

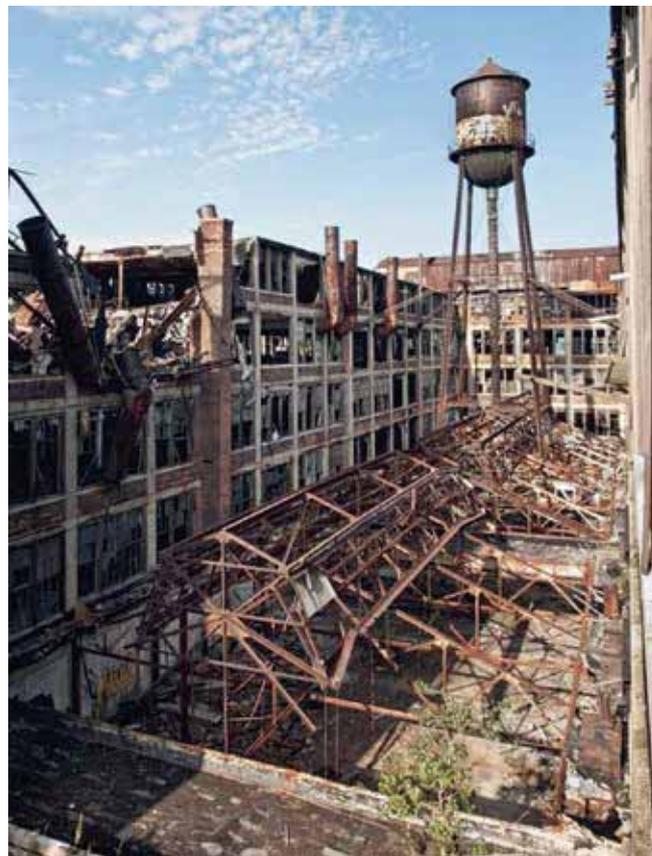
In a real estate context, the companion of change is obsolescence. As activity patterns shift, the real estate shells that accommodate historic activities will become less economically relevant. On the one hand this should stimulate the development of new real estate concepts and neighbourhood formats which respond to the change. We need to be ready with an open mind to facilitate these concepts. On the other hand, it will create redundancy in some assets or potentially whole city quarters. If we want to avoid a similar blight to the disused factories in the shift to a service economy, we need to be proactive in managing this change. Both elements have a common solution which is a hands-on public sector prepared to facilitate change through planning and drive change through investment in infrastructure, and the compulsory acquisition of failed assets. Visionaries and risk-takers in the private sector, willing to invest in new products not yet empirically proven to succeed, will also be required.

It is easy to visualise the neighbourhood as a physical concept. However, neighbourhoods have been defined over centuries as physically proximate communities with significant face-to-face social contact. This social element rarely holds true in the modern age. Through reconnecting work with the neighbourhood, social interactions must surely increase. This provides a new foundation for the neighbourhood, upon which the buildings of the future now need to be designed.

THREE RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, the public sector must be enfranchised, resourced and willing to lead change. A passive or reactionary public sector will result in stymied city quarters, as shifts in demand lead to obsolescence that the private sector will either be unable or unwilling to address. Local authorities need forward-looking policies, stronger compulsory purchase powers and a political willingness to support change. Meanwhile, new units of government should emerge to address the expanded regional boundaries resulting from dispersed working, and conversely very localised issues resulting from change.

Secondly, the private sector needs to take a longer view and be willing to roll the dice on new real estate concepts. Most commercial real estate investors are risk-averse institutions which seek out long and secure income streams. However, most are incentivised on short-term index outperformance. Change, obsolescence and flexibility do not sit neatly in this context. On one hand, new funding sources with long horizons are required to create meaningful long-term investments in neighbourhoods. On the other, it is the more adventurous investors who



3

In a real estate context, the companion of change is obsolescence. As activity patterns shift, the real estate shells that accommodate historic activities will become less economically relevant

will drive progress by reimagining real estate concepts in line with how people now want to live.

Finally, this change will be disorientating for many, in the same way that massive industrial change was for the Luddites. Whilst there are many positives in what lies ahead, including the potential for strengthening local community ties, we need to be mindful of the potential rise of inequalities. As commuting was for the middle class, the growth of the internet and the opportunities it creates clearly favours those with white collar roles. We need to move towards a new social contract which protects those who will be relatively disadvantaged by change, and ensures that the neighbourhoods of the future will be rooted in diversity and equity. ●

Richard Pickering, Chief Strategy Officer UK, Cushman & Wakefield, co-head of the C&W's EMEA Futures programme, and thought-leader on the future of real estate

3 Proactive management of obsolescence will be an important feature of change

Beyond Net-Zero: Climate-Positive Neighbourhoods

Matt Lally and Christopher Pountney describe neighbourhoods that give rather than take



To avoid the most severe impacts of climate change, global greenhouse gas emissions must reach net-zero by the middle of the century. Given the rapid rate of global urbanisation, towns and cities have a pivotal role in this level of climate action. Whilst radical urban retrofitting is a major part of the solution, many places will continue to grow outwards, with new and expanded settlements occupying sites that have long been countryside. Such sites are precious, but handled with care, sensitivity and ambition, projects at the neighbourhood, district or new town scale provide opportunities to chart an ambitious pathway forward, setting a clear vision, pioneering new policy, achieving critical mass and economies of scale, and demonstrating new models of delivery, governance and funding.

A RADICAL SHIFT

The pandemic is changing the way that we view things. Our experiences have emphasised the importance of local amenities and our relationship with nature. It has thrown a spotlight on the quality of home environments and how these influence both mental and physical health and well-being, and prompted us to ask profound questions about the future of work. It has revealed deep social inequities.

Responding to these changing views requires a radical shift in how we design new neighbourhoods way beyond current preoccupations with environmental impact mitigation. It means going further than 'lean-clean-green' place-making and sustainable development. It is about new restorative and regenerative design practices, adopting an approach of 'living system design' focused on delivering net gains, places that give rather than take.

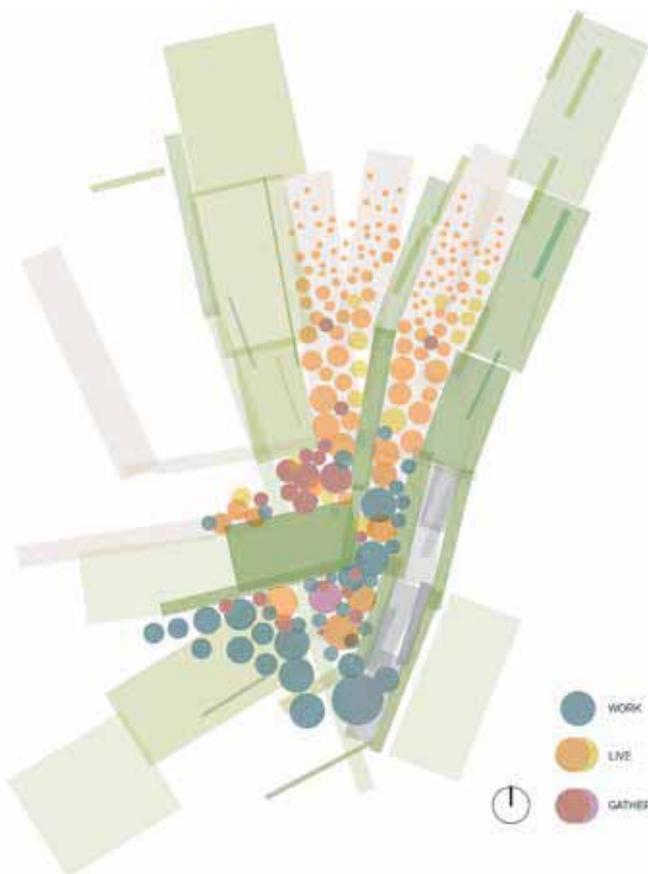
The philosophy is to create a net positive impact on natural systems within a built environment to delight the senses, whilst simultaneously:

- achieving carbon neutrality
- actively improving the health of ecosystems
- embracing circular economy measures
- maximising social value, and
- helping to build resilience to future shocks and stresses, whether from flooding, societal tensions, economic dependencies or the impact of a future pandemic.

THE CASE FOR CLIMATE-POSITIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Creating new climate-positive neighbourhoods is key to delivering a net-zero thriving future. This starts by conceptualising a neighbourhood as both a place and people, and as a complex web of systems related to natural and man-made processes. As a place, the neighbourhood includes infrastructure and buildings, public and green spaces. The people include residents, workers and visitors of all ages, genders, races and abilities and with different needs. The neighbourhood

1 The Wellcome Genome Campus brings places of work and living together around shared social spaces. Image by Arup



2

systems incorporate environmental processes such as those related to flood catchments, to business supply and demand chains, and to the social glue related to community interaction, democratic governance and municipal services.

A neighbourhood needs to have a minimum of 1,500 homes to support a primary school and other local services, and be part of a settlement of at least 25,000 people to offer a high degree of self-containment and easy access to a secondary school and other services (Hickman, 2010). It has sufficient scale, density and diversity to grow a community, justify investment in long-lasting and high-quality social infrastructure, and provide a hub for low-emission public transport. As a place, it provides a variety of spaces to bring people together, form connections and avoid loneliness. As a gathering of people, the neighbourhood provides a social unit that is potentially supportive and communal, with shared aims and ambitions.

WELLCOME GENOME CAMPUS MASTERPLAN, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The proposed Wellcome Genome Campus expansion in Hinxton, south Cambridgeshire is a model research and innovation community focused on world-leading innovations in genomics and biodata. The overriding intention is to create a place where anyone, from scientists and students to members of the public, can come to learn about this field of science and explore its applications and implications.

The campus plan comprises 150,000 sqm of employment uses, 1,500 homes and a range of amenities within a landscape that reflects the unique qualities of the area. Located on a 110 hectare site in a predominantly agricultural landscape, the masterplan responds sensitively to the specific local character through a network of open spaces that promotes health and well-being, and a focus on environmental land management that includes natural drainage systems and improved biodiversity and soil health. An ambitious travel plan aims to significantly reduce car dependence and increase public transportation opportunities, cycling and walking to and from the campus.

Conceptually, the neighbourhood grows outwards from a new common, attracting and facilitating the co-mingling of a variety

of uses: research, housing, public amenities, a hotel, education and a space for food, beverage and retailing. This public space is a place of gathering that connects the research and innovation cluster, the residential neighbourhoods to the north, and the wider local communities. The scheme delivers 7km of new cycleways and 11km of new walking routes, and adds 16 hectares to an existing 5 hectares of woodland. Fifty per cent of the site will remain undeveloped, allowing for new habitat creation, outdoor leisure and recreation, allotments and farming.

CLIMATE-POSITIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

A climate-positive neighbourhood will be planned, designed and delivered to minimise emissions throughout the development’s lifecycle. It will achieve this in ways that meet the needs of people and provide a high-quality and resilient environment, enabling the community and its economic base to thrive. It will actively support people to reduce emissions and live restorative and regenerative lifestyles.

However a climate-positive neighbourhood is not about independence, but has a local focus. It must be joined to adjacent neighbourhoods, districts and towns by high-quality, reliable and accessible physical and digital connections. It should create positive impacts beyond its boundaries, amplifying net gains and being a catalyst for wider change. A climate-positive neighbourhood has two inextricably linked goals that address both the climate imperative and promote quality of life.

Goal 1 – Green: Net-zero emissions and climate resilience

In a climate-positive neighbourhood the buildings, energy, transport and waste systems are designed, constructed and operated to minimise annual operational emissions. The embodied emissions in new construction, whether buildings or infrastructure, regeneration or retrofit, will also be minimised. Any residual lifecycle emissions will be counteracted in a robust and transparent way. Alongside this, the neighbourhood will promote and drive initiatives that help to reduce emissions associated with the goods and services its residents consume. The climate-positive neighbourhood will also be resilient to shocks and stresses caused by a changing climate. It will achieve this through inclusive climate action that ensures vulnerable and marginalised people are prioritised and heard.

Goal 2 – Thriving: Resilient people-centred places

A climate-positive neighbourhood meets the needs of its people and strengthens quality of life. Its people, businesses and

2 The Wellcome Genome Campus Masterplan embraces the unique landscape qualities, and places a new Common at its heart. Image by Arup

systems can survive, adapt and prosper no matter the shocks, stresses or climate-related impacts they experience. All residents can access goods, services, education and employment in a fair and inclusive way, while the urban realm provides a vibrant, safe and friendly environment for all. The neighbourhood is distinctly human-scaled, encouraging healthy lifestyles and providing seamless connectivity to the city and beyond.

By addressing these goals, a climate-positive neighbourhood will become a highly desirable place to be, demonstrating emissions reduction in practice, and standing out as a front-runner for other neighbourhoods to follow. This is the most secure basis for ensuring long-lasting emissions reduction.

TEN DESIGN APPROACHES

Ten design approaches address both green and thriving goals and are drawn from the recent *Global Guide Book (2021)* that Arup has prepared with C40 Cities. Many of these will be familiar and are a model for net-zero climate-resilient urbanisation

that is socially beneficial and which can be widely supported, rapidly endorsed and replicated. Key concepts and example actions are provided.

These approaches interrelate and should not be treated independently. Maximising the impact of one design approach will require the support of others. For example, a major shift to active travel needs to be supported by physical infrastructure, new facilities and communications campaigns. Extending ambition in one area will open up new opportunities in another. For example, designing new buildings to make use of modular and demountable techniques will promote new training and skills in the construction workforce. These should

DESIGN APPROACH	KEY CONCEPTS	EXAMPLE ACTIONS
1. Close to home with thriving streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compactness and mixed use • Proximity and decentralisation • Active public realm • Adaptable spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible hybrid building types • Local administration hubs • Micro-logistic centres
2. People-centred zero-carbon mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority to street space • Good street design • Tactical urbanism • Zero emissions vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar powered car ports • School streets • Car-free weekends
3. Physical and digital connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically connected • Digitally connected • Smart and efficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero emissions transport networks • Electric/cycle last-mile deliveries • Green building management systems
4. A place for everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially inclusive • Engaged stakeholders • Cohesive communities • Equitable distribution of benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergenerational living • Cooperative and participative housing • Citizen kiosks
5. Clean construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimised existing assets • Designed for the future with circularity • Efficient low carbon materials • Clean construction sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repurpose and retrofit existing buildings and infrastructure • Design for modularity, change of use and deconstruction • Telematic controls for construction vehicles
6. Green buildings and energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimised energy demand • Future energy infrastructure • Decarbonised energy supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massing, topography and solar and wind orientation • Enhanced building fabric specification and use of renewables • Capture waste heat
7. Circular resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimised resource use • Avoided waste • Circular priority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water efficiency and reuse • Sharing schemes for bikes, vehicles, toys and electrical products • Maker spaces and allotments
8. Green and nature-based solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-functional and accessible open green spaces • New healthy places • Embedded climate resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Versatile parks and play • Indigenous planting • Biodiverse buildings and infrastructure
9. Sustainable lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy sustainable choices • Service-based and sharing economy • Maximised social value • Changed behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise green and social benefits • Partnerships for zero-waste and upcycling • Community emissions dashboard
10. Green and inclusive economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New green skills and jobs • Spaces to support sustainable businesses • Transitioned to the green economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-working, flexible, affordable, green workspace • Shared equipment, workshops, fab-labs • Green supply chains

support the drive to reduce emissions whilst also combining to deliver high-quality, thriving places.

These measures will be most impactful when they are adopted early in the development cycle. Many of the highest impact opportunities require deliberate decision-making. The approaches intertwine to inform the neighbourhood vision and objectives, identifying key stakeholders and setting the development brief. It will also be necessary to track the implementation and effectiveness of these measures throughout the development cycle. It is not sufficient to design for best practice; thought must be given to implementation, including construction and on-going maintenance. The end-user, whether resident, worker or visitor, should be a particular focus.

L'INNESTO, MILAN, ITALY

Milan is embracing a bold regeneration strategy for its first carbon-neutral social housing development. Winner of the global C40 Reinventing Cities competition, the plan presents an innovative carbon-free and resilient design solution for the regeneration of underused urban space. The design embeds circular economy principles from the strategic planning stage and unlocks value for all stakeholders: private sector investors, the public sector such as the Milan municipality, the rail administration FS Sistemi Urbani, the university and local residents.

L'Innesto is an urban sustainability sandbox. The partnership between the public and private sectors is expected to be a replicable and scalable intervention to test carbon-neutral initiatives and inform future policy-making. It offers a unique social housing model where collaborative living is expressed through a system of spaces for multifunctional neighbourhood use. This social, physical and technological infrastructure is designed to bring residents together. The project involves the construction of public and semi-public spaces: living rooms and kitchens for communal use, workshops, gardens and services on the ground floors of the buildings and neighbourhood guesthouses. These communal facilities are to be managed in an integrated manner by residents, non-profit operators and local stakeholders.

The development is to have a decentralised district heating system powered by renewable sources, including an urban wastewater heat-recovery system. To achieve net-zero emissions within 30 years, the buildings are designed to a near-zero energy specification and will be built with a pre-assembled construction technology, enabling the modular structures to be disassembled and recycled.

AVOIDING GREENWASH AND SETTING THE RIGHT PATHWAY

Taking the right path requires commitment and dedication. Sustainable Communities, Millennium Villages and Garden Towns have come and gone, purporting to be exemplars but often falling short of their ideals. An increasing number of developments also purport to be carbon-neutral developments, but with scant evidence to back up these claims. To set ambitious but realistic action plans, this new paradigm needs to be approached with rigour.

Neighbourhoods are complex systems and it is essential that a climate-positive neighbourhood is supported by a robust, evidence-based emissions assessment. The most effective way to achieve this is to implement a strategic development pathway that embeds climate and liveability considerations into each of the five core stages.

Successfully developing a socially and economically thriving, climate-positive neighbourhood requires a strategic and holistic approach. Investing in standalone technical solutions will not be enough. It will involve for example, placing the neighbourhood within relevant land use strategies and development policies, establishing programmes of capacity-building, and directing staff and funding in the pursuit of common goals.

Climate-positive neighbourhoods will create green jobs, offer lower energy bills, provide more accessible transport options,



4

improve waste management, and incorporate green infrastructure, all of which benefit other urban agendas such as inclusivity, equity, prosperity, resilience and quality of life.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

In conclusion we see three priorities to facilitate the creation of new climate-positive neighbourhoods:

- 1 Ensure that planning reform supports them, including a clear and universal definition and assessment methodology for net-zero carbon neighbourhoods.
- 2 Upskill the planning and development industry to achieve these standards and living system design approaches to deliver net positive outcomes.
- 3 Maximise the opportunities that large-scale development brings, with new delivery models deployed that have net-zero carbon and social value prerogatives at their heart, including incentivisation measures and strings attached to all public sector funding. ●

Matt Lally, Associate Director, Integrated City Planning, Arup

Christopher Pountney, Associate Director, Energy, Cities and Climate Change, Arup

REFERENCES

Hickman et al (2010) Spatial planning for sustainable travel? *Town & Country Planning*, February 2010
 Arup and The C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (2021), *Green and Thriving Neighbourhoods: A pathway to net-zero featuring the '15-minute city'*

3 From *Green and Thriving Neighbourhoods: A pathway to net-zero featuring the '15-minute city'* by Arup and the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (2021)
 4 L'Innesto, Milan, Italy: net-zero carbon specifications include circular economy principles within a fabric of social spaces. Image by Barreca & La Varra

Social Value and New Neighbourhoods

Joanna Rowelle explains how social value is being recognised at all scales



1

Social value has become a bit *de rigueur* in development, but is also a topic that at times feels nebulous and hard to grasp. Research that Arup has conducted with the Institute of Economic Development found that ‘both the public sector and industry identified many challenges to the successful delivery of social value, with consensus on one of the biggest barriers – the lack of understanding on what social value is’. It can be difficult therefore to know how to deliver it well. Moreover, there is a propensity to seek to monetise all impacts and value to the point that some intangible outcomes – such as civic pride, aspiration in children, or strong and cohesive neighbourhoods – are in a bucket of ‘softer’ elements. Yet surely these are the very outcomes that can raise value for both the people who live in and adjacent to new neighbourhoods, and those who deliver them.

UNPACKING SOCIAL VALUE

What is social value, how can we build it, create it and sustain it when designing and delivering new neighbourhoods? Here ‘new’ means places being delivered including part of new garden towns or villages, or development corporation propositions. Measuring and monitoring social value in a new place can be hard to define. Social value is about meaningful change for existing and new communities, and thus thinking about whom social value is being delivered for and how, needs to reflect on the widest possible benefits and impacts which might be felt beyond the red line of a development. Local people who are about to

experience change need to know what benefit will be delivered for them.

Social value can be described as a series of elements; whether they are to be measured and monetised, or act as guiding principles for place-making, at the very core is the notion that public benefit is extracted from all new development and investment. This will ensure that people feel part of the journey and the evolution of that place. If we are to plan for and design new neighbourhoods that work, we should plan and design them to be inclusive and meaningful for all.

Places constantly change and so delivering social value is a continual process, which should include the following elements:

- A healthy, natural and climate-resilient environment
- High-quality jobs, workforce equality and diversity
- Local and inclusive economic growth
- Relevant and empowering training and education
- Accessible and high quality homes, transport, technologies, goods and services

1 Visualisation of proposals for Perry Barr, Birmingham by Arup

- Empowering and just governance and partnerships
- Local procurement and supply chain opportunities
- Inclusive, accessible and active community spaces
- Representative and enriching culture and heritage
- Safe, connected and proud communities
- Good connections to other places, adding to the local context.

Together these elements provide good outcomes for both people and place, and have an enduring nature so that they can deliver change in the long term, as well as providing shorter term quick wins.

Building more than hundred homes per year in a new neighbourhood creates the challenge of critical mass, which needs careful thought and investment embedded across all phases of delivery. However, new neighbourhoods have the potential to avoid some of the inherited consequences of loss of biodiversity, and address the need for land restoration and socio-economic disparities.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIAL VALUE

The *Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012* increased the focus on generating additional value from public spending, with the New Social Value Delivery Model introduced in January 2021. It embeds social value further into public sector procurement. For example at least 10 per cent of scoring in a procurement exercise must now rest on social value. The Delivery Model also addresses the following which should be embedded in projects and programmes: COVID-19 recovery, tackling economic inequality, fighting climate change, providing equal opportunities, and well-being.

These outcomes can best be achieved through stronger partnerships between the public and private sectors. There is growing consensus that greater social value can be created if a project lifecycle approach is taken. The recent review and update of the *Treasury Green Book* (used by central Government to appraise public spending and value for money) has broadened the way that previously hard-to-quantify outcomes are evaluated, putting greater emphasis on place and sustainability. These changes should see benefits in how public spend is delivered and decisions made.

Social value elements need to integrate the *UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* as the Delivery Model does, setting a framework for social, economic and environmental measures, which can be applied to different projects and agendas at different scales.

ACROSS PROJECT LIFECYCLES

Whilst the idea of social value has been embedded in procurement, there is a growing consensus that greater social value can be created if a project lifecycle approach is taken, to best embed and deliver the outcomes defined above. This is not just about how we deliver projects, but how projects are planned, designed, built and operated over a long period of time, recognising that communities adapt and evolve.

It is essential therefore that those responsible for the creation of new neighbourhoods ensure that social value is developed and placed throughout the lifecycle of the development, including through the RIBA Design Stages 0-7. Social value can and should be embedded across all built environment projects, including infrastructure such as transport, energy, digital, schools and so forth. The best projects are also those that monitor and measure their impact, learn lessons and keep striving to improve.

The National Infrastructure Commission’s report *Design Principles for National Infrastructure* (2020) placed much importance on social value and emphasised that infrastructure should be designed for people, places and the environment (not engineers or architects). The significant budgets and geographical scale of major infrastructure and new developments mean that the wider off-site benefits can potentially be very large.



2



3

Infrastructure projects in particular need to look beyond the red line to ensure that all parts of a community are taken into consideration through the lifecycle of a project, with strong and impactful consultation and engagement.

We are working with government departments to better show how to appraise and deliver social value, akin to an Environmental Impact Assessment – a Social Value Impact Assessment or Statement. Building on the current social value legislation, this approach demonstrates a deep commitment to social value by the public sector and is impacting how development is planned, designed, and delivered.

One of the key principles to deliver has to be strong partnership-working and leadership. Without strong and confident leadership from either the public sector or private developers and investors, social value cannot be achieved to the best standards. Social value needs a strong ambassador (be it a person or institution) throughout the delivery of a project. Arup’s recent work on new delivery vehicles, including locally-led development corporations in the East Midlands and Gloucestershire, places the need to deliver the best possible social value and economic outcomes at the centre of propositions. Adopting a locally-led governance approach provides the opportunity to embed strong local partnerships in the project and put existing and future communities at the heart of the proposals. This includes ensuring that jobs are accessible and relevant, increasing employment, diversifying skills in the area and enabling workers to progress

2 Perry Barr, proposals for Perry Park for Birmingham City Council. Image by Arup
3 Waltham Cross town centre: proposals for public space improvements for the Borough of Broxbourne Council



4

through skill levels and giving opportunities for higher wages, through to providing access to open spaces and active travel modes, which support healthier lifestyles.

HOW TO PLAN AND DESIGN FOR SOCIAL VALUE

Social value is not a box-ticking exercise. It should be at the top of the agenda for designers, planners and developers as we move out of the pandemic. Social value is an outcome-led (not an output-led) approach, and not a process.

The pandemic has seen the world live and work differently. Arup undertook a survey across five European cities to see how people might work in the future and whether there will be a strong propensity to work from home. The findings suggested that those who had the privilege to work from home would want to do so, with some differences between cities, but looking for a balance. Supporting the concept of the 15-minute city, respondents cited that having experienced a more local lifestyle through the pandemic working from home and using only local amenities would be attractive. Arup's 2021 report *Central Activities Zone (CAZ) Economic Futures Research* for the Mayor of London analysing work space and office use in the future suggested that there might be a shift in the way people live, work and commute, but business interactions and agglomeration benefits still dictate that workspace is where people want to be, and where business is more effective when face-to-face.

How does this translate to developing new places and neighbourhoods? We have been supporting local authorities around the country to consider how best to achieve social value outcomes. Many councils are taking a more active role in the planning, design and delivery of new neighbourhoods. This enables them to leverage the benefits of partnership-working and ensures that place-making outcomes meet community needs.

In the East Midlands this has involved making the case for a new type of locally-led urban development corporation. Council leaders told us that new local growth had to produce opportunities for all. Our baseline study reinforced this need, finding that as many as a quarter of jobs in some local areas were vulnerable to automation, highlighting a pressing need to secure long-term jobs and skills for local people. The work concludes that through the public and private sectors working in partnership with the local community through the development corporation a more comprehensive and cohesive set of outcomes can be achieved across three key development locations. This included transformational benefits for the region with 84,000 jobs and £4.8bn Gross Value Added (GVA) created.

POST-COVID NEIGHBOURHOODS

Nobody yet knows what will happen as we move out of the pandemic. Its impact will be markedly different for different demographic groups and types of places. We will need to use data in new ways to understand scenarios, impact and mitigation, patterns of decline and what the opportunities are to move to a full economic recovery.

Human health and well-being have risen up the agenda and the new way that some people have had to live and work might



5

leave a lasting impact, higher levels of poverty and unemployment. Local authorities with constraints on spending will be looking for ways to ensure economic activity and recovery. COVID-19 has exposed inequalities resulting in the need for new development and regeneration to emphasise well-being.

ENGAGEMENT

It is vital to maintain spending on the public realm, public space, parks and other types of open space, community facilities such as schools and GPs, high streets, town centres, sustainable modes of transport and new homes. Austerity measures saw services cut and public spending on the public realm and built environment decline. As the heart of communities, investing in the public realm and high streets can enhance and instil a strong sense of civic pride and well-being.

CONCLUSION

Understanding and delivering social value needs tangible actions which can be driven across all phases of development, such as:

- Producing a social value framework for an institution, developer or local authority governing a project.
- Looking at innovative ways to finance projects with incentives to deliver social value outcomes, with key performance indicators to ensure they work for local communities.
- Creating social value forums with representation on corporations' boards
- Engaging young people to give them a voice about their future. Twenty-year growth strategies mean that today's teenagers will be the custodians and leaders of these places in the future.
- Ensuring partnership-working to bring the public and private sectors together to co-design and actively participate in decision-making. ●

4 Waverley Station, Edinburgh: proposals for a new public space for Network Rail
5 FitzPark, London: a temporary public space in Windmill Street transformed from a delivery bay into a parklet. Photograph by Paul Carstairs

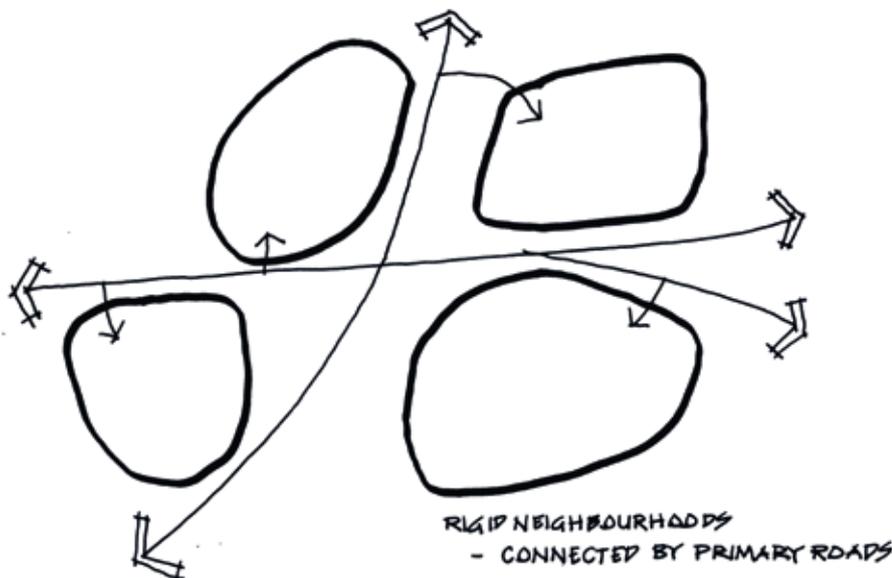
Joanna Rowelle, Director, Leader of Integrated City Planning, Arup

REFERENCES

IED and Arup (2020) *From the Ground Up – Improving the Delivery of Social Value in Construction*.
Institute of Civil Engineers (2020) *Maximising Social Value from Infrastructure Projects*.

The Pliable City

Roger Evans calls for timelessness and flexibility in the design of neighbourhoods



TOWN CONTEXT: LOCATION AND URBAN FORM

Topography and landscape

Working with nature is the starting point for any responsible town plan, identifying where to build or conserve. Historic settlements had little option but to work in harmony with the land. Today, earth-moving is cheap, as is ripping out hedgerows, diverting streams and changing contours to suit standardised designs, but we do this at our peril. Ian McHarg's ecological approach to planning remains fundamental: if you understand topography, you know what the soil types are; if you understand soils, you know what vegetation will grow; if you understand vegetation, you will know what wildlife it will be supporting.

Microclimate

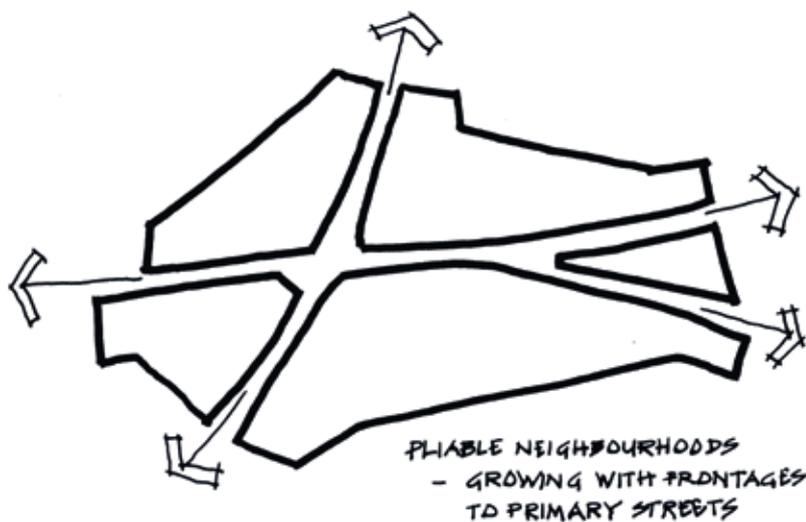
The first purpose of any building activity is to provide shelter to modify the microclimate. This was once instinctive: the incremental growth of towns took close account of local conditions, enabling new buildings to avoid frost hollows, orientating streets away from harsh winter winds, seeking warming winter sun and shade in summer. These skills are even more important in planning for growth in an age of climate change.

Street structure

Different land uses work at optimum locations within a street network. Those needing higher footfalls work in the best connected locations; uses needing quiet places work in less well-connected locations. The function of planning is to understand and develop a street network with a range of locations to match predicted demand but not to fix it. In the planning of towns, function follows form.

Public transport

The area required for car parking in most new residential development now exceeds the footprint of the houses that they serve. In addition, parking is also required at town centres, local centres and business sites. Locating growth where there is efficient public transport is a pre-requisite to reducing parking requirements and reclaiming land for higher housing space standards, private outdoor space, parks and wildlife.



1

To be sustainable, towns and cities need to provide not just for present needs but also serve unknown futures. Successful environments create a common ground, facilitating human activity and providing cultural continuity; they are meeting grounds in both a geographic and spiritual sense. If our needs from built form change over centuries or with events such as pandemics, the challenge for urban design is to build timeless places that do not need rebuilding, yet are able to accommodate change, so that future generations can use them. This is the Pliable City, able to bend easily without being damaged or losing its shape.

Looking at successful and enduring places, I explore what should be fixed or changeable at the scale of the town, the neighbourhood, and the centre of the neighbourhood, where most activity takes place.

1 Rigid vs pliable neighbourhoods
Top: Isolated and inward-looking development arising in the absence of a detailed spatial plan.
Below: Neighbourhood design responding to a clear spatial plan setting out street frontages.

These four considerations – landscape, microclimate, street structure and public transport – should shape local development plans, not just as aspirational written policies but as drawn physical plans.

This is a prerequisite in planning for growth and the siting of new neighbourhoods. Otherwise the UK's plan-led system is little more than a map showing which land owners have successfully promoted their sites. If we look to build pieces of town rather than isolated estates, then sustainability must be built-in, not bolted on.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

If the location of growth, landscape context and the principal street structure are set out in town plans, what are the key design considerations at the neighbourhood scale? Assuming that the green infrastructure network within a new neighbourhood will respond to the broad-brush landscape structure, and that the lower street hierarchy will respond to the planned town street structure, there are four further key areas for consideration:

Density and height

Conventional parking standards limit residential density but locating growth where public transport can replace private cars can increase density, raise space standards and increase both public and private outdoor space. We can compare the typical volume housebuilder estate of around 3,500sqm of development per hectare to developments where private car ownership has almost been completely superseded by public transport such as Hammarby in greater Stockholm. There the built density is double that, at around 7,000sqm per hectare.

Private outdoor space

Private outdoor space is linked to house typology, the shape of the plot and the configuration of the plot series. Medieval burgh plots were narrow and deep accommodating workshops and food production at the rear of the plot, while the house fronted a busy street. The wide-fronted plot of the town farmstead had a passage to a yard where livestock might be kept. The courtyard house built along one or two sides of a square walled plot creates an inner sanctum hidden from the street. The typical volume housebuilder development plot is often a by-product of siting as many standard house types as possible, but rarely provides useable outdoor space.

Improved space standards

Working from home has increased since the internet arrived, reversing the trend of separating land uses which began with the Industrial Revolution. Home space standards now need to accommodate live-work space for part or all of the week. Storage standards also need to reflect the fact that we are spending more time in our homes and use them for work and self-sufficiency.

LOCAL CENTRES AND PRINCIPAL FRONTAGES

Flexible ground floor uses

The segregation of life into different land uses is a relatively modern phenomenon. The originator of the illustrated text (like this journal) was arguably William Blake, poet, painter and printmaker who worked from a home atelier with an adjoining printmaking workshop on the ground floor of his 5m frontage terraced home in Lambeth, London. In smarter locations, the contemporary Georgian house provided an office on the ground floor before the office block was invented.

Build-within frontage zones

Building frontages in local, district and town centres can be subject to greater change at ground level depending on the circumstances of the occupants or to take advantage of a busy street. This could involve making a new or second entrance from the



2



3



4

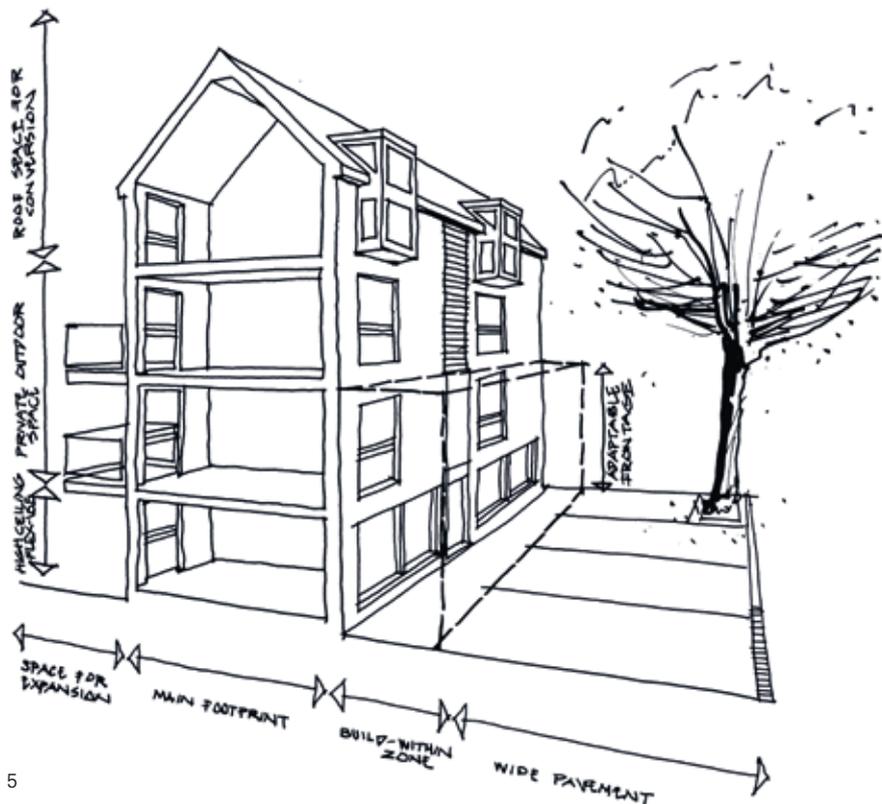
2 Hammarby Sjöstad, Stockholm: with a density of 7,000 sqm per hectare, generous space standards and a welcoming public realm, achieved by minimising car-dependency.

3 A courtyard block at Newhall, Harlow: a special typology developed with private outdoor spaces grouped around a central courtyard for accessibility (Roger Evans Associates)

4 Flexible ground floor use and wide pavements in a local centre at Newhall

Currently the UK planning system seeks a high level of control over the detail of the built environment while being remarkably flexible about the underlying principles of spatial planning

6 The Pliable City: flexibility as key design decisions such as location, landscape setting and street patterns are fixed. The Rigid Neighbourhood: poorly connected development and seeking to control quality by fixing the



street, creating an entrance lobby area, building a display window or adding screening. Urban design codes which set out a build-within frontage zone of 1-2m depth enable the customisation of the front of the building, not otherwise possible with a rigid build-to line at the back of the pavement. A build-within zone facilitates a degree of articulation to the front of a building, including the intensification of the active edge or a setback if the occupant prefers.

Public realm

If car dependency is to be reduced, walking and cycling need to be the dominant modes in neighbourhood streets: the needs of pedestrians should be placed above those of motorists.

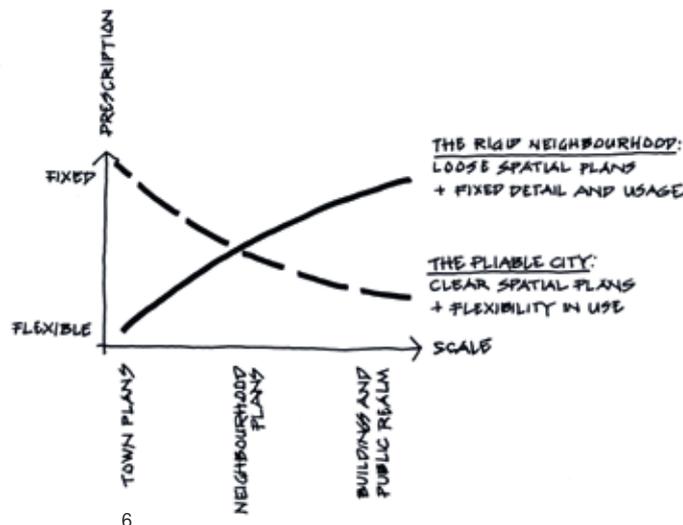
In central areas, flexible ground floor uses create active building edges and more intensive use of the pavement. Wide pavements enable activities to spill out onto the street. A 4m minimum pavement width (or zone within a shared space) allows street life, whereas a standard 1.8m wide pavement only permits movement.

THE PLIABLE CITY VS. THE RIGID NEIGHBOURHOOD

This analysis of fixed versus flexible design at different scales suggests that location and urban form need to be tightly prescribed. Land use, the design of buildings – particularly their principal frontages – and the public realm, all need to be flexible in local, district or town centres.

Currently the UK planning system seeks a high level of control over the detail of the built environment while being remarkably flexible about the underlying principles of spatial planning. This can be seen in inviting landowners to nominate prospective development sites in the absence of a spatial plan. Northern European planning systems take a contrary approach whereby spatial planning is prescriptive and undertaken by the planning authority, while building detail is less prescriptive.

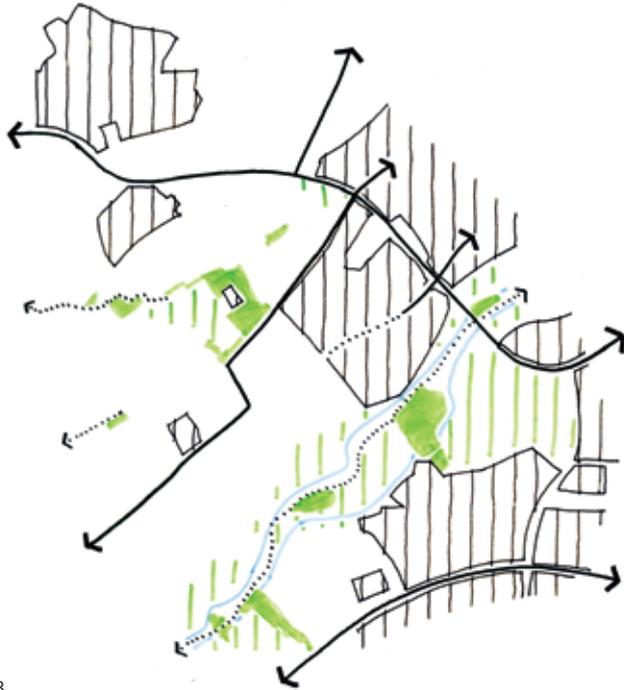
Neighbourhoods rarely exist in isolation but usually form part of a wider city, town or village. Therefore, the right location and context are critical for the success of a new neighbourhood, rather than the content itself.



6 The Pliable City: flexibility as key design decisions such as location, landscape setting and street patterns are fixed. The Rigid Neighbourhood: poorly connected development and seeking to control quality by fixing the detail

The Pliable City is based on growth focused on primary movement routes with streets acting as seams rather than barriers. Layouts can be well connected and offer flexibility in use. A choice of routes and connections to the surrounding area enables uses to gravitate to the best locations, and offers flexibility in traffic management. A well-connected green infrastructure network will also provide a greater diversity of habitat corridors and a choice of walking routes.

With these strategic urban design decisions made, a less prescriptive approach can be taken towards the detail. Design which facilitates flexibility in use allows a neighbourhood to grow into itself over time. Better results are likely if users can fine-tune their environment; place-making needs many hands.



8

The likely outcome of development on poorly connected sites is 'rigid neighbourhoods' connected by highways. This is a typical outcome of a local development plan with little or no spatial planning content. An abdication of spatial planning rarely creates towns or city quarters; at the detailed design stage there is an attempt to fix as much as possible to compensate for the lack of design input at the strategic design stage. The resulting neighbourhood layouts are fixed in that they offer little flexibility in how they are used; typically there are a couple of distributor road connections giving poor connectivity and low permeability. Design considerations then focus on the appearance of buildings, rather than how they are used, and offer little scope for adaptation.

THREE STEPS TOWARDS PLIABLE CITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

1 Strategic Urban Design

The first step is a return to spatial planning so that physical plans for growth are drawn up in consultation with local communities before any 'call for sites' or areas. There is nothing in UK planning legislation to say that this cannot be done, in fact the proposed changes to the planning system encourage it, but there is also no requirement for it to happen. Plan-making takes both skill and time, so these changes need resourcing.

2 Taxation

Resources need to be increased or at least moved from betterment levies (such as Section 106 Agreements or CIL) to the start of the planning process. The land identified for growth needs to be available – rarely a problem in practice as most land potentially needed for development has already been optioned by land speculating companies, but which nevertheless concerns local plan inspectors. There are many existing models: in Denmark a tax on development land is levied at the point at which a growth plan is adopted, encouraging a land owner to make land available for development. This revenue could fund planning and the construction of advance infrastructure.

3 Infrastructure

If the planning of major new streets and the public realm is to lead growth as described here, this cannot be an afterthought delivered through a S106 agreement for offsite highway improvements. Once the activity of inventors, civil engineering



9

has too often become the mindless application of standards coupled with the collection of commuted sums for maintenance. Infrastructure needs to be at the heart of the spatial planning process, as a creative activity undertaken by interdisciplinary teams, testing street-led growth scenarios and delivering advance infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

Historic towns and cities have proved remarkably robust, changing to meet new needs. They provide an essential continuity in terms of urban form, including street structure and the public realm, and these same qualities are appreciated and enjoyed by people today and in the past. We need to reconsider what it is important to fix or what should be allowed to flex in planning for growth. The Pliable City offers a different set of priorities for local plans and the design of new neighbourhoods, with the prospect of making responsible decisions about the shape of towns while also enabling adaptation to future needs. ●

Roger Evans, urban designer, architect and town planner

REFERENCES

Falk, N Learning from the Danes, Here and Now, Academy of Urbanism (online)

8 and 9 Function follows form: Grimsby today and a proposed growth strategy with new neighbourhoods fronting the movement structure and land uses finding optimum locations

Post-COVID Cities or Suburbs?

David Rudlin considers how the future of cities will unfold



1

Writing this from a cottage on the Llŷn Peninsula in North Wales, although committed urbanites, we have left our beloved Manchester. We are not alone, thousands of people were thinking the same last summer when the first lockdown lifted and we realised how easy it had been working from home. Even before the pandemic, a YouGov Survey found that a quarter of Londoners wanted to leave the city. Data released by the Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence in January 2021 suggested that 700,000 people had actually left London over the last 12 months causing the city's population to fall for the first time since the 1980s. However this was almost entirely due to foreign nationals leaving London as a result of Brexit, which is of course an even greater threat to our cities than the pandemic.

Yet there are still signs that the urban renaissance continues. The population of our major cities has been growing rapidly and consistently for the last 20 years and our planning policies assume a continuation of this growth. Manchester's skyline is glittering with towers, many still under construction. As Richard Florida tells us, the creative class of young, educated and professional people have been abandoning suburban life and flocking to live in cities, where they have been fuelling an economic boom. Post-COVID, which of these trends will dominate? The future of our cities depends on such questions.

Mr Micawber in Charles Dickens' novel *David Copperfield* describes his situation thus: 'Annual income 20 pounds, annual expenditure £19, 19s and 6d, result happiness. Annual income £20, annual expenditure £20 ought and six, result misery.' We could use an amended form for cities: annual inward migration 100,000, annual outward migration 99,600, result growth and prosperity. Annual inward migration 100,000, annual outflow 100,600, result decline and depopulation.

Newcastle-based geographer Tony Champion coined the phrase the 'population cascade' to describe this process. Each part of a city is receiving and losing people from neighbouring districts and most of the time, even in successful cities, the net

flow is outwards. This is the process that fuels suburban sprawl and a process that Champion calls counter-urbanisation.

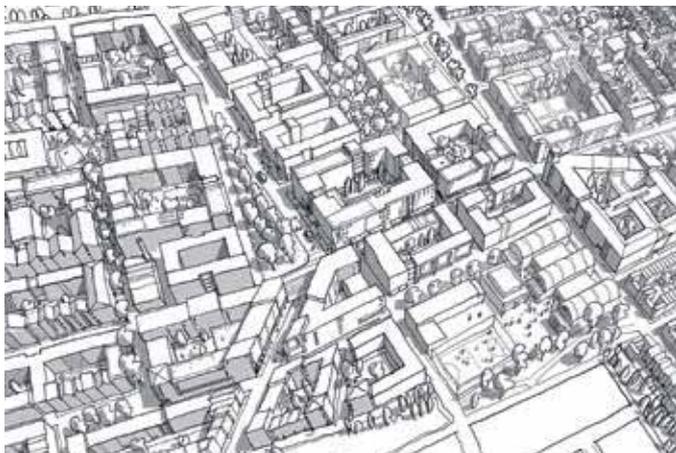
In *Climax City* (2019), we use another analogy to explain why this outward movement of people does not always lead to population decline. The city is like a spinning disk with sand being poured onto the centre. People arrive near the centre of the city and then, as they become more affluent, have kids, etc. they move to the edge (before falling off the disk when they move to the country). So we should take the suggestion that 700,000 people have left London during the pandemic with a pinch of salt. As Ian Gordon, professor of human geography at London School of Economics has written, if London's population had fallen that steeply 'someone would have noticed'. Up to 500,000 people leave London every year, so how does this compare with the number of new arrivals?

In recent years until 2020 more people have been moving into all of our large cities than leaving – the urban renaissance. It is likely that the balance will have shifted in 2020 but the net loss of people from London will be in tens rather than hundreds of thousands. Whether this will continue no one really knows, and all we have are scenarios:

SCENARIO 1

Cities will bounce back quickly with people relishing the opportunity for face-to-face contact and the intensity of activities that only a city can provide. Jonathan Reades and Martin Crookson make the case powerfully in their new book *Why Face-to-Face Still Matters: The Persistent Power of Cities in the Post-Pandemic Era* (2021). They argue that modern high-added-value businesses need high-intensity places that are busy, well-connected and hyper-convenient. This is particularly true of opaque markets reliant on judgement rather than calculation. This happens best face-to-face and people, particularly the young, will increasingly be attracted to urban environments where they can make connections, meet people like themselves and progress their careers. In this scenario, COVID-19 will be seen as a blip and a minor one at that, as our cities continue to thrive.

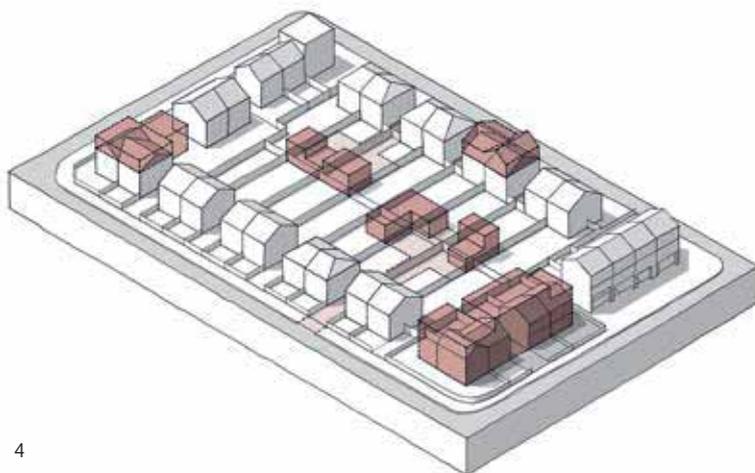
1 The garden city principles set out in URBED's Wolfson Economics Prize report



2



3



4

SCENARIO 2

People realise that they like working from home and not sitting on trains and buses to get to the office every day. They continue to do most of their shopping online, except for occasional special shopping trips. They feel able to move out to the suburbs or beyond, and travel back into the city once or twice a week. This scenario could have a profound impact on cities. Offices will change, reducing in size and becoming places to meet with colleagues rather than be chained to a desk five days a week. The population of office workers on any particular day will be far smaller, which will impact on shops, restaurants and other businesses that rely on their trade. This is not about collapse, but Mr. Micawber's tipping of the scales.

HOW DO WE DESIGN CITIES?

It was clear before COVID-19 that town centres were in a state of transition. We have a third more retail space than we need, and are already seeing vacant department stores being reconfigured for new uses from housing to shared-offices, indoor trampolining to food halls. Young people will continue to be attracted to cities and the urban housing market will continue to grow. However tall buildings are hypersensitive to market changes and so their numbers may fall. Leisure uses, independent bars and craft breweries have been hit hard by the pandemic, but they should bounce back quickly. So too will the independent retail sector filling the gap left by the collapse of retailers like Arcadia.

However urbanism does not only relate to city centres. In the UK, town and city centres cover a tiny proportion of the urban area compared to the surrounding rings of inner urban neighbourhoods and miles of suburbs. It is an urban model based on the daily commute into the centre for work, non-essential shopping, entertainment and leisure. Out-of-town development might have distorted the model, but it is a model that we return to time and time again in our discussions about cities. The big question raised by the pandemic is whether this model remains appropriate in the post-COVID world.

Young people will continue to be attracted to cities and the urban housing market will continue to grow

This model is only really sustainable with high quality public transport; it is not possible for everyone to drive into the city centre, as has become apparent from the levels of post-lockdown congestion in Manchester and other cities. Hopefully the current reluctance to use public transport will be short-lived. A longer term challenge comes from the 15-minute city as initially proposed by Carlos Moreno in Paris. Lockdown and home-working has already seen major shifts in this direction. Data from the Centre for Cities Recovery Tracker shows that local and suburban centres have fared much better during the lockdowns than large city centres. With more home-working, this is likely to continue and many urban designers see the 15-minute city concept as a model for the transformation of suburbs.

When the UN estimates that 56 per cent of the world's population (and more than 80 per cent of the UK's population) live in cities, I picture high-density apartments. In fact most people, particularly in the Global North, live in low-density suburbs – suburbs are part of the city! So the big change in a world where people spend more time working from home, want more space and feel nervous about public transport is the transformation of suburbs, and with it a transformation of our model of the city. Perhaps cities could become a little more European and a little less American, blurring the distinction between city centre, inner neighbourhood

2 A child-friendly suburb with parking in communal barns and traffic-free streets

3 The Trafford Centre as the centre for a new urban village built on its car parks

4 The *National Model Design Code* includes guidance on the intensification of suburban housing areas



5



6



7



8

and suburb. Maybe suburbs don't have to be bland, mono-use, low-density and car-dependent.

Many are thinking about this, aside from the recent if rather batty Policy Exchange report *Strong Suburbs* (2021). More sensible is the Supurbia model developed by HTA Architects (see *UD* issue 138, p10). Its starting point is that 24 per cent of London's land area is taken up with suburban back gardens. Much of suburbia consists of underoccupied homes (40 per cent of households have at least two spare rooms) on large plots that could be used much more efficiently. The project suggests a set of models to use these plots more efficiently such as mews courts, small apartment blocks, flats over garages etc. that would be pre-approved in designated areas. This is now in the *National Model Design Code*, which also suggests that local codes could include such suburban intensification.

There is also a huge job to be done reforming new suburban development, as we addressed in our Wolfson Prize-winning entry. There is a need to find new suburban models for development that are compact and walkable, while incorporating a much greater mix of uses. In our essay we suggested 'open source neighbourhoods' in which individual plots would be subject to a loose design code regulating their physical form and allowing a wide range of house types and uses. Sites would be divided into plots and these would be bought by both individuals and small building companies, who would develop the plots in line with a plot passport. The plots would be usable for any activity that caused no harm to neighbours. For example, a home-working architect might build a studio in their back garden, eventually employing a couple of people while using the local home-working hub for meetings and the communal 3D printer. Meanwhile the neighbour might develop a pottery and install a shopfront to display and sell goods. It is the process by which new suburbs develop rather than their design that makes the difference, and is a return to how we used to build new neighbourhoods before the introduction of the modern town planning system in 1947. There are three things we can do:

- We can start blurring the distinctions between city centre, inner city and suburb, and change policies towards that goal to embrace home-working and the 15-minute city.
- We can intensify our existing suburbs so that they are dense, mixed use, less car-based and more sustainable.
- We can reform how we build new suburbs, and take a more strategic, spatial and infrastructural look at the way we create new neighbourhoods, including finding an alternative to the volume housebuilder model.

With the publication earlier this year of the *National Model Design Code* along with last year's *Planning White Paper*, there are some positive signs that things are moving in the right direction. The city that emerges from COVID-19, whichever scenario unfolds, will make these reforms all the more important. ●

David Rudlin, Principal at URBED

REFERENCES

Champion, T (1996), *Migration between Metropolitan and Non-metropolitan Areas in Britain*, Newcastle University.
 Reades, J and Crookson, M (2021) *Why Face-to-Face Still Matters: The Persistent Power of Cities in the Post-Pandemic Era*, Bristol University Press
www.centreforcities.org/data/high-streets-recovery-tracker/
 Hughes S and Southwood, B (2021) *Strong Suburbs: Enabling streets to control their own development*, Policy Exchange.

5-8 URBED's Trent Basin for Blueprint: 'a new type of place, not quite urban nor quite suburban, close to the city but not in it, a place where the countryside sprawls into the city not vice versa'

Dragons, Drawbridges and Big Bubbles

Ambrose Tsui and Stefan Kruczkowski consider pandemic-proofing in Hong Kong and the UK



During the last 18 months, lives around the world have been defined by lockdowns and restrictions on private and public activities in a way that few could have imagined. Socialising in the UK was largely limited to virtual interactions and household bubbles. Overnight, business was undertaken from kitchen tables, spare bedrooms and living rooms.

As people spent more time at home, many critiqued the design of their homes like never before. Those of working and school age spent the majority of their waking hours at home. At the same time people began to seek homes with more internal and external space. Demand soared for pandemic-proof places to live, work and socialise. By contrast, the response in Hong Kong has been very different. How does the pandemic change what we consider to be well-designed homes and neighbourhoods? Can lessons from Hong Kong (HK) inform thinking in the UK?

The long-term implications of COVID-19 remain to be seen. If we assume and hope that our lives will return largely to what they were pre-pandemic, how we design places must change to reduce the risk of strict and long lockdowns in the future. The flight from UK cities will further exaggerate suburban sprawl, car dependency, social isolation, inactivity, obesity and resource consumption. What can urban designers do to shape

decision-making and apply urban design thinking to changing market and social demands? How can urban design adapt and remain relevant in a world that may continue to retreat from the public realm?

LEARNING LESSONS IN HONG KONG

In 2003 Hong Kong (HK) learned from its experience of SARS, introducing a number of measures such as masks and travel restrictions, and these were quickly implemented to control COVID-19. HK has been exploring pandemic-proof design since then and in the absence of significant suburban flight. Whilst COVID-19 has not led to significant urban to suburban migration, built environment practitioners have nonetheless reflected on the design of buildings and spaces. Sewerage systems in HK's high-rise buildings have been the focus of particular attention as evidence suggests that they contribute to the spread of COVID-19.

1 Victoria Embankment, Nottingham: the lack of opportunities to socialise inside buildings has led people to question whether open spaces should be dominated by cars



2



3



4



5

Kam-sing Wong, Secretary for the Environment in the Hong Kong Special Administration Region (HKSAR) Government, hopes to mandate that new developments adopt higher sewerage system standards in response to the clusters of COVID-19 in high-density neighbourhoods. These include separating the waste systems of upper and lower floors to avoid the leakage of waste-water caused by differences in water pressure. Additional provisions are to improve the design and robustness of internal and external waste pipe systems to prevent the ingress of COVID-19-infected particulates.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

As part of wider infection control measures, the HKSAR banned diners from eating and drinking inside buildings. Whilst HK residents do not seek shelter from the wind and rain like their UK counterparts, they seek shelter from the heat and sun. Demand for space within its tiny urban parks soared with many resorting to sitting on pavements and the steps of footbridges. The ban on internal dining was short-lived (just 48 hours) as the HKSAR realised that the capacity of the public realm simply could not accommodate the number of city workers during their lunch breaks. This incident highlighted the need for more and better quality public open space within HK. Research by Civic Exchange highlights that HK residents have a mere 2.7-2.8 sqm of open space each, far less than Asian cities such as Shanghai, Tokyo and Seoul. Singapore, which is smaller than HK, offers 7.4 sqm per person.

The absence of high-quality open spaces has had a negative effect on the well-being and mental health of residents. Whilst there are over 200 pocket parks, or sitting areas as they are known in HK, they are very small and aesthetically poor. Facilities are usually basic – a few benches and trees, limiting their desirability and usability. Only 38 per cent of HK residents visit

sitting areas more than once a month, with use greatest amongst more senior groups (Civic Exchange 2018). Whilst their design and size are issues, many are located in noisy places alongside main circular roads, petrol stations or major highways. When mental stress is caused by a lack of opportunities to escape or find solitude in a pandemic, the problem with these sitting areas is clearer.

The HKSAG has invested in new and better quality public spaces, such as the Kwun Tong Music Fountain in Kowloon East. An opportunity exists to think more holistically about open space provision by creating a network of new and existing attractive spaces, increasing their value. Opportunities also exist to use the roofs of apartment buildings and increase the open space available per person. Future high-rise buildings could incorporate multi-level sky gardens inspired by the vertical park at Neu-Oerlikon in Zurich, Switzerland.

In 2017, a luxury residential development, Skypark, was launched in the heart of Mongkok, Central Kowloon. A key selling point was the generous modern rooftop garden spaces. However its exclusivity highlights problems of inequality in HK. Accessibility to open spaces and more natural environments should be a universal right. The majority of HK residents are

- 2 Poor environments have an effect on mental health
- 3 Great Kneighton, Cambridge: a well integrated place. Photograph by Tim Stoar from *Building for a Healthy Life* (2020)
- 4 Houlton, Rugby: an integrated neighbourhood with the cafe used as a meeting place for new residents
- 5 Parents have had the opportunity to walk their kids to school



6

not able to afford such places let alone the few detached houses with private gardens that do exist.

With the HK economy heavily reliant on the success of real estate, if better quality living environments are to be offered, it would require state intervention. The *Lantau Tomorrow Vision* involves the creation of a series of artificial islands totalling 1,700ha to meet future housing needs, and is a government-backed proposal with the scope to create better quality living environments.

The role of urban design in creating more pandemic-proof settlements has been gaining momentum since 2003, so that building geometry and air corridors are now typical considerations. The HKSAG established a task force, Team Clean, to study the practicalities of incorporating air ventilation assessments (AVA) into the planning system. AVAs build on designs pioneered at the redevelopment of the So Uk public housing estate where five new local air paths across the scheme take advantage of the prevailing wind, channelling higher levels of air flow and external air ventilation. Changes to So Uk included stepped building profiles and increasing the distances between buildings from 10m to 32m. Such air corridors are reminiscent of *feng shui's* dragon gates incorporated into high-rise buildings, allowing dragons to have a clear path to water.

THE UK EXPERIENCE

By contrast the UK's rapid shift to home-working has resulted in a reduced focus on the design of high density housing, and more on the public realm, specifically the allocation of street space for cycle ways. This is in response to the reduced capacity and desirability of public transport and increased use of private cars.

Changes to working practices are widely expected to be permanent in the UK, in contrast with HK where cultural norms, the experience of SARS and other factors have seen employees return to the office as soon as restrictions were lifted. Whilst the immediate reaction by many in the UK has been to seek homes that better suit post-pandemic living with home-offices, large gardens and more space, we should look beyond these initial market and consumer reactions.

The pandemic has reaffirmed that we are intensely social animals. Whether that is sitting in a pub alone reading the paper, meeting a friend for a chat on a coffee shop's sunny terrace, going for a swim or sweating in the gym. All offer planned and chance social interactions that enhance our lives in a way that many of us only realised when they became almost non-existent.

LOCAL FACILITIES

The large-scale residential developments meeting the bulk of the UK's new housing needs are typically being built by volume developers in car-dependent locations, at relatively low densities and where there is a critical absence of spend to sustain local facilities. They are neither cities, towns nor villages, but offer a

The 10 Putting Health into Place principles and Building for a Healthy Life

Plan, Assess and Involve

1. Plan ahead collectively ←
2. Assess local health and care needs and assets
3. Connect, involve and empower people and communities ←

Design, Deliver and Manage

4. Create compact neighbourhoods ←
5. Maximise active travel ←
6. Inspire and enable healthy eating
7. Foster health in homes and buildings ←
8. Enable healthy play and leisure ←

Develop and Provide Health Care Services

9. Develop health services that help people to stay well
10. Create integrated health and wellbeing centres



7

major opportunity to create places in the types of developments where place most often eludes us.

New neighbourhoods will need to offer people the opportunity to work at home in dedicated home-offices, and few developers offer this for two working adults. Close to home working options are also needed; co-working spaces are a perfect way to revive existing high streets and make new high streets viable. Proximity makes walking and cycling more practical when the commute is considerably shorter.

Many new large residential developments typically include schools, which is a further opportunity; the absence of the traditional commute offers the choice to do something else with the time saved. Goods and service providers can become more viable because spending power is no longer exported. Parents have had more time to spend with their children walking and cycling them to school before returning home. This offers urban designers an opportunity to design streets around pedestrians and cyclists.

Whilst car ownership levels will perhaps not alter in the short term, lower use levels could be sustained if highway authorities recognise these opportunities. We know that these are sensitive to the cost of maintenance. But what better way to reduce costs than to introduce skinnier streets, and reduce wear and tear on carriageways, than to invite people to walk and cycle? The remit of highway authorities is limited and results in many authorities focusing less on public health, air quality and resource consumption than they should. The benefits are significant: better public health through greater levels of physical activity, improved air quality, a reduction in fuel consumption, and reductions in pollutants such as oil and rubber particulates filtering into watercourses and food chains.

BIG BUBBLES

A further opportunity exists in the 'bigger bubble' concept whereby with the

6 Broadway, Nottingham: emerging from the lockdowns, people craved social interaction
7 The 10 Putting Public Health into Place principles, *Building for a Healthy Life* (2020)

The large-scale residential developments meeting the bulk of the UK's new housing needs are typically being built by volume developers in car-dependent locations, at relatively low densities and where there is a critical absence of spend to sustain local facilities



8



9



10

Settlements need to become more resilient to future pandemics, and there lie the opportunities for urban designers and to return to its roots, planning for public health.

In HK, COVID-19 has reinforced the need for more pandemic-proof design that has been evolving since SARS. Whilst we might expect this to translate into features such as balconies for residents living in high-rise accommodation, the strength of the housing market in HK means that this is unlikely to occur without policy and other regulatory interventions.

The most interesting lessons from HK are those relating to sewerage systems, the importance of outdoor as well as indoor ventilated and sheltered spaces, and air corridors. The impact of the pandemic has highlighted the need for outdoor spaces that are better suited to increases in demand alongside protection from local climatic conditions. In the UK the flight from cities and higher density living perhaps offer the greatest opportunity to counter the placeless sprawl that has troubled urban designers for decades. With the bulk of housing growth to be delivered in greenfield locations and by volume house builders, the return of the town could be the silver lining of COVID-19. ●

warning of a future pandemic, individual settlements or parts of them could go into voluntary lockdowns early. Across the UK, the political influence of NIMBYs frequently sees new developments separated from their immediate neighbours by buffers or green halos. These buffers provide the opportunity for new settlements to literally pull up a drawbridge if designed in. A new community could choose to sacrifice its wider involvement with society and lock itself down early, preserving more daily life than was possible in the lockdowns of 2020 and 2021.

In a lockdown situation, the risk of transmission increases through physical contact and yet a community would need supplies from beyond its bubble, but could be compromised by deliveries from those outside. The safest solution would be a central delivery point from which residents could collect their goods or have them delivered by robot. Residents could cycle their child to school and on to their co-working space, and call at the delivery hub on the way home. Trumpington Meadows in Cambridge, with its cycle-friendly streets and residents cycling kids to school and the local Waitrose, suggests the idea is feasible. With its Starship delivery system, Milton Keynes makes the use of robots seem less fanciful. Amazon lockers are a small version of a delivery hub, the revival of the old PO box and key. What the drawbridge idea means in practice is less clear, although it is not inconceivable that people will seek pandemic-proof homes and workplaces, and pandemic-proof communities.

CONCLUSION

Reactions to COVID-19 have been different in HK and the UK, and yet we share a common objective: to create healthy places for people to live and restore their social and public lives.

Ambrose Tsui, freelance researcher in neighbourhood design in Hong Kong
Stefan Kruczkowski, Director of Urban Design Doctor Ltd

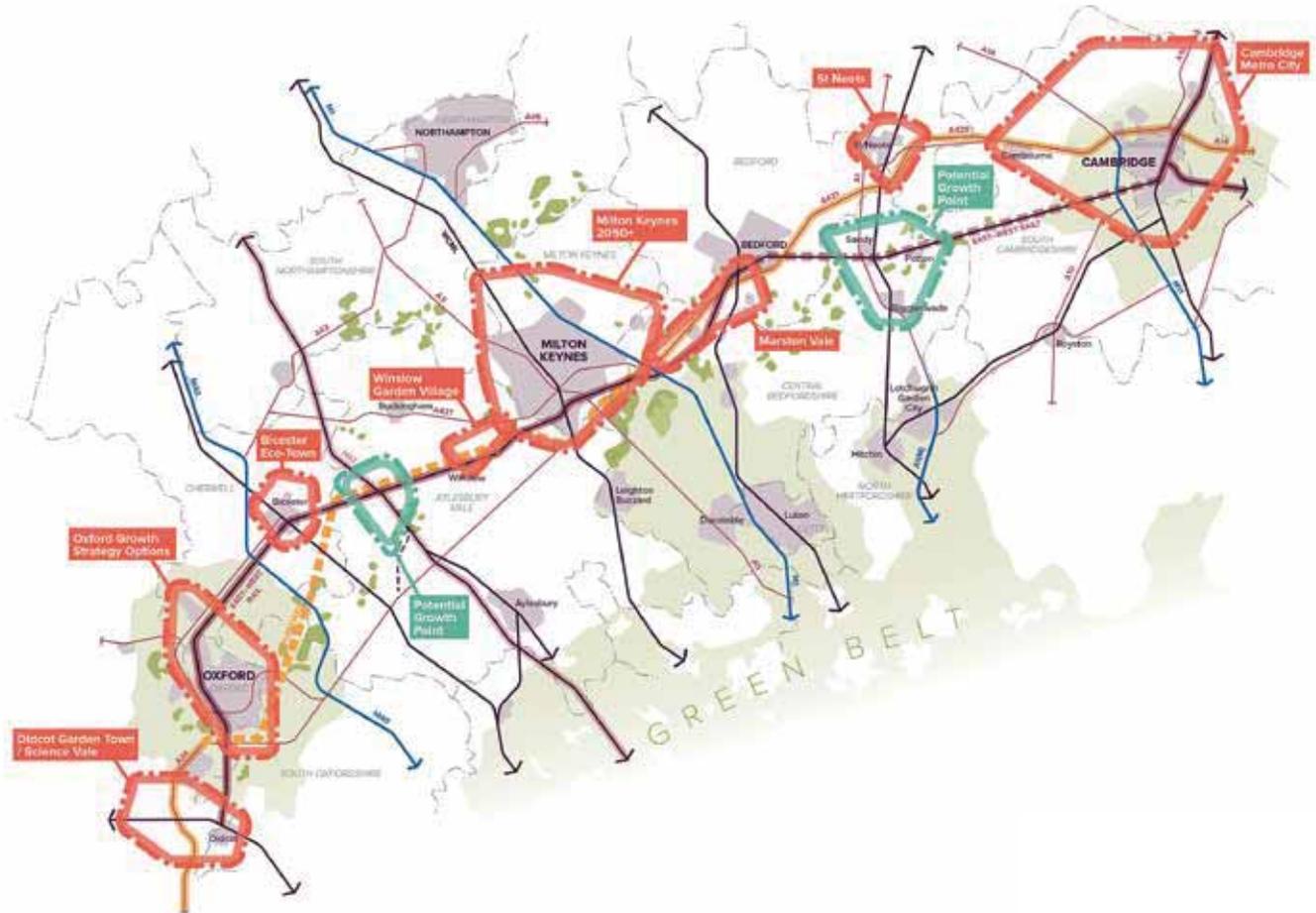
REFERENCES:

Hong Kong Housing Authority (2015), *Redevelopment of So Uk Estate Air Ventilation Assessment – Initial Study Report Issue 1*, Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Ltd (pland.gov.hk)
Civic Exchange Report (2018), *Open Space Opinion Survey, Open Space Opinion Survey (Full Report) – Civic Exchange (civic-exchange.org)*

8 Old Market Square, Nottingham
9 Starship robots undertaking deliveries in Milton Keynes
10 Clay Farm, Cambridge: the absence of internal circulation spaces and informal recreational spaces predates the need for pandemic-proof design

The OxCam Arc in a Post-COVID World

Victoria Lee explores its position in the new normal



1

The OxCam Arc has much to commend it; its history, geography, universities and businesses are a few of its key assets. Oxford and Cambridge are of course local, regional and global brands, where heritage and academia take centre stage. For the local and international community, these places are incubators, and networks and knowledge are traded as capital. Oxford and Cambridge are also home to heroic architecture and lessons in city development, illustrating not just what to design and develop, but importantly, how to do so over decades and centuries.

The cities and towns that lie in-between are also unique and characterful. There is a range of urban, suburban and rural areas which span a population and density continuum. For instance, the current populations of Corby and Peterborough in the north of the OxCam Arc are 70,000 and 200,000 respectively. There are also places of different ages: Abingdon, in Oxfordshire is one of the oldest towns in England, while Milton Keynes, in Buckinghamshire is new and has been a test bed for urban development across a number of decades. Between these towns and cities, vast open spaces, key views and areas of outstanding natural beauty help to unify the whole.

THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19

History tells us that pandemics come and go. Towns and cities have outlived previous periods of instability caused by viruses or otherwise, and this is unlikely to be the last. The OxCam Arc

initiative can therefore continue in the hope of future success. The AstraZeneca vaccine is a notable triumph for the UK and the University of Oxford in particular, further reinforcing Oxford's place on a global platform.

As a result of COVID-19, some changes can be noted in the region: a slower pace of new housing development, the growth of localism and a decline in the use of public transport. Some sectors, such as leisure, have felt the weight of the pandemic and are struggling to re-emerge. Others, such as digital technology and online sales, have remained buoyant. Universities across the Arc have continued to function. Critical changes in teaching and learning were required but knowledge incubation and transfer carry on.

The effect of COVID-19 is however not fully visible. Our mindset and daily practices should also be considered alongside visible changes to the physical and built environments. The invisible change is potentially where most substantial and long-lasting transformation lies. Invisible

1 Oxford to Cambridge Corridor Framework by David Lock Associates

change is what shapes the development market, inspires innovation and growth, and creates that sense of belonging and community that we seek where we live.

A few future scenarios of a post-COVID world are presented below. They are specific to the OxCam Arc and the role it can play in the UK, regionally and for local communities.

LOCAL TO GLOBAL INFLUENCE

The UK government has bold aspirations for the OxCam Arc. It seeks to create a ‘long-term vision to secure sustainable growth and prosperity for all’. This grand ambition can be verified to some extent: academic research on innovation hubs has proved that its benefits, socio-economic or otherwise, can span well beyond the hub itself. Sustainable growth, however, is a highly contested concept. Sustainability is yet to be sufficiently defined in theory and in practice. When paired with the term growth, the concept can be muddled further. So where does that leave sustainable growth in the context of COVID? Can the OxCam Arc compete with the likes of innovation hubs in San Francisco, New York, Tel Aviv, Shenzhen, Tokyo and Melbourne?

Firstly, COVID-19 reminds us all of the importance of localism and context. What works for one place and its people might not necessarily work for another. For growth to occur in a post COVID-19 world, we must make a concerted effort to better understand and embrace local contexts and assets. For example, how can Luton’s airport infrastructure and its young diverse population support international transit and trade? How can the Green Belt in Cherwell be protected to bolster green, health and well-being initiatives? A blanket approach across the Arc can threaten the concept of the hub and innovation altogether.

Government initiatives, such as Festival UK 2022, can help to ensure we do not fall into this trap. As a mascot for science, technology and engineering, it can also shape Arc initiatives and promote the Arc globally. Interestingly, a local contextual approach can also help the Arc to compete in the global market for innovation hubs. California’s penchant for outdoor living is engrained in Silicon Valley’s approach to campuses and open space. Shenzhen capitalises on its proximity to Hong Kong, but is distinct in its identity. Localism fosters these identities and helps assets to remain globally competitive.

REFLECTING ON BOUNDARIES

Boundaries were created and recreated during this pandemic. We have experienced how they can be intensified and broken down in a relatively short space of time. Fixed lines drawn on paper and enforced in the built environment were re-addressed to help shape and protect communities and their future. For example, at a national level COVID-19 tracking apps helped in determining where and to what extent lockdown rules should be applied. At a local level, temporary bollards were put in place in some areas to reduce and shift traffic. Through these changes, we have had the opportunity to reflect on the meaning and purpose of boundaries. We can more readily understand how they apply to our daily lives and decisions.

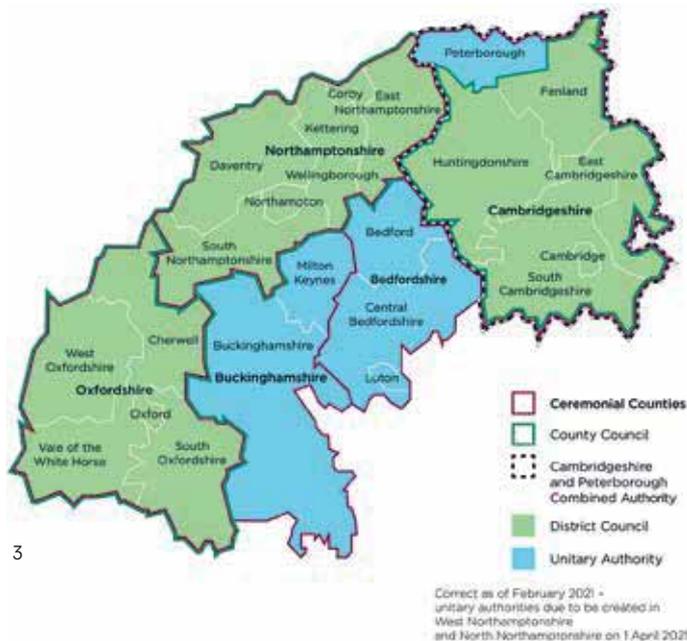
In a similar way, COVID-19 can help central government, local authorities, developers and design teams to reflect on boundaries. They might consider where political, physical and other boundaries may be diluted to help streamline the vision and development of the Arc.

Boundaries are already being broken down through the creation of unitary authorities. In light of economic instability caused by the pandemic coupled with Brexit, more local and regional collaboration may be underway. Politically, this might be particularly useful as the OxCam Arc is characterised by a political sea of blue between red strongholds at Oxford and Cambridge. Despite this, capacity within local authorities may still hinder progress.

A form of urban development corporation (UDC) could streamline the development and delivery of the Arc. UDCs have been successful to varying degrees. The work of the London



2



3

2 Punting in Oxford’s University Parks
3 The local authorities in the Arc



4

Legacy Development Corporation, for example, was greatly shaped by the objectives and policies of the Olympic Games, even after the event itself. Central government might consider how such a UDC might link to brands, policies, standards and incentives that sit outside the UK. A non-partisan purpose might help to unify both people and politics.

QUESTIONING STUDENT HOUSING

In the OxCam region, student housing is and has been in high demand. Oxford colleges have been vying to maximise their land assets to accommodate more students. This is no mean task. Land in the city is highly constrained and there are strict planning policies and processes to scrutinise development proposals. Land that has been developed varies greatly from backyard sites, to fields and farms. A similar pattern for student housing exists in Cambridge. Pre-COVID-19, both cities benefited from high demand for inner city development by aspirational colleges and private developers. In smaller towns and cities, such as in Bedfordshire, the student housing development model also flourished. Local colleges and universities vied for the attention of the students, both nationally and internationally. Lower land values provided greater economic returns and scope for growth.

As a result of the pandemic students, particularly those living abroad, might consider the benefits of online learning. Students in general might also wish to be closer to home or even live at home during times of global uncertainty. In both scenarios, the demand for student housing will decrease. In a post-pandemic world therefore developers and local authorities shaping the OxCam Arc might consider a greater mix of housing types. This rule of thumb might be more applicable to some towns and cities in the Arc than others.

Oxford and Cambridge are likely to continue to attract students from home and abroad for the whole student experience in acclaimed universities in historic towns. Universities in secondary towns and cities may therefore consider other ways to maximise their land and other property assets. These options may or may not be connected to their university role and include partnerships with the private sector and local authorities, as well as exploring business and philanthropic initiatives.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

Access and mobility enabled through digital, physical, economic and social infrastructure support innovation. A world-class innovation hub or region should therefore provide consistent access to high-quality services. However, the quality and consistency of these services, particularly in rural areas of the OxCam

Student housing is and has been in high demand. Oxford colleges have been vying to maximise their land assets to accommodate more students... A similar pattern for student housing exists in Cambridge

Arc, can be limiting factors. For instance, high-speed broadband and internet service providers may be constrained. Funding and the physical land topography to enable better services are other factors, and energy, utilities and transport infrastructure are major considerations. Evidence suggests that central government recognises the role that access and mobility plays in the OxCam region and innovation in general. East-West Rail is set to develop and deliver public rail transport in under-served areas across the region.

Post-pandemic, transport infrastructure can change in a number of ways. Stations are likely to become more than just places to embark and disembark, becoming integrated hubs for work and leisure. Their strategic locations in town centres and often historic characteristics add commercial value to these assets, and so the business model of future station development will require reconsideration. Stations may become smaller and more local. Communities slowly adapting to a new online norm will still need to access public transport, but increasingly from more remote parts of the country. The need for digital infrastructure is also likely to increase. Both the online and physical presence provided by the OxCam Arc will still be needed.

THE GREEN BELT

Green Belt designation and development in the UK is highly sensitive. It plays a key role in history and the long-term future of the environment, and it adds social value to communities. However, pre-COVID-19, the government's push for growth, homes and jobs inadvertently thrust the Green Belt into the spotlight. Contentious proposals for Green Belt development were on the increase; in the Arc, large-scale campuses were highly scrutinised by local

4 The need for student accommodation in Oxford and Cambridge will continue



5

authorities on parts of the Green Belt and in areas of landscape value. Whilst some campuses sought to embrace their settings and reduce any impact on the Green Belt, other factors included land value and constraints such as utilities and waterways. Large car parks for staff also proved an issue, requiring more land and further investment. Campus compounds required highly technical buildings and equipment, alongside new housing and appropriate commercial spaces.

The wider benefits of the Green Belt seem to be trending post-COVID-19. We've become much more familiar with the outdoors' value for health and well-being; government initiatives to improve cycling and walking support the use of the Green Belt. Beyond the pandemic, the value of the Green Belt continues to increase. The value of land in rural places increases as more people seek to move out of cities. This is coupled with environmental arguments on climate change and the loss of biodiversity and natural habitats. To match the focus on the Green Belt, stronger planning regulations and designations may come into play. Local authorities may be much more cautious and robust about discussing Green Belt development in general.

Perhaps it is time to consider:

- A planning weighting system to assess which aspects of planning need to be more controlled and enforced, and equally, which could be more fluid and not require formal engagement with local authorities.
- A new system to educate the public on the role of health and well-being in development and open spaces, for example, a form of energy performance certificate (EPC) rating but for health and well-being, targeting new housing and commercial development.
- Policies and systems to continue to curb the reliance on private vehicles, and specifically improving public transportation and reducing travel costs.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 has changed perceptions of the built and natural environment. We have consciously and subconsciously begun to reconsider how we plan and deliver growth and regeneration. A slow and gradual change of focus and priorities has unfolded. We have also seen the importance of innovation, which is central to human existence and resilience. The OxCam Arc is a platform for such innovation. ●

Victoria Lee, urban designer and sustainable development strategist



6

5 Ninewells, Cambridge, designed by PRP is a high quality high density new development
 6 Historic pubs such as the Lamb and Flag have added to Oxford's charm



1

The Parisian 15-Minute City

Didier Couval-Grima looks at the challenges of proximity in the French capital

2019 was a year of relative economic optimism, and in 2020 France's municipal elections took place. But in March 2020 all priorities in French public life changed. The pandemic forced the government to take unprecedented measures for public security and health protection. The first lockdown required people to stay at home and work remotely, closing education institutions and public open spaces, and limiting outings to one kilometre and for essential purposes only: i.e. shopping for food, doctors' appointments or dog walking.

THE 15-MINUTE PHILOSOPHY

This new forced proximity changed the pattern of numerous daily activities. Residents became aware of the presence or conversely the absence of essential services within a short distance of their homes. For many, it was a revelation to discover the importance of six key functions: suitable housing, learning, working and health facilities, shopping and human development places (leisure, sport and culture).

Paris's Mayor Anne Hidalgo had made the 15-minute city a cornerstone of her electoral campaign, and the notion became an imposed reality. Paris City Council's intention is to maintain the attractiveness of a city that is losing population as a result

of increasing housing costs. Even though prices have not reached London's levels, younger households' budgets do not allow them to stay in the city centre where the demand for housing exceeds supply, and the lack of available stock reinforces this upward trend. As a result, the search for a better relationship between cost and quality of the built environment has accelerated people's moves to the periphery.

The Franco-Colombian academic Carlos Moreno, associate professor at the Business Administration Institute of Paris (University of Paris), is the initiator of this concept and supported the Mayor's candidacy. He developed notions of micro-urbanism and 'chronotopia': how to coordinate vital time with vital space within a personal time-budget that remains stable. In order to also reduce our environmental and climatic

1 Part of Rue Ste-Croix-de-La-Bretonnerie in front of Saint-Merri elementary school has been closed to traffic



2



3

impact, he added to the concept of proximity the challenge of ‘de-mobility’. He has also stated that the closer inhabitants are to accessing these six functions within 15 minutes, the greater their well-being. To counter critics who see this as a shrinking lifestyle, Moreno does not view the outcome as a village, but as a networked city, a polycentric city with a high-quality social life. He does not suggest building new facilities in every neighbourhood, but using them better.

CORONAVIRUS IMPACTS

During spring 2020, the pandemic highlighted the lack of access to greenery which increased the desirability of balconies or gardens, in particular for working parents with children off school. Unsurprisingly there is now an unprecedented level of interest in homes with such amenities, even in peripheral areas that until recently were considered undesirable. Areas with an established network of green spaces are preferred, for example those near the Marne River, a tributary of the Seine. The concept of Greater Paris has thus become a reality for many inhabitants who no longer consider central Paris as the exclusive location for their daily activities.

2 The Marais, Paris: Rue de la Verrerie is now a convivial place
 3 Rue des Martyrs, one of the main shopping streets in the 9th *arrondissement* is closed to through-traffic on weekends

The COVID-19 crisis has significantly challenged the way that we travel, live and dwell within the Greater Paris metropolitan area. Local authorities adopted varying levels of commitment to establish temporary amenities for transitional uses, based on tactical urban design: temporary cycle ways, the pedestrianisation of streets, widening footpaths and using parking spaces by restaurants. In total, 210km of temporary cycleways appeared in Greater Paris and with few exceptions, have been retained. Their design has attracted new cyclists, and the success of these cycle lanes has led regional cycling associations to demand that they be made permanent. The result could be a change in habits in favour of active mobility modes.

Whilst public transport is finding it difficult to attract pre-pandemic levels of use and car traffic is rising once again, the provision of secure facilities for alternative modes is high on the agenda in the Greater Paris area. The creation of an ‘express cycle network’ was a key issue in the June 2021 regional and departmental elections. It remains to be seen whether Paris has learned from these temporary measures and a move is made towards a zero-carbon 15-minute city beyond simply switching from internal combustion vehicles to hybrid or electric ones.

THE SCHOOL AS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD’S HEART

At the end of January 2021 one secondary and 11 primary school courtyards were opened to the public with the aim of making the 15-minute city a reality. This is the first step in the process of turning schools into neighbourhoods’ hearts. Because of its density, Paris has an amazing provision of 430 crèches, 649 primary and 114 secondary schools.

The idea is to turn schools into hubs, open to all and outside school times, so that they could become meeting places and social hubs for activities by residents and local associations. Another objective is to use the playgrounds as breathing spaces, quiet places to relax or cool down during heat waves.

This experimental stage ended in April 2021, and the open spaces had attracted people in search of outdoor places in which to relax. By mid-May, an additional 36 places were opened, and some 20 crèches opened on Saturday mornings, allowing parents to spend time with their children in places better adapted to the needs of the youngest, and to participate in workshops for children and parents. These diverse activities are financed by the *Caisse d’Allocations Familiales* (a social security bank).

This initiative is linked to physical interventions in the school courtyards and their surroundings. The Oasis playgrounds programme, initiated by



4



5

the Mayor during her first term, aims to create cool islands by reducing hard surfaces in favour of green areas and rainwater-absorbing surfaces. It started during the recent unprecedented heatwaves (i.e. temperatures of over 35°C) which showed the increasing difficulties of living in a dense urban environment with its zinc roofs, asphalt streets, and limited green spaces, all adding to the heat sink.

CAPTURING THE STREETS

The plan is to calm the streets around schools, for obvious safety reasons and to create social spaces free of cars. The implementation of these streets for schools is complicated however because access to neighbouring properties needs to be retained in mixed use areas where businesses have street access for deliveries. In fact, few streets in schools' vicinities fulfil all of the conditions needed to close them entirely to traffic and install fixed barriers. The alternative – to close them only when children are arriving and going home – is limited by a lack of appropriate municipal or school staff that could be responsible for it.

Nevertheless, some examples of total closures started in September 2020; they will allow the use of these secure spaces

4 Rue de Rivoli, with a 'corona bike lane', double the width of the previous cycle lane. The new urban IKEA store attracts those who do not have cars 5 Rue de Rivoli, with two cycle paths and a vehicle-only lane for deliveries, taxis, buses and residents' access

for activities within the framework of a 'streets for kids' programme. Whether in school yards or the surrounding streets, and beyond the ecological benefits of greening spaces, the aim is to reinforce social and intergenerational links in new convivial public spaces where the old, lonely or single parent families can benefit.

These interventions also have economic advantages as they allow the establishment of multi-use spaces without the need to build new facilities or amenities. There are almost no opportunities for the creation of new neighbourhoods. The 15-minute city means the intensification of use rather than additional space in order to offer new sport training venues, cultural facilities or community spaces. Three additional initiatives are included to achieve the city of proximity:

- Artistic platforms to bring culture to residents by taking the big Parisian cultural institutions out to the neighbourhoods, and linking them to local cultural animators.
- Citizens' kiosks where residents can help each other, ask for advice from associations or municipal agencies such as the local manager for cleanliness. This is a position that will be created in each *arrondissement* as part of decentralising services.
- Social sport clubs where sport can be combined with looking after young children and helping with homework.

Although these initiatives have yet to lead to concrete actions, decentralisation is taking place: each *arrondissement* is being divided into areas of 20,000-30,000 inhabitants to listen to their needs and suggestions. A specific pilot service sector has been identified for each *arrondissement* where the local population has outlined its expectations.

Finally, the challenge of proximity is accompanied by the concept of short distances easily managed by walking or cycling, and several initiatives have already been implemented:

- The reduction of maximum speeds to 30km/h for the whole of Paris
- Temporary cycle ways made permanent
- Banning most traffic within the central area
- The conversion of street parking to other uses.

Once the number of paid parking spaces is reduced by 50 per cent, local streets will be transformed with restaurant terraces and shop displays, as well as greening with trees or plants, thus reducing hard surfaces and increasing the permeability of the public realm.

BARRIERS TO THE 15-MINUTE CITY
Timing is not the same for urban design

as it is for politics; Paris is not France, not even the Ile-de-France region. It is a unique case and the ideas cannot easily be copied by other districts, where roundabouts on access roads are now even more frequent than in Britain. The spatial and social segregation in numerous cities means that the 15-minute city model could increase the imbalance between the poorest and the richest neighbourhoods, Flavio Coppola, the C40 Cities' programme manager for urban planning, is conscious of this threat and suggests that cities prioritise neighbourhoods with the greatest housing need. Since most historic city centres have a good level of accessible services, the model should be applicable to new neighbourhoods in large metropolitan areas.

Critics of the 15-minute city consider it a middle-class utopia, and note that a large percentage of those working in city centres cannot afford to live there. Health workers, cleaners, supermarket staff – all those poorly paid but essential to the proper functioning of cities – have been praised during the pandemic. However, their daily lives have not changed: they are excluded from the city centre, live in suburbs where rents are lower, and travel to work by often crowded public transport.

POSSIBLE CONFLICTING INTERESTS

There is another contradiction: during the pandemic restrictions, proximity made a positive contribution to well-being. Research by Richard Bentall, Professor of Psychology at the University of Sheffield, showed that the feeling of belonging to a neighbourhood offered an important protection to mental health. On the other hand, the compulsory 'stay at home' mandate could negate the feeling of freedom offered by a big city, and lead to feelings of being a hamster in a cage, repeatedly using the same shops and cafes.

This shows the advantages of a polycentric city with a public transport network that allows access to everything that the city has to offer. That is the purpose of the new *Grand Paris Express*, a super-metro system that gives access to the wider metropolitan area without having to pass through the centre. The combination of a looser transport grid and improved post-COVID liveable neighbourhoods could result in new patterns for areas still considered undesirable.

For smaller cities or newly developed lower density areas, Carlos Moreno suggests the 'half-hour area' to reach the same level of services. In medium-sized cities, shopping centres have destabilised the central area, such as in Avignon which has 500,000m² of large and medium-sized shopping centres for 300,000 inhabitants. Faced with such competition, the retail industry doesn't create new job opportunities, at best there are job transfers. Elected representatives have addressed this situation and surprisingly their actions have coincided with a change of strategy by shopping centre owners who control vast tracts of land. The shopping centre model has reached its limit and is becoming obsolete, hypermarkets are in decline, shunned by single parent families who prefer smaller more local centres or *drive-piétons* (an oxymoron but the equivalent of click-and-collect). Overall, younger generations, highly connected but much less motorised, prefer to order online and have goods delivered, rather than go to shopping centres in a series of hangars. Carrefour, the leading French brand, is changing its business model and becoming a developer that transforms shopping centres into mixed neighbourhoods; one example is the Merignac-Soleil area on the outskirts of Bordeaux.

Finally, a neighbourhood must offer amenities and services to its inhabitants. The 15-minute concept is not a magic wand; it has to be adapted to the local conditions of each neighbourhood so as to achieve a 'liveable, viable and equitable city' and to ensure a better balance in urban environments. ●

Didier Couval-Grima, architect and engineer, Senior Technical Officer, Paris-Centre, (Formerly 1st-4th *arrondissements*)



6

During the pandemic restrictions, proximity made a positive contribution to well-being... the feeling of belonging to a neighbourhood offered an important protection to mental health



7

6 Rue Ste-Croix-de-La-Bretonnerie (4th arr), now a *zone de rencontre* with car parking removed to give more space to pedestrians – *coronatrottoirs*
 7 Milton's School Paris: Two school playgrounds in the same street are open after school hours for a range of activities

The New Post-Corona Neighbourhood

Jon Rowland calls for destination development, not default estates



sub-standard housing; a lack of appropriate social and physical structures; zoning that leads to pollution, congestion and dormitory estates; and, the huge amount of space given over to the car, all of which impact on physical and mental health. Insurance, mortgage, fiscal and supply chains also play their part. The TCPA's ten principles for success show that a more integrated approach and responsive governance are needed to achieve positive results.

ATTRIBUTES FOR A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD

The collision of COVID-19 and climate change gives us an opportunity to seek a vision for the future and offers a catalyst for change. How do we make new neighbourhoods more humane and less bleak? How do we use social mobility and value, health and behaviour, equity and inclusivity to create more sympathetic built environments? What models and patterns are appropriate, and who leads? Unpacking these will help a programme for development, and recognising the attributes and interdependencies of the new neighbourhood could posit a way forward.

VISIBILITY AND VISION

We should not accept opportunistic approaches to new neighbourhoods, extensions or settlements, but establish spatial strategies and frameworks for development over time. Cutting across political and professional boundaries, such strategic planning, needs collaboration between key players, such as local authorities, infrastructure providers, and civic and community forums, instead of landowners and developers leading the process. Local authorities have a key role in supporting localism. Mechanisms to achieve a vision should respond to the aspirations of local communities and an understanding of the need to change that part of the unwritten social contract. A strong vision understood by all will benefit all, and reduce the imposition of poor development.

LOCALITY AND STRATEGY

Without this understanding and a clear long-term goal, the new neighbourhood could become insular. Locating it adjacent to major public transport routes provides

After the Second World War, communities were determined to find new ways and forms of providing housing to answer the needs of ordinary people and build a better world. The planning system was established in 1947. Over time, new industries, technologies, societal and economic changes have complicated the system until it has become sclerotic, and reduced to decisions on quantity, not quality. Now new urgencies are emerging.

For some it is time to get rid of the current system and 'build, build, build', often resulting in poor quality design and construction. For others it is a return to the norm and the preservation of myths. Most of our housing today echoes the myths of village life coloured by vicarious nostalgia. How many times have we seen plans that use the words village green or market place, where neither exists? Our vocabulary is becoming meaningless, and images bind us to a form of settlement completely inappropriate for the challenges ahead.

As a settlement grows so does the need for services; secondary centres are established around which areas emerge that we call neighbourhoods. The OED defines these as 'a community within a town or city'. They also imply a social context, neighbourliness and a mode of behaviour.

The drive for more housing has resulted in urban extensions defined by the number of dwellings that will support a school and a shop, often ignoring the soft infrastructure needed to underpin it; the pandemic exposed weaknesses in the urban design of these areas. The TCPA report *20-Minute Neighbourhoods* (2021) identifies the gap between what is built and what is required:

¹ The features of a 20-minute neighbourhood, by the TCPA

fast links to key facilities. Investment in guided bus or tram systems can encourage compact development, often financed by increased economic values. A new city-edge neighbourhood is a precursor to additional growth in the future, and not necessarily an end in itself. URBED's 2014 proposals for Uxcester – the future expansion of Oxford's neighbourhoods – suggested a series of 'snowflakes' or walkable neighbourhoods associated with major infrastructure to rebalance the city in terms of physical, economic and social investment. Too many opportunistic development proposals ignore the major infrastructure required to connect residents to cultural, health, educational and employment facilities.

SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIO-DIVERSITY

The 2008 financial crash resulted in the relaxation of codes for sustainable development, and it is time to put new goals in place: parts of the Green Belt identified for development could be designated for zero-carbon development, green buildings and green streets. The Government could consider development paralleling the car industry by setting a deadline for zero-carbon neighbourhoods. Arup's ten design approaches are a useful start, being both soft and hard and of social and developmental value.

LONGEVITY

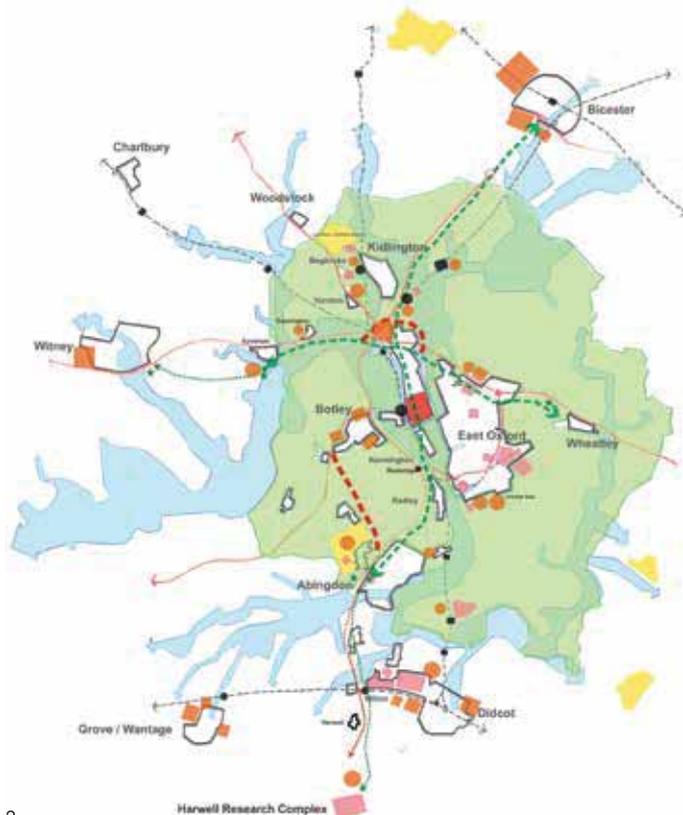
It takes 10-15 years to build a new neighbourhood, and this implies political bi-partisanship, so that frameworks or mechanisms are allowed to work and adapt over time, adding to market credibility and confidence, supporting long-term infrastructural planning and providing fiscal opportunities. Longevity also provides time for social value and support to be programmed. Such an approach with long-term continuity and consistent leadership, is successful in Europe as exemplified by Freiburg, Vienna and Montpellier.

MANAGEABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

Better manageability and governance will be essential, and the capability, capacity and role of the local authority improved as a result. The mechanisms for delivering new neighbourhoods at present can only succeed with government support, both philosophically and practically. Didier Couval-Grima shows that in Paris, strong leadership, a clear philosophy, strategy and a mechanism to deliver can improve the common good. Experience in the UK has shown that local urban development corporations and other similar organisations can deliver major projects over time. At the other end of the spectrum, mechanisms for long-term stewardship, whether community trusts, development forums, co-ops and co-housing foundations should be explored as soft support, so that neighbourhoods are not designed or built for the convenience of waste management departments, but set the agenda for a management response. The new post-COVID-19 neighbourhoods will also need to make a positive contribution to existing and adjacent communities to mesh old and new.

ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Linking neighbourhoods, integrating them with adjacent development, establishing digital, active and social movement and decent public transport, would help to reduce travel congestion and pollution. Oxford's hub and spoke relationship with its outlying satellite settlements – the result of political, fluvial, and administrative constraints as well as a lack of investment – is highly polluted, congested and poorly connected with development opportunities. Access to resources, services, employment and public places are critical if equity and diversity are to be established. Infrastructure should be designed with an emphasis on social value. People will be spending more time in their neighbourhood, and access to work, sun, air and space to exercise, means pleasurable places, day and night whatever the development intensity is.



2



3

2 Oxford: A Strategy for Growth. Image by Jon Rowland from *Oxford Futures: Achieving smarter growth in Central Oxfordshire* by Oxford Civic Society 2014
 3 URBED's *Wolfson Economics Prize* for Uxcester with 'snowflakes' neighbourhoods

HYBRIDITY

In 2015, before the pandemic, over 4.2 million people in the UK worked from home. This rose to 16.3m by April 2020 (ONS), a 400 per cent increase. Whereas the first suburbs were conceived of as well-linked, self-contained communities with manufacturing and agricultural zones at their edges and civic amenities at their centres, their characteristic today is of dormitory developments.

The lockdowns showed that as people spent more time in their neighbourhood and at home, housing typologies did not reflect their needs. Current housing types cannot adapt to institutional or



4



5



6

commercial change, and zoning prevents mix. Enabling a vertical and horizontal mix of uses and adaptability could mean that new neighbourhoods would not only be places for people to live, but also creators of local economy. The opportunity to have managed offices, workspaces, retail and commercial units integrated into residential areas as dynamic hubs remains unexplored, and could contribute to a circular economy. Victorian cities showed just that, all within walking distance. Let's go back to the future – but move on from the Elysian village myth.

POPULARITY AND LIFESTYLE

Ten volume-builders account for most houses built today, and these are ubiquitous, similar, often bleak and poorly constructed. Standard house types are not flexible enough to create places that are healthy and liveable. Poor locations, public transport and public space have sometimes led to 40 to 50 per cent of land being given over to the car. Changing lifestyles in the form of health, well-being, flexibility and reduced car usage

Enabling a vertical and horizontal mix of uses and adaptability could mean that new neighbourhoods would not only be places for people to live, but also creators of local economy

could force developers to build 'destination' developments, not default estates.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

Densities are calculated in dwellings and habitable rooms per hectare, but plot ratios are better determinants of fit. Someone wanting more space should not have to buy a three or four-bed house, but an equivalent in floorspace. Some house-builders are testing this, giving buyers the opportunity to reduce the number of rooms within the overall envelope. However, mortgage companies can reduce the economic value of that dwelling. New typologies like 'shell housing' could help, but require flexibility in policy. The kind of compact development referred to in the *National Model Design Code* suggests a different solution, now being proposed by local authorities.

'European cities often have higher urban density figures and do so through mid-rise development and settlement patterns. It is this kind of urban form that is likely to be most appropriate in most cases... and most desirable for continuing to enhance the existing character of the city.'

Background Paper on Density. Local Plan 2036: Oxford City Council 2021

However this is still seen in terms of dwellings per hectare, and buying space rather than rooms may be a better way forward. Exemplified by the German *Bebauungsplan*, plot ratios still seem a step too far in the UK.

SECURITY AND WELL-BEING

Perceptions of comfort and belonging are important: child-centred development, health and lifestyle could all be at the centre of what makes a place pleasurable and memorable. Moving away from introverted neighbourhood development could positively address neighbourliness. Co-operatives and co-ownership development have an important role in promoting equity and social inclusivity. Recent studies on co-ops and co-housing in the US have pointed to the changes in the domestic social dynamic:

- The potential for better use of space, as parental roles coalesce and greater sharing of responsibilities takes place.
- The rise of co-housing with the higher

4 The German B-Plan: all a council needs as a controlling document on one sheet of paper
5 Barton Park, Oxford: 'destination' development in a joint venture between Grosvenor Estates and Oxford City Council setting the standard for future development in the city
6 NW Cambridge: what can be achieved with quality mechanisms in place

degrees of shared work, space and communal support structures resulting in a re-evaluation of social connection and the rise in neighbourliness

CIVILITY, QUALITY, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL VALUES

Creating these values, from beautiful buildings to diversity, street and public realm design should enrich neighbourhoods. A key aspect should be to redefine the relationship between the dwelling, the garden and the car. Development intensity, quality and greenery are not antipathetic, but how we deliver neighbourhoods makes this difficult. A return to the sense of enclosure and comfort of well-managed streets, places designed as socially-inclusive environments, spaces to meet, cycle and walk, is necessary. This is fundamental to local identity and belonging. The role of diversity and development forums could help as part of the social value agenda. Using schools as 18-hour asset hubs is possible; challenging rules regarding utility provision, insurance, mortgage company conservatism, education, and health and safety could also provide opportunities to regain a sense of civic pride, locality and place.

Multi-functional open space will mean different and more intensely used parks. Community-managed gardens could provide accessible safe areas for families. Private outdoor space, especially for apartments, is necessary, and lessons from the lockdowns suggest that balconies should be mandatory. The need for a greener environment is a key element in people's choice, and can only be achieved by rethinking the component parts of the new neighbourhood. Cambridge's Quality Charter has set the template.

VIABILITY

High social values can be achieved from the start, and a long-term legacy approach by landowners can have a significantly positive effect. However most development is through options and opportunism. The Academy of Urbanism's 2019 report *Better Housing for the 21st Century* suggested capturing land value uplift to help fund new neighbourhoods and local infrastructure. This can provide genuinely affordable housing as part of mixed developments with homes of differing tenures spread throughout. Nicholas Falk's recent report *Applying Land Value Capture Tools* (2021) shows the benefits of the recent rise of community and development trusts, insurance companies and arms-length council development ventures as a means of creating, nurturing and managing new neighbourhoods.

Finally, what does this mean for urban designers? Currently there are several organisations treading similar paths. So that we don't remain passengers on the roller-coaster of short-term policy-making we need to stop talking to each other and start a debate with others – if not the government. If Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth can do it, perhaps the Urban Design Group, the Academy of Urbanism, the Place Alliance and other players can address these issues in a concerted way and help the government to create well-designed and beautiful new neighbourhoods.

As Ray Davies sings:

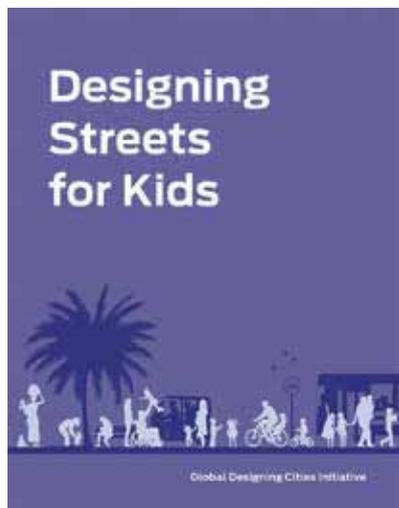
'Preserving the old ways from being abused,
Protecting the new ways for me and for you
What more can we do.'

The Village Green Preservation Society, The Kinks ●

Jon Rowland, urban designer and masterplanner, architect, anthropologist, author, director of JRUD Ltd and owner of Jon Rowland Art.



7 Montpellier, France: new mixed use development increasing intensity and useable space
8 Olympic Park, East London: the effect of controlling mechanisms on Taylor Wimpey's housing
9 Nantes, France: balconies have proved essential to apartment living



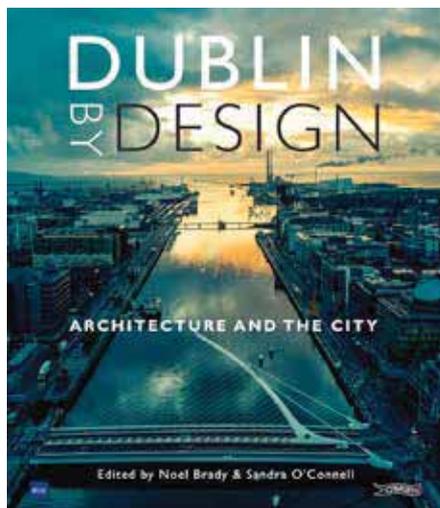
Designing Streets for Kids

NACTO and Global Designing Cities Initiative, 2020, free to download, ISBN 978 1642830712

The new kid on the block has arrived and joined the expanding suite of design resources produced by Global Designing Cities Initiative's (GDCI), a programme of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). *Designing Streets for Kids* focuses on the needs of children and their caregivers with the wider aim of transforming streets to create safe, sustainable and healthy cities. This book supplements the *Global Street Design Guide* published in 2016; however, it is a comprehensive book and can be read as a stand-alone resource.

The book is organised into three sections. The scene is set by highlighting the long-term effects that street design can have on children and how by addressing these, wider benefits can be gained for all. Challenges are given from a global perspective which include death and injuries from road traffic accidents, mental health stress and a lack of physical activity. This is supported by disheartening facts such as that worldwide around 127,000 children under the age of five die each year from outdoor air pollution. The guidance that follows provides solution-orientated approaches ranging from a strategic level, through policy and planning, right down to street design, including dimensions and sections. Concluding the guidance, the final part offers recommendations on processes related to engagement, scaling up projects, funding and measuring impact.

A real strength of this guide is its visually-led approach with the use of rich graphics, colour photographs, diagrams and tables which makes it easy to navigate. Although the information is primarily from a North American perspective, the inclusion of case studies from different countries provides insights on best practice, strategies, policies and projects at a global level. Therefore it is a valuable resource for street designers working in urban contexts.



It is worth mentioning that while this guide's focus is on the needs of children and caregivers, there is perhaps an oversight on the needs of adolescents. The latter are often omitted, sitting between childhood and adulthood, and often excluded from public spaces. Should this book be updated, there would be an opportunity to expand the guidance on the conversation around many of the health, physical and social well-being challenges that teenagers face in urban streets, and design solutions addressing these. The guidance provides plenty of practical information and an index would be useful; fortunately the free downloadable PDF version is searchable. It is a great resource and one to add to the growing literature on ways to make cities more inclusive. ●

Amanda Gregor, Urban Design Officer,
Sevenoaks District Council and Public Practice
Alumni

Dublin by Design, Architecture and the City

Noel Brady and Sandra O'Connell,
2020, O'Brien Press, £27.99,
ISBN 978 1788491679

Published to celebrate one hundred years of the creation of the Irish State, this is a paean to the city of Dublin combined with a series of pleas to improve its governance and to achieve better planning. It is an architects' book, written by architects who have worked in Dublin and have strong views on it. For someone not familiar with the city, it is intriguing and somewhat confusing.

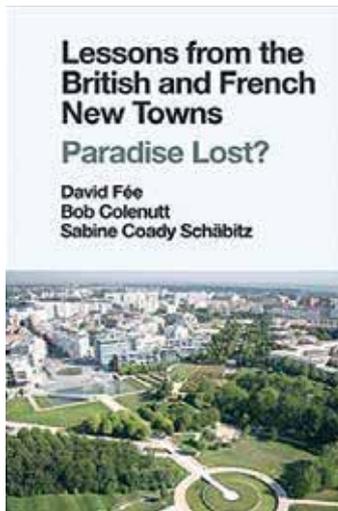
The text is divided into three parts, *From Whence we Came*, *A Phoenix Reborn*, and *History of the Future*, each one containing several articles by different authors. Whilst the first two parts are mostly historic and chronological dealing with the evolution of governance and city form, the third is thematic and often polemic. Urban design is not at the centre of the story, even though it

plays an important and implied role in many of the sections. Housing, health, transport and trees are some of the subjects covered, and each one is interesting in itself; many contributors criticise the current situation and argue for improvements (for instance on housing policies). However, as each section is very personal and written from a particular point of view, in a few cases almost like memories or vignettes, it is difficult to get an overall image of the contemporary city. The lack of maps, except for historic ones, and the emphasis on very architectural photographs compound this difficulty.

The British domination and consequent influence on the design of the city, the heavy weight of the Catholic church on *inter alia* housing policies, the surge of nationalism and consequent rejection of symbols of the oppressors (such as Georgian architecture), all have had an impact on the city. In the past 30 years, as Ireland became part of the European Union, the economic boom resulting in the Celtic Tiger and the international immigration of often a young population, have forced the city to rethink its future. This book reflects this desire and several contributors suggest new directions, for example in transport policies, city and regional governance or housing, but once again there isn't a clear overall view.

Although beautifully produced, the book would have benefitted of an index and somewhat more careful proof-reading to avoid the repetition of some paragraphs. Dublin comes out as a very interesting city – no doubt one of the authors' objectives – but a comprehensive analysis of the city's urban design is still needed. ●

Sebastian Loew, architect and planner, writer,
consultant and joint editor



Lessons from the British and French New Towns: Paradise lost?

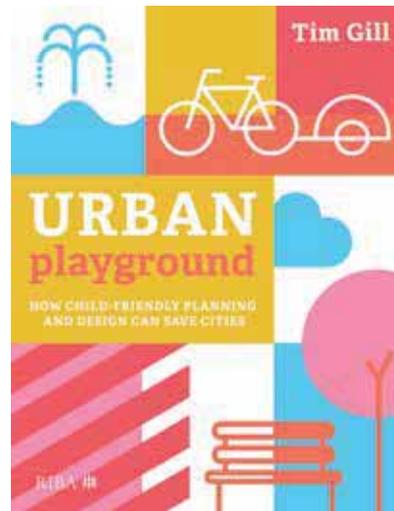
David Fée, Bob Colenutt, Sabine Coady Schäbitz, 2021, Emerald Publishing, £70, ISBN 978 1839094316

This book offers much and its title suggests a wide view and lots of potential interest for the urban designer. There is a significant question mark in its subtitle. The stimulus for the book derives from a 2018 symposium supported by the Sorbonne Nouvelle Research Centre on British Studies. An impressive set of 17 contributors drawn from Britain, France and elsewhere made for a truly international collaboration. The breadth of contributors sadly results in a very variable set of papers. Some present an interesting insight, others are hampered by a rather contorted use of English. This problem is not unique to this book but stems from the wish to create a stand-alone publication from a variety of contributors.

The contributors are drawn largely from academia and that academic influence permeates the book. There are four parts over 14 chapters: The New Towns and Policymakers, The New Towns and Their Residents, The News Towns in their wider Regional and International Context, and The New Towns and Heritage, finishing with a conclusion.

The editors' introduction outlines the contents of each chapter. Each one opens with an abstract followed by an introductory paragraph to the body of the paper which then ends with a conclusion and a full set of references. This careful structure results in a great deal of repetition. One would expect that the original symposium presentations would have had illustrations but no doubt for reasons of economy, there are few illustrations in this book; sadly some are so small as to be almost incomprehensible. This is a great pity as there are interesting ideas behind some of the few figures.

The focus of the majority of the chapters is on the social and procedural aspects of



the development of the towns. This means that there is only limited discussion of layout and design issues. It is however good to see a discussion of Ebbsfleet and a comparative study of Harlow and Thamesmead. Overall, this book could have had much to offer, perhaps too much; its multifarious views do not allow for a coherent conclusion to be developed. The question mark in the title remains. Maybe Paradise might one day be regained. ●

Richard Cole, architect and planner

Urban Playground, How child-friendly planning and design can save cities

Tim Gill, 2021, RIBA Publishing, £38, ISBN 978 1859469293

During the COVID-19 crisis, less crowded urban landscapes and fewer vehicles have offered different and unexpected perspectives on the built environment. As the world slowly emerges from the pandemic, these glimpses may help to shape a new vision for urban planning that outlives the easy soundbite of 'building back better'. This book by Tim Gill could not have arrived at a better time.

In *Urban Playground*, Gill has produced a thorough but succinct and accessible guide to child-friendly planning and design, not just for planners and architects, but for the complex networks of all those involved in creating more liveable spaces and places. More importantly perhaps, he makes a highly persuasive case for the needs of children and young people to be not just a bigger priority, but central to the strategic thinking – economically, environmentally and healthfully – that should inform all spatial planning.

The volume is attractive and well-designed. Eschewing lengthy academic arguments in favour of pithy overviews, principles and checklists, the book has plenty of space for handsome illustrations and

graphics on almost every page. This makes it both easy to navigate and enjoyable to dip into and browse. The intention is clearly that it should be useful and while succeeding in that, the book is also designed to persuade, with concise arguments and insights stringent enough to give policymakers pause for thought.

The book's six chapters are populated with a treasury of ideas, initiatives, projects and schemes, that are then distilled into the tools for making them happen. Taken together they present the essential components of a built environment that responds to its youngest citizens, and a roadmap for getting there.

If there is a general criticism, it might be that the role of national policy is largely absent. Wood, Bornat and Biquelet-Lock (2019), in their report for the RTPI, noted that British children are notably missing from planning policy and processes, surely a reason for the UK's poor performance in this arena. In particular, I would like to have seen a little more consideration of two UK initiatives. The *Welsh Play Sufficiency Duty* is dismissed as providing 'little evidence... (of) ... influencing schemes or spending programmes', when the research is somewhat more positive at least on the legislation's impact on attitudes and processes. The *English Play Strategy* is not mentioned at all. Although abandoned in 2010 during the global financial crisis, the next ten years could present an opportunity to revisit the plans to make England the 'best place in the world to grow up'.

However, in a book with such a broad scope and an international perspective, these are perhaps parochial cavils; the omissions are consistent with Gill's disciplined and unsentimental focus on what works for cities. British cities are in a good position to take the lead on what the economic and social recovery should look like. This book should be high on their reading list. ●

Adrian Voce, author of *Policy for Play – responding to children's forgotten right* (Policy Press, 2015) and guest topic editor of issue UD156

Practice Index

The following practices and urban design courses are members of the Urban Design Group. Please see the UDG's website www.udg.org.uk for more details.

Those wishing to be included in future issues should contact the UDG

70 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EJ
T 020 7250 0892
C Robert Huxford
E administration@udg.org.uk
W www.udg.org.uk

ADAM URBANISM
Old Hyde House
75 Hyde Street
Winchester SO23 7DW
T 01962 843843
C Hugh Petter
hugh.petter@adamarchitecture.com
W www.adamurbanism.com
World-renowned for progressive, classical design covering town and country houses, housing development, urban masterplans, commercial development and public buildings.

AECOM
Aldgate Tower, 2 Leman Street
London E1 8FA
T 020 7798 5987
C Mark Hughes
E mark.hughes@aecom.com
W www.aecom.com
One of the largest built environment practices in the UK offering an integrated life-cycle approach to projects from urban designers, architects, engineers, scientists, management, and construction consultants.

ALAN BAXTER
75 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EL
T 020 7250 1555
C Clare Coats
E ccoats@alanbaxter.co.uk
W www.alanbaxter.co.uk
An engineering and urban design practice. Particularly concerned with the thoughtful integration of buildings, infrastructure and movement, and the creation of places.

ALLEN PYKE ASSOCIATES
The Factory, 2 Acre Road
Kingston-upon-Thames KT2 6EF
T 020 8549 3434
C James Hyde
E design@allenpyke.co.uk
W www.allenpyke.co.uk
Innovative, responsive, committed, competitive, process. Priorities: people, spaces, movement, culture. Places: regenerate, infill, extend create.

**ALLIES & MORRISON:
URBAN PRACTITIONERS**
85 Southwark Street, London SE1 0HX
T 020 7921 0100
C Anthony Rifkin
E arifkin@am-up.com
W www.urbanpractitioners.co.uk
Specialist competition winning urban regeneration practice combining economic and urban design skills. Projects include West Ealing and Plymouth East End.

ANDREW MARTIN PLANNING
Town Mill, Mill Lane, Stebbing,
Dunmow, Essex CM6 3SN
T 01371 855855
C Andrew Martin
E info@am-plan.com
W www.am-plan.com
Independent planning and urban design consultancy. AM-P advise public and private sector clients on strategic site promotion, development planning and management, planning appeals, masterplanning and community engagement.

ARCHI-SCAPE
123 Beach Road, Hartford
Norwich CW8 3AB
T 07884 401777
C Chris Brearley
E c.brearley@archi-scape.net
Archi-Scape aims to fuse quality architecture with thoughtful urban design to create delightful buildings, places and spaces for all.

**ARC LANDSCAPE DESIGN
& PLANNING**
Engravers House, 35 Wick Road
Teddington TW11 9DN
T 020 3538 8980
C Vanessa Ross
E v.ross@arcldp.co.uk
W www.arcldp.co.uk
Landscape architectural with studios in London and the East Midlands with expertise in both assessment and design, we provide project specific pragmatic and creative design services.

AR URBANISM
63 Rivington Street
London EC2A 3QQ
T 020 3290 8979
C Amanda Reynolds
E amanda@ar-urbanism.com
W www.ar-urbanism.com
AR Urbanism specialises in urban design and masterplanning projects. We are a niche consultancy, proud of the high quality of service we provide for our clients and our commitment to the communities we work with.

AREA
Grange, Linlithgow
West Lothian EH49 7RH
T 01506 83247
C Karen Cadell
E ask@area.uk.com
W www.area.uk.com
Making places imaginatively to deliver the successful, sustainable and humane environments of the future.

AREA LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
Blackhouse Studio, Pin Mill
Ipswich IP9 1JN
T 01473 781994
C Charlotte Norman
E charlotte@area-la.com
W www.area-la.com
We work on civic, commercial and occasional private development projects across the UK and beyond, specialising in difficult sites with complex planning issues.

ASHENDEN ARCHITECTURE
14 Debden Mill Business Centre
Old Maltings Approach
Woodbridge IP12 1BL
T 01394 788768
C Philip Ashenden
philip@ashendenarchitectureltd.co.uk
www.ashendenarchitectureltd.co.uk

ASSAEL ARCHITECTURE
123 Upper Richmond Road
London SW15 2TL
T 020 7736 7744
C Russell Pedley
E pedley@assael.co.uk
W www.assael.co.uk
Architects and urban designers covering mixed use, hotel, leisure and residential, including urban frameworks and masterplanning projects.

ATKINS PLC
Nova North 11
Bressenden Place, Westminster
London SW1E 5BY
T 020 7121 2000
C Neil Manthorpe
E neil.manthorpe@atkinsglobal.com
W www.atkinsglobal.co.uk
Interdisciplinary practice that offers a range of built environment specialists working together to deliver quality places for everybody to enjoy.

BACA ARCHITECTS
Unit 1, 199 Long Lane
London SE1 4PN
T 020 7397 5620
C Richard Coutts
E enquiries@baca.uk.com
W www.baca.uk.com
Award-winning architects with 100 per cent planning success. Baca Architects have established a core specialism in waterfront and water architecture.

BALDWIN DESIGN CONSULTANCY
4 Marina Walk, Pennington Wharf
Plank Lane, Leigh WN7 4EZ
T 01925 747615
C Graham Baldwin
E g.baldwin@baldwindesign.net
W www.baldwindesign.net
Baldwin Design's award winning services, include masterplanning, urban design, suburban space planning, across multi use classes from inception to completion.

**BARTON WILLMORE PARTNERSHIP
READING**
The Blade, Abbey Square
Reading RG1 3BE
T 0118 943 0000
MANCHESTER
Tower 12, 18/22 Bridge Street
Spinningfields
Manchester M3 3BZ
T 0161 817 4900
C Dan Mitchell
E masterplanning@bartonwillmore.co.uk
BIRMINGHAM
9th Floor, Bank House, 8 Cherry Street
Birmingham B2 5AL
T 0121 711 5151
C Luke Hillson
E luke.hillson@bartonwillmore.co.uk
W www.bartonwillmore.co.uk
Concept through to implementation on complex sites, comprehensive design guides, urban regeneration, brownfield sites, and major urban expansions.

BE1 ARCHITECTS
5 Abbey Court, Fraser Road
Priory Business Park
Bedford MK44 3WH
LONDON
107 Clerkenwell Workshops
27/31 Clerkenwell Close
London EC1R 0DU
T 01234 261266
C Selma Hooley
E selma.hooley@be-1.co.uk
W www.be1architects.co.uk
BE1 is a practice of creative and experienced architects, designers, masterplanners, visualisers and technicians. We are skilled in the design and delivery of masterplanning, architectural and urban design projects and are committed to designing the appropriate solution for all of our projects.

BIDWELLS
Bidwell House, Trumpington Road
Cambridge CB2 9LD
T 01223 559800
C Chris Surfleet
E chris.surfleet@bidwells.co.uk
W www.bidwells.co.uk
Planning, landscape and urban design consultancy, specialising in masterplanning, townscape assessment, landscape and visual impact assessment.

BOYER

24 Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HF
T 020 3268 2018
C Ananya Banerjee
ananyabanerjee@boyerplanning.co.uk
W www.boyerplanning.co.uk
Offices in Bristol, Cardiff, Colchester,
London and Wokingham.
Planning and urban design consultants
offering a wide range of services
to support sites throughout the
development process. We believe in
shaping places through responsive
design.

BOYLE + SUMMERS

Canute Chambers, Canute Road
Southampton SO14 3AB
T 02380 63 1432 / 07824 698033
C Richard Summers
E richard@boyleandsummers.co.uk
W www.boyleandsummers.co.uk
Space-shapers, place-makers,
street designers and development
promoters. Value generators, team
workers and site finders. Strategists,
pragmatists, specialists and generalists.
Visioneers, urbanists, architects and
masterplanners.

BROADWAY MALYAN

3 Weybridge Business Park
Addlestone Road, Weybridge,
Surrey KT15 2BW
T 01932 845599
C Jeff Nottage
E j.nottage@broadwaymalyan.com
W www.broadwaymalyan.com
We are an international interdisciplinary
practice which believes in the value of
place-making-led masterplans that are
rooted in local context.

BROCK CARMICHAEL ARCHITECTS

19 Old Hall Street, Liverpool L3 9JQ
T 0151 242 6222
C Michael Cosser
E office@brockcarmichael.co.uk
Masterplans and development briefs.
Mixed use and brownfield regeneration
projects. Design in historic and sensitive
settings. Integrated landscape design.

BDP

16 Brewhouse Yard, Clerkenwell
London EC1V 4LJ
T 020 7812 8000
C Nick Edwards
E nick.edwards@bdp.com
W www.bdp.co.uk
BDP offers town planning,
masterplanning, urban design,
landscape, regeneration and
sustainability studies, and has teams
based in London, Manchester and
Belfast.

CARTER JONAS

One Chapel Place
London W1G 0BG
T 020 7518 3226
C Johnny Clayton
E johnny.clayton@carterjonas.co.uk
W www.carterjonas.co.uk/
masterplanning-and-urban-design
Multidisciplinary practice working
throughout the UK with dedicated
masterplanning studio: specialises
in urban design and masterplanning,
place-making, new settlements and
urban extensions, urban regeneration,
sustainability and community
consultation.

CHAPMAN TAYLOR LLP

10 Eastbourne Terrace
London W2 6LG
T 020 7371 3000
E ctldon@chapmantaylor.com
W www.chapmantaylor.com
MANCHESTER
Bass Warehouse, 4 Castle Street
Castlefield, Manchester M3 4LZ
T 0161 828 6500
E ctmcrc@chapmantaylor.com
Chapman Taylor is an international
firm of architects and urban designers
specialising in mixed use city centre
regeneration and transport projects
throughout the world.

CITY ID

23 Trenchard Street
Bristol BS1 5AN
T 0117 917 7000
C Mike Rawlinson
E mike.rawlinson@cityid.co.uk
W cityid.co.uk
Place branding and marketing vision
masterplanning, urban design, public
realm strategies, way finding and
legibility strategies, information design
and graphics.

CORSTORPHINE & WRIGHT

One Mortimer Street
London W1T 3JA
T 020 7842 0820
C Jonathan Tarbatt
E jtarbatt@cw-architects.co.uk
W www.corstorphine-wright.com
An award-winning AJ 100 top 25
architectural practice with 11 design
studios across the UK and Ireland.
We have a unique reputation –
combining creative excellence and
commercial awareness.

CSA ENVIRONMENTAL

Dixies Barns, High Street
Ashwell SG7 5NT
T 01462 743647
C Clive Self
E ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk
W www.csaenvironmental.co.uk
Delivering masterplanning, design
coding and implementations. Specialist
knowledge across landscape, ecology,
archaeology and urbanism leading
to well-presented, high quality,
commercially aware schemes.

DAP ARCHITECTURE

3-5 Hospital Approach
Chelmsford, Essex CM1 7FA
T 01245 440302
C Richard Maloney
E studio@daparchitecture.co.uk
W www.daparchitecture.co.uk
We provide a comprehensive range
of consultancy services relating to
architectural, interior and urban design.

DAR

74 Wigmore Street
London, W1U 2SQ
T 020 7962 1333
C Robyn Gilmour
E robyn.gilmour@dar.com
W www.dar.com
Dar is a leading international
multidisciplinary consultant in
urban design, planning, landscape,
engineering, architecture, project
management, transportation and
economics. The founding member of
Dar Group, we are 10,000 strong in 40
offices worldwide.

DAVID LOCK ASSOCIATES LTD

50 North Thirteenth Street
Central Milton Keynes
Milton Keynes MK9 3BP
T 01908 666276
C Simon Pugh
E spugh@davidlock.com
W www.davidlock.com
David Lock Associates is an award-
winning independent town planning,
urban design and masterplanning
consultancy with over 30 years of
experience providing expert advice to
the development industry.

DEFINE

Unit 6, 133-137 Newhall Street
Birmingham B3 1SF
T 0121 237 1901
C Andy Williams
E enquiries@wearedefine.com
W www.wearedefine.com
Define specialises in the promotion,
shaping and assessment of
development. Our work focuses on
strategic planning, masterplanning,
urban design codes, EIA, TVIA, estate
strategies, public realm design,
consultation strategies, urban design
audits and expert witness.

DESIGN BY POD

99 Galgate, Barnard Castle
Co Durham DL12 8ES
T 01833 696600
C Andy Dolby
E andy@designbypod.co.uk
Masterplanning, site appraisal, layout
and architectural design. Development
frameworks, urban regeneration, design
codes, briefs and design and access
statements.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION
PARTNERSHIP**

Tithe Barn, Barnsley Park Estate
Barnsley, Cirencester GL7 5EG
T 01285 740427
C Peter Widdrington
E peterw@edp-uk.co.uk
W www.edp-uk.co.uk
The Environmental Dimension
Partnership Ltd provides independent
environmental planning and design
advice to landowners, and property and
energy sector clients from offices in the
Cotswolds and Cardiff.

FABRIK LTD

1st Floor Studio
4-8 Emerson Street
London SE1 9DU
T 0207 620 1453
C Johnny Rath
E johnny@fabrikuk.com
W www.fabrikuk.com
We are a firm of landscape architects,
landscape planners, urban designers
and arboriculturists based in Alton and
London.

FARRELLS

7 Hatton Street, London NW8 8PL
T 020 7258 3433
C Katerina Karaga
E enquiries@terryfarrell.co.uk
W www.farrells.com
Architectural, urban design, planning
and masterplanning services. New
buildings, refurbishment, conference/
exhibition centres and visitor attractions.

FAULKNERBROWNS

Dobson House, Northumbrian Way
Newcastle upon Tyne NE12 6QW
T 0191 268 3007
C Ben Sykes
E b.sykes@faulknerbrowns.co.uk
W www.faulknerbrowns.co.uk
FaulknerBrowns is a regionally-based
architectural design practice with a
national and international reputation
in masterplanning, offices, healthcare,
commercial mixed use, industrial and
residential.

FERIA URBANISM

Second Floor Studio, 11 Fernside Road
Bournemouth, Dorset BH9 2LA
T 01202 548676
C Richard Eastham
E info@feria-urbanism.eu
W www.feria-urbanism.eu
Expertise in urban planning,
masterplanning and public participation.
Specialisms include design for the
night time economy, urban design
skills training and local community
engagement.

FLETCHER PRIEST ARCHITECTS

Middlesex House
34/42 Cleveland Street
London W1T 4JE
T 020 7034 2200
F 020 7637 5347
C Jonathan Kendall
E london@fletcherpriest.com
W www.fletcherpriest.com
Work ranges from city-scale masterplans
(Stratford City, Riga) to architectural
commissions for high-profile
professional clients.

**FOWLER ARCHITECTURE
& PLANNING LTD**

39 High Street, Pewsey
Marlborough
Wiltshire SWN9 5AF
T 01672 569 444
E enquiries@faap.co.uk
W www.faap.co.uk
We are a family-run practice of
architects, town planners and urban
designers with over 35 years of
experience creating luxury family homes
across the South of England.

**FPCR ENVIRONMENT
& DESIGN LTD**

Lockington Hall, Lockington
Derby DE74 2RH
T 01509 672772
C Tim Jackson
E tim.jackson@fpccr.co.uk
W www.fpcr.co.uk
Integrated design and environmental
practice. Specialists in masterplanning,
urban and mixed use regeneration,
development frameworks, EIAs and
public inquiries.

**FRAMEWORK ARCHITECTURE AND
URBAN DESIGN**

3 Marine Studios, Burton Lane
Burton Waters, Lincoln LN11 2WN
T 01522 535383
C Gregg Wilson
E info@frameworklincoln.co.uk
W www.frameworklincoln.co.uk
Architecture and urban design. A
commitment to the broader built
environment and the particular dynamic
of a place and the design opportunities
presented.

GARSDALE DESIGN LIMITED

High Branthwaites, Frostrow
Sedbergh, Cumbria, LA10 5JR
T 015396 20875
C Derrick Hartley
E info@garsdaledesign.co.uk
W www.garsdaledesign.co.uk

GDL provides masterplanning and urban design, architecture and heritage services developed through 25 years wide ranging experience in the UK and Middle East.

GILLESPIES**LONDON**

1 St John's Square
London EC1M 4DH
T 0207 251 2929
C Jim Diggle

E jim.diggle@gillespies.co.uk
W www.gillespies.co.uk

MANCHESTER

Westgate House
44 Hale Road, Hale
Cheshire WA14 2EX
T 0161 928 7715
C Jim Fox

E jim.fox@gillespies.co.uk
W www.gillespies.co.uk

Offices also based in Oxford, Leeds and Moscow

Gillespies is a leading international multidisciplinary design practice specialising in urban design, masterplanning, strategic planning, design guidelines, public realm design, landscape design and environmental assessments.

GLEN HOWELLS ARCHITECTS**LONDON**

Middlesex House, 34-42 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JE
T 020 7407 9915
C Jack Pritchard

communications@glennhowells.co.uk
BIRMINGHAM

321 Bradford Street
Birmingham, B5 6ET
C 0121 666 7640
W www.glennhowells.co.uk

Clear thinking designers, exploring ideas of making buildings and places that improve people's lives.

GLOBE CONSULTANTS LTD

The Tithe Barn, Greestone Place
Lincoln LN2 1PP
T 01522 563 515
C Phil Scrafton

E enquiry@globelimited.co.uk
W www.globelimited.co.uk

A team of highly experienced and qualified development and town planning specialists, providing practical and effective advice and services throughout the UK.

GM DESIGN ASSOCIATES LTD

22 Lodge Road, Coleraine
Co. Londonderry BT52 1NB
Northern Ireland
T 028 703 56138
C Bill Gamble

E bill.gamble@g-m-design.co.uk
W www.g-m-design.com

Architecture, town and country planning, urban design, landscape architecture, development frameworks and briefs, feasibility studies, sustainability appraisals, public participation and community engagement.

HOK INTERNATIONAL LTD

Qube, 90 Whitfield Street
London W1T 4EZ
T 020 7636 2006
C John Prevc

E john.prevc@hok.com
W www.hok.com

HOK delivers design of the highest quality. It is one of Europe's leading architectural practices, offering experienced people in a diverse range of building types, skills and markets.

HUSKISSON BROWN ASSOCIATES

17 Upper Grosvenor Road
Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN11 2DU
T 01892 527828
C Nicola Brown

E office@huskissonbrown.co.uk
W www.huskissonbrown.co.uk

Landscape consultancy offering masterplanning, streetscape and urban park design, estate restoration, environmental impact assessments.

HTA DESIGN LLP

78 Chamber Street, London E1 8BL
T 020 7485 8555
C Simon Bayliss

E simon.bayliss@hta.co.uk
W www.hta.co.uk

HTA Design LLP is a multi-disciplinary practice of architecture, landscape design, planning, urban design, sustainability, graphic design and communications based in London and Edinburgh, specialising in regeneration.

IBI GROUP

One Didsbury Point, 2 The Avenue
Didsbury, Manchester M20 2EY
T 0161 696 4980
C Fiona Barker

W www.ibigroup.com

We are a globally integrated urban design, planning, architecture, town planning, masterplanning, landscape architecture, engineering and technology practice.

ICENI PROJECTS

Da Vinci House
44 Saffron Hill
London EC1N 8FH
T 020 3640 8508
C Paul Drew

E pdrew@iceniprojects.com
W www.iceniprojects.com

Iceni Projects is a planning and development consultancy with an innovative and commercially-minded approach aimed at delivering success.

IDP GROUP

27 Spon Street
Coventry CV1 3BA
T 024 7652 7600
C Ben Flippance

E bflippance@idpgroup.com
W www.weareidp.com

We are IDP. We enhance daily life through architecture. We use design creativity, logic, collaboration and pragmatism to realise places and space. Ideas, delivered.

JACOBS

2nd Floor Cottons Centre
Cottons Lane
London SE1 2QG
T 0203 980 2000
C Nivedita Vijayan

E nivedita.vijayan@jacobs.com
W www.jacobs.com

At Jacobs, we're challenging today to reinvent tomorrow. Jacobs provides a full spectrum of professional services including consulting, technical, scientific and project delivery for the government and private sector.

JB PLANNING ASSOCIATES

Chells Manor, Chells Lane
Stevenage, Herts SG2 7AA
T 01438 312130
C John Boyd

E john.boyd@jbplanning.com
W www.jbplanning.com

JB Planning Associates is an independent firm of chartered town planning consultants and urban designers, providing expert advice and design solutions to land owners and developers on site promotion and development.

JTP**LONDON**

Unit 5, The Rum Warehouse
Pennington Street
London E1W 2AP
T 020 7017 1780
C Marcus Adams

E info@jtp.co.uk
EDINBURGH

2nd Floor Venue Studios, 15-21
Calton Road, Edinburgh EH8 8DL
T 0131 272 2762
C Alan Stewart

E info@jtp.co.uk
W www.jtp.co.uk

JTP is an international place-making practice of architects and masterplanners, specialising in harnessing human energy to create new places and breathe life into existing ones.

KAY ELLIOTT

5-7 Meadfoot Road, Torquay
Devon TQ1 2JP
T 01803 213553
C Richard Maddock

E richard.maddock@kayelliott.co.uk
W www.kayelliott.co.uk

International studio with 30 year history of imaginative architects and urban designers, creating buildings and places that enhance their surroundings and add financial value.

LAMBERT SMITH HAMPTON

UK House, 180 Oxford Street
London W1D 1NN
T 020 7198 2000
C Colin Pullan

E cpullan@lsh.co.uk
W www.lsh.co.uk

How things work and look matter. LSH knit together commercial urban design advice and skills to deliver better places and built environments, ensuring enduring value.

LAVIGNE LONSDALE LTD**TRURO**

22 Lemon Street, Truro
Cornwall TR1 2LS
T 01872 273118
C Martyn Lonsdale

E info@lavignelonsondale.co.uk
BATH

First Floor Stable Block
Newton St Loe
Bath BA2 9BR
T 01225 421539
W www.lavigne.co.uk

We are an integrated practice of masterplanners, urban designers, landscape architects and product designers. Experienced in large scale, mixed use and residential masterplanning, health, education, regeneration, housing, parks, public realm and streetscape design.

LDA DESIGN**LONDON**

209-215 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NL
T 020 7467 1470
C Mark Williams

mark.williams@lda-design.co.uk
W www.lda-design.co.uk
GLASGOW

Sovereign House
158 West Regent Street
Glasgow G2 4RL
T 0141 2229780
C Kirstin Taylor

E kirstin.taylor@lda-design.co.uk
Offices throughout the UK

We are an independent consultancy helping clients create places where people belong. We provide landscape-led masterplanning, design and planning services to developers, landowners, communities, universities and government.

LEVITT BERNSTEIN ASSOCIATES LTD

Thane Studios, 2-4 Thane Villas
London N7 7PA
T 020 7275 7676
C Glyn Tully

E post@levittbernstein.co.uk
W www.levittbernstein.co.uk

Urban design, masterplanning, full architectural service, lottery grant bid advice, interior design, urban renewal consultancy and landscape design.

LHC URBAN DESIGN

Design Studio, Emperor Way, Exeter Business Park, Exeter, Devon EX1 3QS
T 01392 444334
C Paul Osborne

E posborne@lhc.net
W www.lhc.net

Urban designers, architects and landscape architects, providing an integrated approach to strategic visioning, regeneration, urban renewal, masterplanning and public realm projects. Creative, knowledgeable, practical, passionate.

LICHFIELDS

The Minster Building, 21 Mincing Lane
London EC3R 7AG
T 020 7837 4477
C Nick Thompson

E nthompson@lichfields.co.uk
W www.nlplanning.com

Also at Newcastle upon Tyne and Cardiff

Urban design, masterplanning, heritage/conservation, visual appraisal, regeneration, daylight/sunlight assessments, public realm strategies.

LIZ LAKE ASSOCIATES

Unit 1, The Exchange 9 Station Road
Stansted, Essex CM24 8AG
T 01279 647044
C Sean Vessey

E office@lizlake.com
W www.lizlake.com

We undertake rapid area analysis & urban visual impact assessment to contribute to the design development of a project. We work in multidisciplinary teams on the cohesive development of buildings, spaces and landscapes to produce the best-quality public realm environments.

- LUC**
250 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8RD
T 0207 383 8472
C Adrian Wikeley
E urbandesign@landuse.co.uk
W www.landuse.co.uk
Offices also in Bristol, Manchester, Glasgow and Edinburgh.
Urban regeneration, landscape design, masterplanning, sustainable development, environmental planning, environmental assessment, landscape planning and management.
- MACE GROUP**
155 Moorgate
London, EC2M 6XB
T 020 3522 3000
C Kevin Radford
E kevin.radford@macegroup.com
W www.macegroup.com
An adventurous and innovative company offering urban design and masterplanning services as part of the consulting arm of the business and alongside its Development, Construction and Operational Services.
- METIS CONSULTANTS LTD**
4th Floor Spencer House
23 Sheen Road, Richmond
London TW9 1BN
T 020 8948 0249
C Luke Meechan
E info@metisconsultants.co.uk
W www.metisconsultants.co.uk
Our team of talented engineers and architects deliver exceptional quality schemes, on time and on budget. Our track record of creating flagship healthy streets, town centre renewals, low emission neighbourhoods and cycleway schemes is unrivalled.
- METROPOLIS PLANNING AND DESIGN**
4 Underwood Row
London N1 7LQ
T 020 7324 2662
C Greg Cooper
E info@metropolis.com
W www.metropolispd.com
Metropolitan urban design solutions drawn from a multi-disciplinary studio of urban designers, architects, planners and heritage architects.
- METROPOLITAN WORKSHOP**
14-16 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6DG
T 020 7566 0450
C David Prichard/Neil Deeley
E info@metwork.co.uk
W www.metwork.co.uk
Metropolitan Workshop has experience in urban design, land use planning, regeneration and architecture in the UK, Eire and Norway. Recent projects: Ballymun Dublin, Durham Millennium Quarter, Adamstown District Centre Dublin, Bjorvika Waterfront.
- NASH PARTNERSHIP**
23a Sydney Buildings
Bath, Somerset BA2 6BZ
T 01225 442424
C Donna Fooks-Bale
E dfooks-bale@nashpartnership.com
W www.nashpartnership.com
Nash Partnership is an architecture, planning, urban design, conservation and economic regeneration consultancy based in Bath and Bristol.
- NEAVES URBANISM**
London
T 020 8194 0111
C Katy Neaves
E katy@neavesurbanism.co.uk
W www.neavesurbanism.co.uk
We are an independent townscape and urban design consultancy that works throughout the UK and provides expert advice during the design development process.
- NEW MASTERPLANNING**
107 Bournemouth Road
Poole, Dorset BH14 9HR
T 01202 742228
C Andy Ward
E office@newMasterplanning.com
W www.newMasterplanning.com
Our skills combine strategic planning with detailed implementation, design flair with economic rigour, independent thinking with a partnership approach.
- NICHOLAS PEARSON ASSOCIATES**
The Farm House, Church Farm Business Park, Corston, Bath BA2 9AP
T 01225 876990
C Jamie Farnell
E jamie.farnell@npaconsult.co.uk
W www.npaconsult.co.uk
Masterplanning, public realm design, streetscape analysis, concept and detail designs. Also full landscape architecture service, EIA, green infrastructure, ecology and biodiversity, environmental planning and management.
- NINETEEN 47**
Unit 4, Innovative Mews
Lake View Drive, Sherwood Park
Nottingham NG15 0EA
T 0330 818 947
C Richard Walshaw
E info@nineteen47.co.uk
W nineteen47.co.uk
Chartered town planners and urban designers
- NODE URBAN DESIGN**
33 Holmfield Road
Leicester LE2 1SE
T 0116 2708742
C Nigel Wakefield
E nwakefield@nodeurbandesign.com
W www.nodeurbandesign.com
An innovative team of urban design, landscape and heritage consultants who believe that good design adds value. Providing sustainable urban design and masterplan solutions at all scales of development with a focus on the creation of a sense of place.
- NOVELL TULLETT**
The Studio, Home Farm
Barrow Court Lane, Barrow Gurney
Bristol BS48 3RW
T 01275 462476
C Simon Lindsley
E bristol@novelltullett.co.uk
W www.novelltullett.co.uk
Urban design, landscape architecture and environmental planning.
- OPTIMISED ENVIRONMENTS OPEN**
Quatermile Two
2nd Floor, 2 Lister Square
Edinburgh EH3 9GL
T 0131 221 5920
C Pol MacDonald
E info@op-en.co.uk
W www.optimisedenvironments.com
A multidisciplinary design company encompassing masterplanning, urban design, landscape architecture, and architecture, with depth of experience at all scales, from tight urban situations to regional landscapes. We work in the UK and overseas.
- ORIGIN3**
23 Westfield Park, Redland
Bristol BS6 6LT
T 0117 980 4900
C Chris Wilson
E info@origin3.co.uk
W www.origin3.co.uk
Planning and urban design consultancy
- OUTERSPACE**
The Boathouse, 27 Ferry Road
Teddington TW11 9NN
T 020 8973 0070
C Richard Broome
E rbroome@outerspaceuk.com
W www.outerspaceuk.com
At Outerspace our designers strive to create places for the 'everyday', balancing creativity with practicality, working closely with our clients and communities to create better places for people and nature.
- PEGASUS GROUP**
5 The Priory, Old London Road, Canwell
Sutton Coldfield B75 5SH
T 0333 0161 777
C Michael Carr
E enquiries@pegasuspug.co.uk
W www.pegasuspug.co.uk
Offices throughout the UK
Masterplanning, detailed layout and architectural design, design and access statements, design codes, sustainable design, development briefs, development frameworks, expert witness, community involvement and sustainability appraisal.
- PETER STEWART CONSULTANCY**
Somerset House, Strand
London EC1M 6EJ
T 020 7250 1120
E mail@pscpcpa.co.uk
W www.pscpcpa.co.uk
Peter Stewart Consultancy provides expert advice in the fields of architecture, urban design, townscape and the historic environment.
- PHILIP CAVE ASSOCIATES**
70 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EJ
T 020 7250 0077
C Philip Cave
E principal@philipcave.com
W www.philipcave.com
Design-led practice with innovative yet practical solutions to environmental opportunities in urban regeneration. Specialist expertise in landscape architecture.
- PHIL JONES ASSOCIATES**
Seven House, High Street
Longbridge, Birmingham B31 2UQ
T 0121 475 0234
C Nigel Millington
E nigel@philjonesassociates.co.uk
W www.philjonesassociates.co.uk
One of the UK's leading independent transport specialists offering the expertise to deliver high quality, viable developments which are design-led and compliant with urban design best practice.
- PLACE BY DESIGN**
Unit C, Baptist Mills Court
Bristol BS5 0FJ
T 01179 517 053
C Charley Burrough
E info@placebydesign.co.uk
W placebydesign.co.uk
Urban Design and architectural practice working with some of the biggest developers in the country, we are involved in projects from conception to technical drawing and construction, producing masterplans and visualisations to support successful planning applications.
- PLACE-MAKE**
Alexander House, 40a Wilbury Way
Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 0AP
T 01462 510099
C David Edwards
E dedwards@place-make.com
W www.place-make.com
A Chartered Practice of architects and urban designers operating across the UK and internationally. Underpinning every project is a commitment to viable and sustainable design and a passion for places.
- PLANIT-IE**
2 Back Grafton Street
Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 1DY
T 0161 928 9281
C Peter Swift
E info@planit-ie.com
W www.planit-ie.com
Design practice specialising in the creation of places and shaping of communities. Our Urban Designers work at all scales from regeneration strategies and conceptual masterplans through to Design Codes – making environments, neighbourhoods and spaces for people to enjoy.
- PLANNING AND DESIGN GROUP (UK) LTD**
Pure Offices, Lake View Drive
Nottingham NG15 0DT
T 01623726256
C Richard Hall
E richard.hall@panddg.co.uk
W www.panddg.co.uk
Providing innovation and creativity and a range of consultant services in the fields of Planning, Urban Design, Masterplanning and Heritage through dedication, hard work and research.
- POLLARD THOMAS EDWARDS ARCHITECTS**
Diespeker Wharf, 38 Graham Street
London N1 8JX
T 020 7336 7777
C Robin Saha-Choudhury
E robin.saha-choudhury@ptea.co.uk
W www.pollardthomasedwards.co.uk
Masterplanners, urban designers, developers, architects, listed building and conservation area designers; specialising in inner city mixed use high density regeneration.
- PRO VISION**
The Lodge, Highcroft Road
Winchester SO22 5GU
T 01794 368698
C Hatem Nabih
E hatem@pro-vision.co.uk
W www.pvprojects.com
A practice of integrated development consultants covering town planning, architecture, urban design and heritage, we provide carefully designed, context driven and client focused plans and buildings.

PRP ARCHITECTS

10 Lindsey Street
London EC1A 9HP
T 020 7653 1200
C Vicky Naysmith
E london@prp-co.uk
W www.prp-co.uk

Architects, planners, urban designers and landscape architects, specialising in housing, urban regeneration, health, education and leisure projects.

RANDALL THORP

Beehive Lofts, Jersey Street
Manchester M4 6JG
T 0161 228 7721
C Dick Longdin

E dlongdin@randallthorp.co.uk
W www.randallthorp.co.uk

Masterplanning for new developments and settlements, infrastructure design and urban renewal, design guides and design briefing, public participation.

RE-FORM LANDSCAPE**ARCHITECTURE**

Tower Works, Globe Road
Leeds LS11 5QG

T 0113 245 4695

C Guy Denton

E info@re-formlandscape.com

W www.re-formlandscape.com
re-form specialises in creating enduring, sustainable designs which create a sense of identity, support the local economy and inspire communities.

RPS CONSULTING SERVICES

Lakesbury House, Hildington Road
Chandlers Ford SO53 5SS

T 02380 810440

C Jonathan Stewart

E jonathan.stewart@rpsgroup.com
W www.rpsgroup.com

RPS Consulting Services are a leading multi-disciplinary development consultancy providing specialist advice across a range of core services including Planning, Urban Design, Masterplanning, Heritage and Transport.

RICHARD REID & ASSOCIATES

Whitely Farm, Ide Hill
Sevenoaks TN14 6BS

T 01732 741417

C Richard Reid

E rreid@richardreid.co.uk

W www.richardreid.co.uk

Award winning practice specialising in urban design, mixed use high density projects, townscape design and regeneration, sustainable masterplanning and environmental education.

RYDER ARCHITECTURE

Cooper's Studios

14-18 Westgate Road
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 3NN

T 0191 269 5454

C Cathy Russell

E CRussell@ryderarchitecture.com

W www.ryderarchitecture.com

Offices in London, Glasgow, Liverpool

Hong Kong, Vancouver, Amsterdam

Our core specialisms include architecture, urban design, placemaking, stakeholder and community engagement, planning, interiors and heritage.

SAVILLS URBAN DESIGN

33 Margaret Street

London W1G 0JD

T 020 3320 8242

W www.savills.com

SOUTHAMPTON

2 Charlotte Place,

Southampton SO14 0TB

T 02380 713900

C Peter Frankum

E pfrankum@savills.com

Offices throughout the World

Savills Urban Design creates value

from places and places of value.

Masterplanning, urban design, design

coding, urban design advice, planning,

commercial guidance.

SCOTT TALLON WALKER**ARCHITECTS**

19 Merrion Square, Dublin O2 VR80

T 00 353 1 669 3000

C Philip Jackson

E mail@stwarchitects.com

W www.stwarchitects.com

Award winning international practice

covering all aspects of architecture,

urban design and planning.

SCOTT WORSFOLD ASSOCIATES

The Studio, 22 Ringwood Road

Longham, Dorset BH22 9AN

T 01202 580902

C Gary Worsfold / Alister Scott

E gary@sw-arch.com

alister@sw-arch.com

www.garyworsfoldarchitecture.co.uk

An award winning practice of chartered

architects, urban designers and experts

in conservation, all with exceptional

graphic skills and an enviable record in

planning consents.

SHAFFREY ASSOCIATES

29 Lower Ormond Quay

Dublin 01 H299

T +353 1872 5602

C Patrick Shaffrey

E studio@shaffrey.ie

The practice has undertaken

architectural, urban design and planning

projects throughout Ireland and possess

a wide knowledge of Irish towns and

cities.

SHEILS FLYNN

Bank House High Street, Docking

Kings Lynn PE31 8NH

T 01485 518304

C Eoghan Sheils

E norfolk@sheilsflynn.com

W www.sheilsflynn.com

Award winning town centre regeneration

schemes, urban strategies and design

guidance. Specialists in community

consultation and team facilitation.

SHEPHEARD EPSTEIN HUNTER

175-185 Gray's Inn Road

London WC1X 8UE

T 020 7841 7500

C Steven Pidwill

E stevenpidwill@seh.co.uk

W www.seh.co.uk

SEH is a user-friendly, award-winning

architects firm, known for its work in

regeneration, education, housing,

masterplanning, mixed use and

healthcare projects.

SHEPPARD ROBSON

77 Parkway, Camden Town

London NW1 7PU

T 020 7504 1700

C Charles Scott

charles.scott@sheppardrobson.com

W www.sheppardrobson.com

MANCHESTER

27th Floor, City Tower, Piccadilly Plaza

Manchester M1 4BD

T 0161 233 8900

Planners, urban designers and

architects. Strategic planning, urban

regeneration, development planning,

town centre renewal, new settlement

planning.

SMEEDEN FOREMAN

Somerset House, Low Moor Lane

Scotton, Knaresborough HG5 9JB

T 01423 863369

C Mark Smeeden

E office@smeeden.foreman.co.uk

W www.smeedenforeman.co.uk

Ecology, landscape architecture

and urban design. Environmental

assessment, detail design, contract

packages and site supervision.

STEN ARCHITECTURE

The Studio, Harrison Street

Wakefield WF1 1PS

T 01924 950985

C Nicola Jones

E nicola@sten-architecture.co.uk

W www.sten-architecture.co.uk

Sten architecture is a practice of

architects, urban designers, architectural

technicians and visualisers. We have

extensive experience in masterplanning,

urban design and the delivery of

successful architectural projects.

STUDIO PARTINGTON

Unit G, Reliance Wharf

Hertford Road, London N1 5EW

T 020 7241 7770

C Richard Partington

E info@studiopartington.co.uk

W www.studiopartington.co.uk

Urban design, housing, retail, education,

sustainability and commercial projects

that take a responsible approach to the

environment and resources.

STUDIO | REAL

Oxford Centre for Innovation

New Road, Oxford OX1 1BY

T 01865 261461

C Roger Evans

E revans@studioreal.co.uk

W www.studioreal.co.uk

Urban regeneration, quarter

frameworks and design briefs, town

centre strategies, movement in towns,

masterplanning and development

economics.

TAPESTRY

Studio D, Main Yard Studios

90 Wallis Road, London E9 5LN

T 020 3882 1495

C Paul Reynolds

E paul@tapestry.studio

W www.tapestry.studio

Tapestry is an urbanism consultancy

focused on delivering high quality place-

making through landscape-led planning

and design services across a range and

scales and sectors. We believe success

comes through collaboration.

TEP - THE ENVIRONMENT**PARTNERSHIP**

Genesis Centre

Birchwood Science Park

Warrington WA3 7BH

T 01925 844004

C Graeme Atherton

E graemeatherton@tep.co.uk

GATESHEAD

Office 26, Gateshead International

Business Centre

Mulgrave Terrace

Gateshead NE8 1AN

T 0191 605 3340

E gateshead@tep.co.uk

CORNWALL

4 Park Noweth

Churchtown, Cury

Helston TR12 7BW

T 01326 240081

E cornwall@tep.co.uk

W www.tep.co.uk

TEP provides independent planning and

design advice with a strong emphasis

on personal service. Our award-winning

multi-disciplinary team has a track

record of delivering complex projects

for private, public and voluntary sector

clients.

TERENCE O'ROURKE

7 Heddon Street

London W1B 4BD

T 020 3664 6755

C Ian Platt

E ian.platt@torltd.co.uk

W www.torltd.co.uk

Award-winning planning, design and

environmental practice.

TETRA TECH

Quay West at MediaCityUK

Trafford Wharf Road, Trafford Park

Manchester M17 1HH

T 0161 696 7216

C Andrew Clarke

E andrew.clarke@tetratech.com

W www.tetratech.com

Offices throughout the UK

Creative urban design and

masterplanning with a contextual

approach to place-making and a

concern for environmental, social and

economic sustainability.

THE TERRA FIRMA CONSULTANCY

Suite B, Ideal House, Bedford Road,

Petersfield, Hampshire GU32 3QA

T 01730 262040

C Lionel Fanshawe

contact@terrafirmaconsultancy.com

W www.terrafirmaconsultancy.com

Independent landscape architectural

practice with considerable urban design

experience at all scales from EIA to

project delivery throughout UK and

overseas.

THE PAUL HOGARTH COMPANY

Bankhead Steading, Bankhead Road

South Queensferry EH30 9TF

T 0131 331 4811

C James Hennessey

E james@paulhogarth.com

W www.paulhogarth.com

The Paul Hogarth Company is a long

established and passionate team of

landscape architects, urban designers

and planners that puts people at the

heart of place-making.

THRIVE

Building 300, The Grange
Romsey Road, Michelmersh
Romsey SO51 0AE

T 01794 367703
C Gary Rider
E Gary.Rider@thrivearchitects.co.uk
W www.thrivearchitects.co.uk

Award winning multi-disciplinary practice encompassing architecture, urban design, masterplanning, design coding, regeneration, development frameworks, sustainable design/planning and construction. Residential and retirement care specialists.

TIBBALDS PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN

19 Maltings Place, 169 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 3JB

T 020 7089 2121
C Katja Stille
E mail@tibbalds.co.uk
W www.tibbalds.co.uk

Multi-disciplinary practice of urban designers, architects and planners. Provides expertise from concept to implementation in regeneration, masterplanning, urban design and design management to public and private sector clients.

TOWN

Impact Hub Kings Cross, 34B York Way London N1 9AB

T 0207 887 2989
C Neil Murphy
E hello@wearetown.co.uk
W www.wearetown.co.uk

TOWN is a development company. We plan and deliver new pieces of town: homes, streets and neighbourhoods. Our purpose is to make places people love.

TOWNSCAPE SOLUTIONS

208 Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick West Midlands B67 5EH

T 0121 429 6111
C Kenny Brown
E kbrown@townscapesolutions.co.uk
W www.townscapesolutions.co.uk
Specialist urban design practice offering a wide range of services including masterplans, site layouts, design briefs, design and access statements, expert witness and 3D illustrations.

TURLEY

10th Floor, 1 New York Street Manchester M1 4HD

C Stephen Taylor (North)
T 0161 233 7676
E stephen.taylor@turley.co.uk
C Craig Becconsall (South)
T 0118 902 2830
W www.turley.co.uk

Offices throughout the UK. Integrated urban design, masterplanning, sustainability and heritage services provided at all project stages and scales of development. Services include visioning, townscape analysis, design guides and public realm resolution.

TNW SADLER BROWN

Chapel House, City Road Chester CH1 3AE

T 01244 310388
C John Tweed
E entasis@tnw-architecture.co.uk
W www.tnw-architecture.co.uk

Architecture and urban design, masterplanning. Urban waterside environments. Community teamwork enablers. Visual impact assessments.

UBU DESIGN LTD

7a Wintex House Easton Lane Business Park Easton Lane

Winchester SO23 7RQ
T 01962 856008
C Rachel Williams
E rachelw@ubu-design.co.uk
W www.ubu-design.co.uk

Ubu Design is an innovative urban design and landscape architecture practice. We combine creativity with understanding to shape development and produce designs that are considered, viable and inspiring, from strategies and frameworks, through masterplanning to detailed design.

URBAN DESIGN BOX

The Tobacco Factory Raleigh Road Bristol BS3 1TF

T 01179395524
C Jonathan Vernon-Smith
E info@urbandesigbox.co.uk
W www.urbandesignbox.co.uk

We are an integrated masterplanning, architecture and urban design service. Working nationally, we have designed, delivered and completed residential, mixed use and commercial projects, from sensitive urban infills to strategic sites.

URBAN DESIGN SOLUTIONS LTD

179/19 Gilmore Place Edinburgh EH3 9PW

T 0131 229 1241
C Leslie Howson
E urbandesignsolutions@virgin.net
W www.urbandesignsolutionsltd.co.uk
A small Edinburgh based urban design practice, committed to good quality environmental design with production of innovative, economic and sustainable urban design solutions.

URBAN FLOW

203 Westminster Bridge Road, Northfield Avenue London SE1 7FR

T 07721 666668
C Lorna Sewell
E lornasewell13@gmail.com
W www.urban-flow.co.uk
We are transport and movement experts, blending conventional transport planning and traffic engineering capability with a strategic appreciation of wider aims including placemaking, masterplanning and sustainability.

URBAN GRAPHICS

31 Castle Lane Bedford MK40 3NT

T 01234 353870
C Bally Meeda
E info@urban-graphics.co.uk
W www.urban-graphics.co.uk

With over 25 years experience, Urban Graphics deliver the tools to secure investment, attain planning permissions, turn visions into reality and influence the regeneration of major projects.

URBAN GREEN

Ground Floor, The Tower Deva City Office Park, Trinity Way Manchester M3 7BF

T 0161 312 3131
C Martin King
E martin.king@weareurbangreen.co.uk
W www.weareurbangreen.co.uk

As designers we create exceptional places to maximise the commercial and environmental value of sites as well as delivering long-term benefits to the wider community.

URBAN IMPRINT

16-18 Park Green Macclesfield Cheshire SK11 7NA

T 01625 265232
C Bob Phillips
E info@urbanimprint.co.uk
W www.urbanimprint.co.uk

A multi-disciplinary town planning and urban design consultancy dedicated to the delivery of high quality development solutions working with public, private and community organisations.

URBANIST ARCHITECTURE

2 Little Thames Walk London SE8 3FB

T 0203 793 7878
C Ufuk Bahar
E bahar@urbanistarchitecture.co.uk
W www.urbanistarchitecture.co.uk
Urbanist Architecture is a London-based Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) chartered architecture and planning practice with offices in Greenwich and Knightsbridge.

URBAN INITIATIVES STUDIO

Exmouth House, 3-11 Pine Street London EC1R 0JH

T 0203 567 0715
C Hugo Nowell
E h.nowell@uistudio.co.uk
W www.uistudio.co.uk
Urban design, transportation, regeneration, development planning.

URBAN MOVEMENT

Exmouth House, 3-11 Pine Street London EC1R 0JH

T 07977 417 661
C Christopher Martin
E c.martin@urbanmovement.co.uk
W www.urbanmovement.co.uk
We're urban designers, transport planners, landscape architects, and traffic engineers who believe in the power of better streets and spaces to make towns and cities more successful, healthy, and enjoyable for everyone.

URBED**MANCHESTER**

10 Little Lever Street Manchester M1 1HR

T 0161 200 5500
C Vicky Payne
E vicky@urbed.coop
W www.urbed.coop

VINCENT AND GORBING

Sterling Court, Norton Road Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 2JY

T 01438 316331
C Richard Lewis
E urban.designers@vincent-gorbing.co.uk
W www.vincent-gorbing.co.uk
Masterplanning, design statements, character assessments, development briefs, residential layouts and urban capacity exercises.

WEI YANG & PARTNERS

33 Cavendish Square London W1G 0PW

T 020 7182 4936
C Jun Huang
E info@weiyangandpartners.co.uk
W www.weiyangandpartners.co.uk
Award-winning multi-disciplinary company driven by a commitment to shape more sustainable and liveable cities. Specialising in low-carbon city development strategies, garden cities and communities, urban regeneration, urban design, mixed use urban complex design and community building strategies.

WEST WADDY ARCHADIA

The Malthouse 60 East St. Helen Street Abingdon, Oxon OX14 5EB

T 01235 523139
C Philip Waddy
E enquiries@wwa-studios.com
W www-studios.com

Experienced and multi-disciplinary team of urban designers, architects and town planners offering a full range of urban design services.

WESTON WILLIAMSON + PARTNERS

12 Valentine Place London SE1 8QH

T 020 7401 8877
C Chris Williamson
E team@westonwilliamson.com
W www.westonwilliamson.com
Weston Williamson is an award winning architectural, urban design and masterplanning practice with a wide variety of projects in the UK and abroad.

WOOD**LONDON**

Floor 12, 25 Canada Square London E14 5LQ

T 020 3 215 1700
C Jeremy Wills
E jeremy.wills@woodplc.com
W woodplc.com

MIDLANDS

Nicholls House, Homer Close, Tachbrook Park

Leamington Spa CV34 6TT
T 01926 439000
C David Thompson
E david.thompson@woodplc.com
W woodplc.com

Wood is an award winning multi-disciplinary environment, engineering and development consultancy with offices around the globe. Our core UK urban design teams in London and Leamington consist of a diverse group of professionals with exceptional knowledge and skills in place-making.

WOODCROFT

67 Chorley Old Road, Bolton Lancashire BL1 3AH

T 0125 483 0274
C Matt King
E enquiry@woodcroftdesign.co.uk
W www.woodcroftdesign.co.uk
Architectural practice with over 20 years' experience in the successful provision of sketch layouts, masterplanning, framework plans, design codes and architectural information to support planning applications.

WOODS HARDWICK

15-17 Goldington Road Bedford MK40 3NH

T 01234 268862
C Marta Brzezinska
E m.brzezinska@woodshardwick.com
W www.woodshardwick.com
Woods Hardwick is one of the UK's leading multidisciplinary professional practices specialising in the built environment.

WSP

6 Devonshire Square London EC2M 4YE

T 020 3116 9371
C Ashley Dunseath
E ashley.dunseath@wsp.com
W www.wsp.com
WSP is a globally recognized professional services firm.

Education Index

The following universities offer courses in Urban Design.

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

School of Architecture and Design
15 Bartholomew Road
Birmingham B5 5JU
T 0121 331 5000
C Lucas Hughes
E lucas.hughes@bcu.ac.uk
W www.bcu.ac.uk
BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture with Urban Design
MA Urban Design
This forward-thinking, exploratory, design focused MA, is rooted in a deep connection between theory and practice.

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

School of Geography and Planning and Welsh School of Architecture, Glamorgan Building, King Edward VII Avenue
Cardiff CF10 3WA
T 029 2087 5607/029 2087 6131
C Aseem Inam
E inamat@Cardiff.ac.uk
W www.cardiff.ac.uk
One year full-time MA in Urban Design.

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

School of Geography and Planning, Glamorgan Buildin. King Edward VII Avenue
Cardiff CF10 3WA
T 029 2087 5607/029 2087 6131
C Richard Bower
E bowerr1t@Cardiff.ac.uk
W www.cardiff.ac.uk
One year full-time MSc in International Planning and Urban Design.

EDINBURGH SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

ECA University of Edinburgh
Lauriston Place, Edinburgh EH3 9DF
T 0131 651 5786
C Dr Ola Uduku
E o.uduku@ed.ac.uk
W www.ed.ac.uk
Jointly run with Heriot Watt University, this M.Sc in Urban Strategies and Design focuses on urban design practice and theory from a cultural, and socio-economic, case-study perspective.

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Mackintosh School of Architecture
167 Renfrew Street
Glasgow G3 6RQ
T 0141 353 4500
C Isabel Deakin
E i.deakin@gsa.ac.uk
W www.gsa.ac.uk
Master of Architecture in: Urban Design and Creative Urban Practices; Urban Building; Computer Aided Architectural Design; and, Energy & Environmental Studies.

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

The Leeds School of Architecture
City Campus
Leeds LS1 3HE
T 0113 81 22593
C George Epolito
E g.epolito@leedsbeckett.ac.uk
W www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk
Whether you have studied urban design, architecture, interdisciplinary design or planning, this course will enable you to network with practitioners, planners, architects and landscape architects to explore the role of urban design in the city.

LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Law and Social Science
103 Borough Road, London SE1 0AA
T 0207 815 5877
C Manuela Madeddu
E madeddum@lsbu.ac.uk
W www.lsbu.ac.uk
The MA Urban Design and Planning (FT or PT) provides an inter-disciplinary approach to urban design and equips students with a comprehensive understanding of urban design, planning and development issues.

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, Clarendon Tower
University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU
T 0191 222 6006
C Georgia Giannopoulou
E georgia.giannopoulou@ncl.ac.uk
W www.ncl.ac.uk
The MA in Urban Design brings together cross-disciplinary expertise striking a balance between methods and approaches in environmental design and the social sciences in the creation of the built environment.

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment,
Headington, Oxford OX3 0BP
T 01865 483 438
C Georgia Butina-Watson and Regina Lim
E gbutina@brookes.ac.uk
rlim@brookes.ac.uk
W www.brookes.ac.uk
Diploma in Urban Design, six months full time or 18 months part time. MA one year full-time or two years part-time.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

Development Planning Unit
34 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9EZ
T 020 7679 1111
C Camillo Boano and Catalina Ortiz
E c.boano@ucl.ac.uk
catalina.ortiz@ucl.ac.uk
W www.ucl.ac.uk

The DPU programme has a unique focus on Urban Design as a transdisciplinary and critical practice.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

Bartlett School of Planning
22 Gordon Street, London WC1H 0QB
T 020 7679 4797
C Filipa Wunderlich
E f.wunderlich@ucl.ac.uk
W www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk
The MSc/Dipl Urban Design & City Planning has a unique focus on the interface between urban design & city planning.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

Bartlett School of Planning
14 Upper Woburn Place
London WC1H 0NN
T 020 7679 4797
C Matthew Carmona
E m.carmona@ucl.ac.uk
W www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk
The MRes Inter-disciplinary Urban Design cuts across urban design programmes at The Bartlett, allowing students to construct their study in a flexible manner and explore urban design as a critical arena for advanced research and practice.

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

Town and Regional Planning
Tower Building, Perth Road
Dundee DD1 4HN
T 01382 385246 / 01382 385048
C Dr Mohammad Radfar
Dr Deepak Gopinath
E m.radfar@dundee.ac.uk
D.Gopinath@dundee.ac.uk
W www.dundee.ac.uk
The MSc Advanced Sustainable Urban Design (RTPI accredited) is a unique multidisciplinary practice-led programme set in an international context (EU study visit) and engaging with such themes as landscape urbanism, place-making across cultures and sustainability evaluation as integrated knowledge spheres in the creation of sustainable places.

UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD

School of Architecture and 3D Design
Queen Street Studios
Huddersfield HD1 3DH
T 01484 472208
C Dr Ioanni Delsante
E i.delsante@hud.ac.uk
W www.hud.ac.uk
MA; PgDip; PgCert in Urban Design (Full Time or Part Time).
The MA in Urban Design aims to provide students with the essential knowledge and skills required to effectively intervene in the urban design process; develop academic research skills, including critical problem-solving and reflective practice; facilitate design responses to the range of cultural, political, socio-economic, historical, environmental and spatial factors.

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

School of Environment, Education and Development
Humanities Bridgeford Street,
Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL
T 0161 275 2815
C Dr. Philip Black
E philip.black@manchester.ac.uk
W www.seed.manchester.ac.uk
MSc Urban Design and International Planning (F/T or P/T)
The fully accredited RTP1 MSc Urban Design and International Planning explores the relationship between urban design and planning by focusing on internationally significant issues.

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Department of Architecture and Built Environment, University Park
Nottingham NG7 2RD
T 0115 9513110
C Prof Tim Heath
E tim.heath@nottingham.ac.uk
W www.nottingham.ac.uk
Master of Architecture (MArch) in Sustainable Urban Design is a research and project-based programme which aims to assist the enhancement of the quality of our cities by bringing innovative design with research in sustainability.

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

School of Architecture, The Arts Tower, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN
T 0114 222 0341
C Beatrice De Carli and Bobby Nisha
E b.a.decarli@sheffield.ac.uk
b.nisha@sheffield.ac.uk
W www.shef.ac.uk
One year full time MA in Urban Design for postgraduate architects, landscape architects and town planners. The programme has a strong design focus, integrates participation and related design processes, and includes international and regional applications.

UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE

Department of Architecture
Urban Design Studies Unit
Level 3, James Weir Building
75 Montrose Street, Glasgow G1 1XJ
T 0141 548 4219
C Ombretta Romice
E ombretta.r.romice@strath.ac.uk
W www.udsu-strath.com
The Postgraduate Course in Urban Design is offered in CPD, Diploma and MSc modes. The course is design centred and includes input from a variety of related disciplines.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

35 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5LS
T 020 7911 5000 ext 66553
C Bill Erickson
E w.n.erickson@westminster.ac.uk
W www.westminster.ac.uk
MA or Diploma Course in Urban Design for postgraduate architects, town planners, landscape architects and related disciplines. One year full time.

Please see the UDG's website www.udg.org.uk/directory/courses for more details. Simply hold your smartphone over the QR code whilst in camera mode and you will be taken to the relevant web page.



Leaving the front

Ten years ago I wrote a piece about Digbeth for the March 2011 issue of *Context*, the journal of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation. I had just moved my office from one listed building in the conservation area to another, the Custard Factory. I reflected on the inherent diversity of Digbeth, and how planning policies generally are inadequate for protecting or generating this quality. Diversity, it seems to me, is something that human society produces naturally if conditions are favourable: it is almost ecologically determined. But the well-intentioned planning system, by defining standards and criteria which development has to meet, often tends to iron out diversity and replace it with uniformity, even if only inadvertently. It is only a local symbol of this process, but the saga of the Headington shark, in which its creator had to struggle repeatedly against authority to enable its survival, can stand as a small illustration.

Ten years later, I have vacated my office in the Custard Factory (actually the part of the original development now separately owned and called Zellig), moved out of Digbeth, and I am now like many others in Covidland working from home. I remain very attached to the district, and I fear for what might happen to its urban diversity. In the *Context* article I mentioned the inadequacies of the Conservation Area Management Plan, a cautious document which does little to generate diversity. 'Local identity should be reinforced by the use of materials traditionally employed in the area, principally brick and slate' it instructs. But there is in fact no homogeneity in Digbeth: that is part of its character. Although the Canal and River Trust promotes the public use of canal towpaths, 'the creation of any direct access from the public realm to the canalside will not be allowed': because that is how it was in the 1770s when the canals were a separate industrial realm. 'Street trees are not a traditional feature of the area, and would not be considered an appropriate addition



1

to the public realm' ignoring the benefits that derive from the sight, shade, sounds and smells of street trees, let alone carbon absorption.

This management plan needs replacing, and a long-awaited Supplementary Planning Document, which will do this, is still not published. Will it recognise the special nature of this heterogeneous conservation area? I hope so, but I am not confident. Before Birmingham City Council appointed Urban Initiatives to write the 2010 Big City Plan, it asked Professor Michael Parkinson to write the socio-economic agenda for it. Parkinson was very perceptive about the nature and potential of Digbeth. He wrote: 'This is one of the most exciting parts of the city, which has authenticity, grit, great buildings, waterways. In other cities it would be a jewel. It is absolutely critical that this area is developed in the right way for the city. It certainly must not be overdeveloped or sanitised by conventional development'. Historic England describes Digbeth as 'cool, funky and beautiful, as well as dusty and noisy, one of Britain's most varied, dynamic and colourful inner-city areas'.

But in June, the Planning Committee approved a proposal by Oval Real Estate covering about half of Digbeth, 17.5 hectares in all (since 2017 Oval Real Estate have been the owners of the Custard Factory and many other nearby premises). I wrote here in UD150 about its preparatory study. Contrary to conservation area policy, it proposes the demolition and replacement of many buildings, including ones which Oval does not own, and new development which also contravenes principles contained in the management plan. In making this extensive

planning application, Oval demonstrated a very proprietorial attitude towards Digbeth. It is symptomatic that to contact Oval, you email hello@digbeth.com. This is related to what Hammerson did a short distance away: removing the public street since mediaeval times called Bull Ring, and replacing it with an indoor shopping centre called Bullring. That was also approved by the City Council, although to its limited credit it did insist that street direction signs continued to indicate Bull Ring, even though it was no longer there.

Diversity has its roots in diverse ownership. With multiple ownership and occupation, spread across a variety of old buildings, diversity can grow naturally. But a big acquisitive developer aspiring to a monopoly of ownership, HS2 now actually taking shape a few blocks away, and politicians and officers who see no threat to urban quality in these events, all combine to create a threat to diversity. I have moved away from the front, but the sound of gunfire is clearly heard, and ominous. ●

Joe Holyoak, architect and urban designer

1 Digbeth, Birmingham: two more storeys are proposed to be added to the buildings on the left of the street in the Oval planning application
2 Stuart Mugridge, *The Battle for Eastside*, 2007. Urban development as warfare. In 2007 Digbeth was part of the Eastside regeneration zone



2



Local living, community-focused architecture and co-creation underpin Pollard Thomas Edwards' Cotown vision.

A Cotown is a new kind of place to live, to work and enjoy, designed with the people destined to live there. Distinguished by co-housing, a caring economy with equitable industries and everyday necessities within walking distance, Cotowns blend with local ecologies – blue and green alike – and connect to the wider community and world-at-large.

In Cotowns, working from home is easy (because houses are designed to allow

for this) but they also feature third place venues - community-focused architecture, founded on sociality, where people flock to be together - and nearby making spaces. As well as deploying smart tech to create a digitally managed environment flexible and responsive to changing use, Cotowns are formed of genuinely diverse neighbourhoods, where age, heritage, qualifications and bank balance don't matter. Instead, a willingness to put down roots is what counts.

