A STUDY INTO THE USE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORKS AS A PLANNING TOOL

SOPHIE FITCH

Submitted as part of MPhil Town Planning

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

September 2004
ABSTRACT

A study into the use and effectiveness of urban design frameworks as a planning tool

There is an increasing recognition of the importance of urban design in driving the aims of the UK planning system. This has arisen out of the recognition and acknowledgement derived through research and experience that incorporating principles of good urban design can bring many benefits to an area.

This study sets out to investigate a set of research questions surrounding the preparation and use of a form of supplementary planning guidance known as Urban Design Frameworks. Through a literature review, and use of three London local authority case studies, the study draws conclusions in relation to the following questions:

- What are urban design frameworks and what is their purpose and function?
- Where do urban design frameworks fit within the hierarchy of supplementary planning guidance?
- Who produces the guidance and who are they produced for?
- Is there a consultation process surrounding their preparation?
- Are there variations in terms of their form, content, and objectives?
- Does their content reflect their objective/s?
- Do they cover the same spatial contexts?
- What are their advantages/disadvantages?
- Will there be an increase in the publication of area based design guidance documents by local authorities as a result of the requirement under the new planning system for Area Action Plans?

Through the analysis of the case studies, conclusions are made in relation to the varying names and nature of the guidance documents that are broadly categorised as area based design frameworks. Their overall advantages relate to their use in facilitating the planning process, whilst their disadvantages relate to the expense, time and resources required for their preparation.
Acknowledgements

In presenting this thesis, I am extremely grateful to those who have provided continued guidance and support throughout; my tutor, Dr Matthew Carmona for his help and advice; my husband David Fitch; as well as other family members, friends and colleagues. I am also grateful to the interviewees who were willing to contribute their experiences to my work.
### CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER ONE</strong></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Urban Design</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Urban Design as a Process</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER TWO</strong></td>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Design and the Planning Process</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Government Guidance</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Urban Design and Supplementary Planning Guidance</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Roles and Forms of Supplementary Planning Guidance</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Implications of proposed reforms to the planning system</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Modified Research Questions</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER THREE</strong></td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER FOUR</strong></td>
<td>Case Studies</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER FIVE</strong></td>
<td>Conclusions/Recommendations</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BIBLIOGRAPHY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPENDICES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix One</td>
<td>Annex A to PPG1</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix Two</td>
<td>Annex D to PPG3</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix Three</td>
<td>CABE 2003 Survey Questionnaire and responses</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix Four</td>
<td>Annex C to Draft PPS1</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix Five</td>
<td>Template of letter sent to local authorities</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.0 Introduction

There is an increasing recognition of the importance of urban design in driving the aims of the UK planning system. This has arisen out of the recognition and acknowledgement derived through research and experience that incorporating principles of good urban design can bring many benefits to an area. This was one of the key findings, for example, within a recent research project commissioned by the Commission for Architecture and Built Environment (CABE) and the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR). One of the findings within the report states:

"good urban design adds value by increasing the economic viability of development and by delivering social and environmental benefits." (CABE/DETR, 2001, p.8).

In addition, the Urban Task Forces' report 'Towards an Urban Renaissance' suggests that "Successful urban regeneration is design-led" (Urban Task Force, 1999, p.49). They were commissioned to find out the reasons for urban decline in England, and to recommend solutions for bringing people back to our towns, cities and urban neighbourhoods. Such conclusions arose out of site visits by the Task Force to Barcelona, Germany and the Netherlands which confirmed the importance of urban design in turning cities round.

There appears to be an increasing amount of research suggesting that urban design has an important role in the regeneration of towns and cities, as well as controlling the quality of future growth. Some consider that this has amounted to an urban design renaissance. Greed (1998) comments that this renaissance has been experienced in terms of urban design as a subject, expressed through college courses and in terms of the numbers of practitioners undertaking urban design work within the public and private sector. However, Carmona (1998) attributes this to the increasing acceptance by not only the government, but by planners and
development professions, stating that the control of urban design “represents the most appropriate and effective means through which local authorities can influence the quality of new development” (Carmona, 1998, p.41).

Therefore, as the UK planning system is one of the driving forces behind shaping our towns and cities, it plays a key role in respect of conveying and expressing the importance of urban design. This may stem from Government guidance, local development plan policy and also through supplementary planning guidance.

This research is concerned specifically with urban design frameworks which are one form of supplementary planning guidance (SPG) that local authorities can use as a planning tool. The aim of this study is to look at the extent to which urban design frameworks are being produced, and in circumstances where they are, whether they have proved to be beneficial as a form of supplementary planning guidance. In investigating the above, the following set of research questions will seek to be addressed and will underpin the study:

- What is an urban design framework and what is its purpose and function?
- Where do design frameworks fit within the hierarchy of other forms of supplementary planning guidance?
- Who are the ‘users’ of urban design frameworks?
- Who is involved in producing urban design frameworks and is there a consultation process?
- What benefits/problems arise from producing them?
- Where they have been produced, what was the process, what were the barriers encountered?
- Where they are not being produced, what are the reasons?
- What will the future role of urban design frameworks be in view of unitary development plans being replaced with Local Development
Frameworks, as required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004?

In order to explore the above set of key questions, the study is structured into five chapters. Chapter one gives a brief history of the emergence of urban design as a recognised and accepted discipline, discussing opinions and perceptions surrounding its definition, role and scope.

Chapter two is broken down into sections which explore various issues surrounding urban design in the context of the planning system. It will review the ways in which it has more recently begun to be acknowledged as an integral element of the planning process. The changes in the importance attributed to urban design considerations that have emerged within government guidance will also be reviewed. The definition, role and scope of urban design frameworks will be reviewed and compared with other forms of supplementary planning guidance, using examples of relevant research where appropriate.

An emerging critical influence upon this study that will also be considered are the major changes occurring within the current planning system as initially set out within the government's 2001 Planning Green Paper. The proposed reforms have now been given statutory force through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which was passed in Parliament in May 2004. Chapter two will therefore also consider whether there are implications for a new agenda for urban design within these reforms to the planning system. More specifically, it will consider whether there will be a role for supplementary planning guidance such as urban design frameworks.

The last section within Chapter two will summarise the key observations that have arisen out of the discussions within the chapter. If considered necessary in the light of these observations, the initial research questions will be modified.
Chapter three sets out the research methodology, and provides an explanation and rationale behind the choice of methods to be used for different elements of the study.

Chapter 4 consists of two parts. Part one includes the content analysis of a number of urban design frameworks, the selection of which will be set out within the methodology chapter. The analysis of the documents will assist in shaping the questions that will form semi-structured interviews under part two of the chapter.

Chapter 5 will then draw together the conclusions arising from the research together with recommendations of suggested areas for further investigation.

It is acknowledged that there may be examples of influences, theories and practice from other countries that may be relevant in respect of the role of urban design within the planning system. However, this study is a focus on the role of urban design in relation to its application within the British planning system and more specifically in respect of its role in the form of urban design frameworks.
1.1 Urban Design

The term ‘Urban Design’ may conjure up a variety of thoughts and inspirations to different people depending upon their experiences of its role and their interpretations of its meaning. It is only within recent years that it has been increasingly accepted as an essential element of the British planning system in respect of achieving high quality sustainable developments.

However, whilst many would agree that urban design has a fundamental role within the planning system, there are varying views surrounding its definition and role. As Rowley (1994) states, one of the problems in defining urban design, is that definitions will vary depending on an individual’s or interest group’s perspective (Rowley, 1994, p. 181). Lloyd-Jones (1998) considers that the difficulty in providing a simple and commonly accepted definition of urban design is due to such undefined boundaries and its shifting focus. However, Carmona et al (2003) are of the view that “the real need is for definitions that encapsulate its heart or core rather than prescribe its edge or boundary.” (Carmona et al, 2003, p. 5)

It is useful to consider the origins of the term, together with the ways in which it has been interpreted and studied by various writers over the years, in order to relate it to its contemporary use and application within today’s planning system.

Whilst the importance of urban design has recently been brought to the forefront of discussions in respect of its integral role within the planning process, Greed (1998) is of the view that it is in fact “an ancient profession which has shaped towns and cities over the centuries in many different cultures and continents.” (Greed, 1998, p. 4)

However, it would appear to others that the first acknowledged use and studies of urban design commenced in America in the 1950’s with the first
university course in the field being established at Harvard in 1960 (Rowley, 1994). Around this time, definitions began to emerge in respect of what this discipline was considered to involve. Gibberd, (1953) considered that:–

"the purpose of town design is to see that (the urban) composition not only functions properly, but is pleasing in appearance." (Gibberd, 1953, p.10 cited in Rowley, 1994 p.182)

According to McGlynn (1993), the emergence of urban design in the UK, coincided with a growing gap between architecture and planning in the 1960’s. She considered that this gap was concerned with the public realm, this being defined by Gleave (1990) as "the public face of buildings, the spaces between the frontages, streets, pathways, parks, gardens and so forth. To this can be added the activities taking place within and between these spaces and the servicing and managing of these activities. In turn, of course, all of this will be affected by the activities and uses occurring within the buildings themselves; that is the private realm." (Gleave, 1990, p.64, cited in Rowley, 1994, p.195)

She goes on to convey that in addition to the recognition of this gap, the emergence of urban design as an activity, was a result of the crisis of confidence in architecture and planning at this time. It was not until the early 70’s that the first urban design courses began within the UK. However, some consider that many influences, impetus and inspirations within contemporary British urban design practise, can be traced back to the United States (Chapman and Larkham, 1992; Lloyd-Jones, 1998).

Of particular significance in respect of the above point, are the works of Kevin Lynch and economist Jane Jacobs, whose studies are considered to have been influential in the field of urban design (Rowley, 1994; Greed, 1998; Lloyd-Jones, 1998). They are considered to be key proponents of a ‘social-usage’ tradition of urban design thought, noted by Carmona et al (2003, p.6) as being one of two broad traditions distinguished by Jarvis
Sophie Fitch: A study into the use and effectiveness of urban design frameworks as a planning tool

(1980). Carmona et al (2003) consider that these traditions of thought have resulted from the different ways of appreciating design and the products from the design process. The other broad tradition noted by Jarvis (1980) is the ‘visual-artistic’ tradition. The ‘visual-artistic’ tradition, according to Carmona et al (2003) was more of an architectural and narrower understanding of urban design and “focused on visual qualities and aesthetic experience of urban spaces, rather than on the cultural, social, economic, political and spatial factors and processes contributing to successful urban spaces.” (Carmona et al, 2003, p.6)

The ‘social-usage’ tradition on the other hand is considered to be concerned with the social qualities of people, places and activities, encompassing issues of perception and sense of place (Carmona et al, 2003, p.6). As mentioned above, the economist Jane Jacobs is considered to be a key proponent of this tradition, with her work focusing primarily on mixed use development, incorporated in her book “The Death and Life of Great American Cities” which includes the analysis of the design, social use, and economies of cities (Lloyd-Jones, 1998, p. 16).

Another advocate of the social usage approach to urban design according to Punter and Carmona (1997) was Christopher Alexander, expressed within his book ‘A Pattern Language’ (1977). They note that his emphasis of design tendencies relate to context ‘not as a purely visual phenomenon but as a physical, social and cultural frame for design’ (Punter and Carmona, 1997, p. 73). They also note that, and as the title may suggest, his work was concerned with ‘patterns’ which seek to define a set of principles for urban design. They are of the view that the work provides an ‘excellent synthesis of aesthetic and social concerns without ever being preoccupied with matters of external appearance’ (Punter and Carmona, 1997, p. 73).

However, Carmona et al (2003) consider that in recent years, the visual-artistic' and 'social-usage' traditions noted above have been synthesised into a 'making places' tradition. They consider that under this tradition, the
dominant concept of urban design is one of making places for people, and that “synthesising the earlier traditions, contemporary urban design is simultaneously concerned with the design of urban space as an aesthetic entity and as a behavioural setting. It focuses on the diversity and activity which help to create successful urban places, and, in particular, on how well the physical milieu supports the functions and activities taking place there.” (Carmona et al, 2003, p. 7)

Five key attempts are highlighted by Carmona et al (2003) which identify desirable qualities of successful urban places under the ‘making places’ tradition of urban design thought. In this respect, it is noted that influences are again drawn from the US in particular. As well as being a proponent of the ‘social-usage’ approach, Lynch’s work is also considered by Carmona et al (2003) to fall within the third ‘making-places’ tradition. In this context, he focussed on explaining the basis of urban design in respect of five performance dimensions, these being, vitality, sense, fit, access and control (Rowley, 1994, p. 185). Lloyd-Jones (1998) considers that the most famous work of Lynch was his publication of ‘The Image of the City’, an account of a research project carried out in three American cities. Arising out of the project came the concept of ‘legibility’, which, as Lloyd-Jones (1998) notes, has proved invaluable as an analytical design tool.

The work of Lynch, Jacobs and others is considered to be reflected within the ‘Responsive Environments: A Manual for Designers’ written by the Joint Centre of Urban Design at Oxford Polytechnic in 1985 (Punter and Carmona, 1997; Lloyd-Jones, 1998.) Punter and Carmona (1997) note how this manual explicitly draws ideas from writers such as Lynch, Alexander, Jacobs, Cullen and Hillier and Hansen in a “deceptively simple set of principles” (Punter and Carmona, 1997, p.78). The manual conveys seven urban design principles involving richness, visual appropriateness, robustness, variety, legibility, permeability, personalisation and responsiveness. Carmona et al (2003) consider that
the principles conveyed within the above manual, also fall under the 'making-places' tradition of urban design.

A further American influence considered by Carmona et al (2003) under the 'making-places' tradition are the principles expressed by The Congress for New Urbanism (CNU). The CNU is a term applied to a set of ideas that appeared in the USA during the second half of the 80's and early 90's, including neo-traditional neighbourhoods (NTDs) or Traditional Neighbourhood Developments (TNDs) (Carmona et al, 2003). The central idea was to design complete neighbourhoods to be similar to traditional neighbourhoods. New Urbanists were committed to re-establishing the relationships between the art of building and the making of community through citizen based participatory planning and design (CNU, 1999, cited in Carmona et al, 2003, pp.10-11).

The two remaining key attempts considered under the 'making places' tradition of urban design thought include Jacobs and Appleyard's seven essential goals for the future of a good urban environment, and Francis Tibbalds' ten principles of urban design. Jacobs and Appleyard's seven goals include: Liveability, Identity and Control, Access to opportunities, Imagination and joy, Authenticity and meaning, Community and public life, Urban self-reliance, and An environment for all (Carmona et al, 2003, p.9).

Francis Tibbalds' ten principles of urban design were based on a framework for architectural design offered by Prince of Wales in 1989. The principles are as follows:-

1. consider places before buildings;
2. have the humility to learn from the past and respect your context;
3. encourage the mixing of uses in towns and cities;
4. design on a human scale;
5. encourage the freedom to walk about;
6. cater for all sections of the community and consult with them;
7. build legible (recognisable or understandable) environments;
8. build to last and adapt;
9. avoid change on too great a scale at the same time;
10. with all the means available, promote intricacy, joy and visual
delight in the built environment.

It could also be considered that the four qualities identified by Cook (1980, cited in Rowley, 1994, p.183) that urban design as a process seeks to achieve, could also fall within the making places tradition of urban design. These are considered by Rowley (1994) to form a basic framework which collectively encompasses most of the factors which urban designers should take into account (Rowley, 1994, p.185). The qualities identified by Cook (1980) include the visual, functional, environmental and the urban experience considerations of urban design.

Whilst visual and functional considerations are noted by Cook (1980) to be traditional areas of urban design concern, he considers that visual considerations are "now capable of being informed by an understanding of environmental psychology and perception" and encompass issues such as form, spatial definition and composition; serial vision; colour, texture and decoration; and landscaping (Cook, 1980, cited in Rowley, 1994, p.183). In a broad sense, Cook's visual considerations range from the design and siting of a single object in a space, or a concern for buildings seen in their immediate context, to a city wide concern for skylines and the siting of high buildings or other landmarks.

He recognises that traditionally, functional considerations would include issues such as road layout and capacity; car parking provision and refuse collection facilities. However, he notes that like visual considerations "increased understanding of how environments are used as well as the diversity of users and their differing needs, can and should be incorporated" (Cook, 1980, cited in Rowley, 1994, p.184). In this respect, he refers to the need for spaces to be arranged and furnished to support
the most likely or desirable activities, with pedestrian routes being convenient, comfortable and safe. He also notes that the design of spaces should respond to patterns of use and movement (Cook, 1980, cited in Rowley, 1994, p.184).

Cook's environmental quality considerations encompass concerns and priorities such as energy efficiency; wildlife support and nature conservation; pollution and waste control and sustainability. His fourth quality - The Urban Experience is "produced by the diversity of uses, the diversity of architecture and other visual stimuli, the amenities, the open spaces for active and passive recreation, and the interaction of diverse people with each other in these complex surroundings. Complexity, surprise, diversity, and activity are the essence of cities". (Cook, 1980, p.13, cited in Rowley, 1994, p.185). This fourth quality appears most closely related to the 'making places' tradition of urban design as discussed above.

Whilst Rowley (1994) considers the above qualities useful as a framework of considerations that urban designers should take into account, he is of the view that one difficulty with them is the extent to which they overlap and intermingle (Rowley, 1994, p. 185). However, it could be considered inevitable that such qualities of urban design will overlap and intermingle, given their diverse nature.

Many of the influences surrounding traditions of urban design thought (particularly under the more recent 'making-places' tradition proposed by Carmona et al above) appear to have originated from the USA. However, references to urban design in respect of being a place making activity are now echoed within much of the literature surrounding urban design within the UK.

For example, the Urban Design Compendium (2000) acknowledges that a great deal of development since the Second World War world war has been third rate and lacking in any 'sense of place' (Urban Design
Compendium, 2000, p.12). They consider that standard housing types and layouts have been repeated so many times that almost everywhere looks like everywhere else. As a result, the Compendium states that “The development process and the players within the process – central and local government, politicians and professionals, developers, financiers and builders – have become entangled in a system which produces developments, but not places”. (Urban Design Compendium, 2000, p.12).

The more recent principles of urban design conveyed within the DTLR/CABE ‘By-Design’ report, 2000 are also strongly focussed around ‘making places’. In providing a guide to better practice within the planning system, seven specific objectives are identified as being aims of what urban design should seek to achieve. These are as follows:-

- **Character** – a place with its own identity
  To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.

- **Continuity and Enclosure** – a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
  To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public areas.

- **Quality of the public realm** – a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
  To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.

- **Ease of movement** – a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.

- **Legibility** – a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
  To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.

- **Adaptability** – a place that can change easily
  To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

- **Diversity** – a place with variety and choice
  To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.

(DTLR/CABE, 2000 p.15)

The seven objectives of urban design conveyed above are considered by CABE/DETR in their publication ‘The Value of Urban Design’ (2001), to carry considerable legitimacy because of their emergence out of extensive research and debate and also because of their inclusion in government guidance.

It is evident that urban design is concerned with more than aesthetics, as expressed within the earlier ‘visual-artistic’ tradition mentioned above. Wider concerns of urban design are inherent within the ‘social-usage’, and the more recent ‘making places’ tradition of urban design thought, and relate to more complex relationships and processes that create successful places. As Buchannan (1988) states, “Urban design is
essentially about place making, where places are not just a specific space, but all the activities and events that make it possible.” (Buchannan, 1988, p.33, cited in Rowley, 1994, p.182)

The Urban Design Compendium, produced as a guide to accompany the By-Design report referred to above, also defines urban design as a place making activity, stating that “Urban design draws together the many strands of place-making – environmental responsibility, social equity and economic viability, for example – into the creation of places of beauty and distinct identity.” (Urban Design Compendium, 2000, p.12)
1.2 Urban Design as a Process

Whilst some of the above definitions surrounding the role and scope of urban design focus on its 'place making' qualities, others have acknowledged the complex relationships relating to urban design as a process. For example, Erickson and Lloyd-Jones (2001) state that:-

"Since urban design involves decisions about the allocation of resources to shape the physical environment, urban design is inevitably an economic and political, as well as an aesthetic and functional process."

(Erickson and Lloyd-Jones, 2001, p.6)

Rowley (1994) considers that historically, urban design has depended on too narrow a set of considerations and criticizes some of the earlier prescriptive sets of principles. He states that most are exclusively preoccupied with the product of urban design, with very little being said about urban design as a process (Rowley, 1994, p.186). As the Urban Design Compendium (2000) points out, urban design is not the province of one professional group, but should involve joint working between different stakeholders representing different interests. They consider that this means that a full range of professional skills needs to be involved at each stage of the design process, with the team members testing and challenging each other, coming under continual scrutiny from an informed client. Through joint working, they consider that a single cohesive product to which all are committed will be produced (Urban Design Compendium, 2000, p.13).

However, Rowley (1994) points out that how urban designers work is largely a reflection of their particular position within the larger process of urban change. He considers that they act within the prevailing financial, legal, political and institutional context, responding to their clients' requirements and motives. He is of the view that there is no one, identifiable process of urban design, but rather there are choices in terms
of methods and procedures, instruments, resources and participants (Rowley, 1994, p. 189).

Carmona et al (2003) also make reference to differing contexts within which urban design can operate. They consider the local, global, market and regulatory contexts of urban design underpin and inform discussions of the social, visual, functional, temporal, morphological, and perceptual dimensions of urban design. In their view, relating the four contexts and six dimensions is urban design's essential nature as a problem solving process (Carmona et al, 2003, p.36).

They consider that all urban design actions, whatever their scale are embedded within and contribute to their local context. In this respect, all acts of urban design are embedded in the local context but also in the global context i.e. local actions have global impacts and consequences, but also global actions have local impacts and consequences (Carmona et al, 2003, p.39). They note that given warnings of global warming, climate change, pollution of the natural environment and the depletion of fossil fuel sources, urban designers should consider the need for environmental responsibility, the impacts of which affect design decisions at many levels including:

- The integration of new development with existing built form and infrastructure
- The range of uses a development contains
- Site layout and design
- The design of individual buildings

The interrelated nature of the contexts of urban design are also explicit within the explanations given by Carmona et al (2003) surrounding the market and regulatory contexts of urban design. They note that as most of us live in market economies, most actions of urban design occur within
a context based on fundamental forces of supply and demand (Carmona et al, 2003, p.45).

They consider that the context for decision making in the private sector is usually mediated by policy and regulatory frameworks and controls designed to offset economic power so as to produce better outcomes. Therefore, in their view, urban design actions typically occur in market economies that are regulated to a greater or lesser extent. Their consideration of the regulatory context of urban design relates to the 'macro' regulatory (governmental) context which they state provides the overall context for detailed elaboration of public policy, including urban design policy and the operation of urban design control/review (Carmona et al, 2003, p.50).

As stated in the introduction, this study is concerned with urban design frameworks, a form of supplementary planning guidance that can be adopted by local authorities to supplement and expand upon development plan policy. In this sense, it could be considered that they are produced within the 'regulatory' context of urban design noted above. However, due to the interrelated nature of urban design, it is expected that the process surrounding their preparation and use will be influenced by factors falling outside this particular context. Likewise, it is envisaged that the outcomes associated with their production and use, including any problems as well as benefits will be felt across all contexts of urban design.

In considering urban design within its regulatory context, it is useful to turn to the definition that has been ascribed to it by central government. This is contained within Planning Policy and Guidance (PPG) note 1 – General Policies and Principles (1997). In supporting the stronger role of urban design within the planning system, the PPG provides a clarification of the Governments definition of urban design, stating:
"Urban design should be taken to mean the relationship between different buildings; the relationship between buildings and the streets, squares, parks and waterways and other spaces which make up the public domain; the nature and quality of the public domain itself; the relationship of one part of a village, town or city with other parts; and the patterns of movement and activity which are thereby established: in short, the complex relationships between all the elements of built and unbuilt space." (PPG1, Para 14.)

The definition above reinforces the view that urban design within the planning system should not only relate to concerns of aesthetics, but should engage in concerns of the relationship between a wide range of elements. Carmona (1998) has supported this definition in stating that it "explicitly recognises the multi-layered nature of the discipline" (Carmona, 1998, p.48). The elements that he considers make up the multi-layers include its spatial, functional, morphological and contextual/visual dimensions. Whilst not expressly stated, the social dimension, in Carmona's view, is inherent through reference to the public domain and to the patterns of movement and activity. Central Government has not always supported the important role that urban design has within the planning system, and this is one of the many issues surrounding urban design in the context of the planning system. These are discussed in more detail within Chapter 2.
2.1 Design and the Planning Process

Currently within the UK, it is the plan-led system that acts as the overarching framework for controlling land use decisions through the planning process. The Government's commitment to this plan-led system was given statutory force under Section 54(a) of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act, (as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991) in which local authorities are required to base their development control decisions in accordance with the development plan, unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.

Within the plan-led system, there are many opportunities to guide and control aspects of urban design, through statutory policy and non-statutory guidance, stemming from advice given at national level through PPGs (Planning Policy and Guidance notes) and Circulars, down to the local level through the development plan and supplementary design guidance. This system, as noted by Townshend and Madanipour (2001) is essentially a three-tier system with the top layer consisting of the advice deriving from central government.

Hall (1996) comments on the high degree of discretion at all levels within the British planning system and is of the view that it is the most intriguing feature, when compared to procedures in other parts of the world. For example, there are vast differences between the UK and the American planning system, as outlined by Delafons (1991). He considers there to be two main apparent differences, the first and foremost being that the UK operates a 'discretionary' system as opposed to the US 'regulatory' system. Such regulation is based upon zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations, compared to the UK development plan which is implemented by discretionary planning control. The second main difference identified by Delafons is that the US system is purely a local system with no national planning legislation, no secretary of state and no circulars, or appeals process as is the case within the UK system.
However, whilst the planning system is a means of providing design guidance and control, the issue surrounding the extent to which the planning system should intervene in such control within the process, has been debated over a number of years. It is noted by Donovan and Larkham (1996), that there has been debate surrounding aesthetic control of development within the planning system and the role of design guidance within that process for three decades. Whilst it is widely recognised that there is a need for some form of aesthetic control, they note that architects, through the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) have fought against this and have considered that there are, in particular, two alternatives to such a system. The first alternative proposed by the RIBA in the mid-1970s was that:

"only those suitably qualified should be able to carry out significant building development and that they should be exempt from any aesthetic control by virtue of their training and experience and therefore would result in general rising of aesthetic standards." The second alternative was "that all individuals should have the right to build as they please; and that the random varied environment resulting from this are likely to be more rewarding than those created from a controlled system." (Donovan and Larkham, 1996 pps. 303-304).

At this time, the Government’s view of design appeared restricted to concerns regarding aesthetics i.e. based around the ‘visual-artistic’ tradition of urban design discussed in chapter one. This was evident within guidance contained within central Government policy particularly within the 1980’s, which suggested that the planning system should not be concerned with aesthetic controls. As Cullingworth and Nadin (2001) note, the Conservative administration of 1979 held a strong bias against design controls. This was explicit, for example within Government Circular 22/80 (Development Control: Policy and Practice) which, as Lally (2002) notes, stressed that design considerations should not form the basis of planning decisions. The views within Circular 22/80 of the then
Secretary of State Michael Heseltine were, as noted by Cullingworth and Nadin (2001), clearly not in favour of aesthetic control. He stated:

"Far too many of those involved in the system – whether the planning officer or the amateur on the planning committee – have tried to impose their standards quite unnecessarily on what individuals want to do.....Democracy as a system of government I will defend against all comers, but as an arbiter of taste or as a judge of aesthetic or artistic standards it falls short of a far less controlled system of individual, corporate or institutional patronage and initiative.” (Michael Heseltine, 1980, cited in Cullingworth and Nadin, 2001, pps. 132-133.)

Cullingworth and Nadin (2001) consider that whilst the negative attitude expressed by Mr Heseltine may have been his personal view, it was reflected in official planning policy guidance PPG1 (General Policies and Principles) published in 1992. The Annex on design control appeared to give contradicting advice in that 'the appearance of a proposed development and its relationships to its surroundings are material considerations' but also that good design ‘is primarily the responsibility of designers and their client’. (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2001, p.133). However, Punter and Carmona (1997) consider that the 1992 guidance saw planning as a balance between ‘the adequate provision of development with the protection of the natural and built environment’ whilst stressing that planning should continue to confine its consideration to land use aspects (Punter and Carmona, 1997, p. 32).

In addition to the negative role of design expressed within Circular 22/80, Rawlinson (1987) noted that the advice contained within Circular 22/80 was reasserted within Circular 31/85 (Aesthetic Control), the justification being that it was considered that delays in the planning application process were arising as a result of local authorities requiring detailed design amendments.

The lack of central government support for the planning profession generally during the Thatcher years in the 1980’s had serious knock-on
effects at local authority level. As government policy was in favour of a 'laissez-faire' approach, the planning functions of local authorities were restricted financially which, as Punter (1993) comments, resulted in many design teams being disbanded, with increased opportunities for the success of private consultancies. This, together with the expressed lack of concern for design considerations within state policy, put the urban design agenda way down on the list of central government priorities. It could be considered that this demonstrates an example of the interrelated nature of the relationships between the contexts of urban design. In the above case, government decisions made in the 1980's within the regulatory context, had impacts within the market context, this being expressed through the 'laissez-faire' approach to development.

However, a number of changes occurred in respect of the profile of urban design within the planning system within the 1990s, and Carmona (1998) notes that it was this decade that could be regarded as "heralding a new renaissance for design control" (Carmona, 1998, p. 41).

The 1990s saw the profile of urban design being raised significantly within Government publications. The first official recognition of design concerns within official Department of the Environment (DoE) publications was within its 1994 "Quality in Town and Country" Initiative (Carmona, 1998). However, of potentially more significance, according to Punter and Carmona (1997) came the announcement that PPG 1 would be revised to incorporate new policy on design matters. Carmona (1998) considers that this revision to government policy represented the biggest change in the government’s approach to urban design within the 1990s. He notes that there has been an extension in the range of urban design issues considered appropriate for local authority consideration together with urban design being explicitly recognised as a material consideration. Lally (2002) also makes reference to the positive role accorded to design within the policy and notes that PPG1 now states that good design should be encouraged everywhere and should also be the aim of all those involved in the development process.
A further major boost to the role of urban design within the planning system stemmed from the publication in 1999 of the Urban Task Force report 'Towards an Urban Renaissance'. The report identifies the causes of urban decline with recommendations of practical solutions to bring people back to the city, towns and neighbourhoods. Within the report, a new vision for urban regeneration is founded on principles of design excellence, social well-being and environmental responsibility. However, it comments that there is "too little relationship between the speed of economic and social change within which our towns and cities are experiencing, and the planning system’s ability to respond to that change in terms of strategically planning the redevelopment of land." (Urban Task Force, 1999, p.195).

The Urban Task Force considered that the plan process is too slow to respond to economic and social changes, and recommended that the planning system should be more 'streamlined' through simplifying local development plans, to create a stronger emphasis on strategy to enable a more flexible basis for planning (Urban Task Force, 1999, p.197). They acknowledged, however, that making the planning process more streamlined is not the sole responsibility of the local authority, but also involves the role of national government.

The above criticisms highlighted by the Task Force were taken on board within the Government’s Planning Green Paper 2001. Central government’s attitude towards urban design within the planning process has recently undergone major changes which is not only reflected within its policies and guidance, but also within the proposed reforms to the planning system initially set out within its 2001 Green Paper. The reforms have now been given statutory force through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. These issues will be considered in a later section in the context of identifying how the role of urban design frameworks fit in within the current and emerging planning system.
2.2 Government Guidance

It has been noted that historically, government guidance has tended to concentrate on encouraging the control of basic environmental 'amenity' whilst discouraging the control of detailed design and as such, one of the key problems regarding government policy has been the absence of any clear definition of design (Carmona, 1998). As a result of this, Punter and Carmona (1997) note that;

"policies and guidance frequently fail to cover key areas, contain an inadequate range of considerations to ensure appropriate design control, and display a continuing bias towards architectural or external appearance issues at the expense of broader urban design concerns."


However, it can be seen within the previous section, that there has been a notable change, especially within the last 10 years or so in respect of the attitudes accorded to the role that urban design has within the planning system. The attitude of central government policy, specifically, has adopted a more positive stance in respect of acknowledging the enabling role of the planning system in coordinating and guiding urban design issues within the planning system, this being emphasised within its various forms of national planning guidance.

Within PPG1, Carmona (1998) notes that three themes are introduced which underpin the government's approach to the planning system. These include design, mixed use and sustainability. It is noted by Townshend and Madanipour (2001) that each of these themes imply elements of urban design. For example, under the heading of sustainability, they consider that urban design is implied through the pattern of new development being shaped so that the need to travel is minimised. Within mixed use, it is considered that urban design plays a role in respect of the need for compactness, accessibility and a mixture of
uses being promoted to create vitality and diversity, particularly in town centres.

It is apparent that government guidance in the past has not supported the role of urban design in the planning process, however, the current situation looks a lot more favourable when compared to previous government advice urging local authorities to ‘exercise restraint’ and to not get involved in detail (Punter, 1999, p.81). Such advice was conveyed within the earlier versions of PPG1, and Circulars 22/80 and 31/85 respectively, as mentioned previously.

Lally (2002) notes that at the national level, a new set of priorities has been established, owing to the growing concern relating to many urban problems, but asks “how supportive is the policy framework in providing the foundations of more sustainable patterns of development and places of lasting quality?” (Lally, 2002, p.18). As previously mentioned, it was the recommendations of the Urban Task Force that stated that successful regeneration should be design-led, and therefore, it is useful to look at the policy framework that promotes the role of urban design.

The legislative framework which currently incorporates the primary instruments of government advice on aspects of urban design are, as Carmona (1998) notes, widely spread across a number of sources i.e. primary legislation, across planning policy guidance notes (PPGs) and circulars and in a number of other government publications.

The most relevant form of government guidance that relate to the content of the development plan at the local level are planning policy guidance notes, the essence and principles of which should be reflected within the policies of the local development plan. The recently produced DETR/CABE By-Design report, published to expand upon the content of PPG1, provides a broad and useful overview of the key PPGs that make some reference of the need for design within certain policy areas. These are set out below:
PPG1 – General Policy and Principles – Sets out guidance on the role of design considerations in planning, emphasising that good design is a key aim;

PPG3 – Housing – calls for high quality design, landscaping and open space in housing development, and stresses the value of development briefs in raising design standards;

PPG6 – Town Centres and Retail Development – Promotes town centre strategies based on urban design analysis, providing a policy framework and the context for development briefs. It calls for improved standards of design of street furniture, paving, signage and car parks;

PPG7 – The Countryside: environmental quality and economic and social development – promotes high standards of design and points to the role of Countryside Design Summaries, Village Design Statements and landscape character assessments;

PPG13 – Transport – requires new development to help create places that connect with each other sustainably; the aim is to provide the right conditions to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport and to put people before traffic;

PPG15 – Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings – encourages detailed control of the external appearance of buildings in conservation areas, and emphasises the importance of how a building relates to its surroundings and of the quality of townscape.

(By-Design, 2000, p.41)

It is noted that emerging PPS1 – Creating Sustainable Communities will replace PPG under the reformed planning system. This is currently in
draft form, and is examined further within Section 2.5 in the context of the emerging reforms to the planning system.

Whilst the above refers to the various PPGs that in some way stress the importance of design issues across policy areas, it is interesting to note that the emphasis expressed also implicates the role of supplementary design guidance as a tool for achieving high standards of design and the objectives within the guidance, i.e. through design briefs, design summaries and village design statements etc.

Nevertheless, under the current planning system, it is the responsibility of central government to express the appropriate level of intervention through policy formation at the national level. This should be explicitly filtered through at the local level within the local development plan.

However, research carried out by Punter and Bell between 1994 and 1995 found low levels of citations of government policy within appeal statements. The research set out to explore the nature of section 78 appeals in England where design was a determining issue. The aim was to examine the impact of government policy on local planning decisions. Their findings indicated that design advice contained within PPGs was cited within less than half of the appeal statements. In instances where they were, they were more frequently referred to within major appeals. References to design guidance in PPGs were found to be referred to the least within householder applications.

In analysing who utilises central government advice within design appeals, they noted that half of the citations had emanated from the Inspector, (perhaps not surprising when they are appointed by the Secretary of State), with just under one third being cited by the local planning authorities, and the rest from the appellants. Within the analysis of the appeal decisions, however, it was found that only 3% of the sample displayed examples where government advice was explicitly given weight.
Particular attention within the research was given to appeals which were upheld where reference to central government advice had been cited. However, Punter and Bell (1999) commented that the evidence suggested that where local authority citations of central government policy exist, more weight is attached, thus producing higher dismissal rates than those of the appellants.

In respect of the most frequently referred to policy guidance notes, their research indicated that references to PPG 1 and PPG3 were most frequently cited, especially in respect of references to the 7 paragraphs contained within Annex A of PPG1

Although the above research could be considered to be rather dated, it does highlight that there is an important role for urban design guidance that stems from central government, a view that is supported within the recommendations of the report of the Urban Task Force. The report states that in planning for an urban renaissance, there needs to be a strong lead from government, and within that lead, it should be the responsibility of the government to “**identify the importance of urban design in establishing a framework for the management and use of public space, and for new development;**” (Urban Task Force, 1999, p.192)

It could be considered, however, that this has begun to be done to some extent through some of the recent publications such as the Urban Design Compendium, and the CABE/DETR By-Design report. As Townshend and Madanipour (2001) note, this guide is an overall companion to the advice given within the PPG’s, specifically PPG1, with the aim of promoting higher standards to urban design. In addition, as Lally (2002) notes, the ‘Better Places to Live’ companion guide to PPG3 demonstrates how high urban design quality and high density can go hand in hand (Lally, 2002, p.20).

---

1 Annex A to PPG1 is cited in full in Appendix 1
Of particular relevance to this study, however, paragraph A2 of Annex A to PPG 1 states that "Development plans may refer to supplementary design guidance including local design guides and site-specific development briefs, which can usefully elucidate and exemplify plan policies, thereby giving greater certainty to all those involved in the design and development process."

In addition, paragraph A3 states "The weight accorded to supplementary design guidance in planning decisions will be expected to increase where it has been prepared in consultation with the public........."

In addition to the references made within PPG1 concerning design issues generally and the role of supplementary planning guidance, PPG 3 – Housing, makes more specific references relating to securing successful housing development. In setting out the Government’s objectives, PPG 3 states that local planning authorities should seek to:

"Promote good design in new housing developments, in order to create attractive, high quality living environments in which people will choose to live."

(PPG3, p. 5)

As well as encouraging good design as the basis for achieving successful housing developments, PPG 3 also makes a number of references to the importance of supplementary planning guidance and its role in terms of how mixed-use development should be promoted. In particular, paragraph 50 sets out how local planning authorities should facilitate mixed-use development, this includes the preparation of development briefs for sites that are likely to become available for development.

Paragraph 51 goes on to state that local authorities should promote additional housing in town centres within the context of their overall strategy for each centre, taking into account the existing balance of uses
in the centre. Implicit within this statement is the recognised need for strategies for particular areas, which could potentially take the form of urban design frameworks.

The potential role of urban design frameworks is again articulated within the statements made within paragraphs 55, 56, 63 and 64 of the PPG. Paragraph 55 states that local planning authorities should develop a shared vision with their local communities in terms of the types of residential environments they wish to see in their area and should articulate this through development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance.

Paragraph 56 expresses that new housing development should not be viewed in isolation, and that considerations of design and layout must be informed by the wider context, having regard not just to any immediate neighbouring buildings but the townscape and landscape of the wider locality.

Paragraphs 63 and 64 are concerned with rejecting poor design and state that local planning authorities should reject poor design where decisions are supported by clear plan policies and adopted supplementary planning guidance. It also stresses that applicants should be able to demonstrate how they have taken account of the need for good layout and design. Paragraph 64 makes reference to Annex D which provides references to sources of good practice of new development.2

The advice being expressed within government guidance has begun in recent years to acknowledge the importance of urban design within the planning process. In this respect, reference is made to the important role of local policy and guidance in conveying principles and policies concerning urban design considerations at the local level i.e. through

---

2 Annex D to PPG3 is cited in full in Appendix 2
policies within the development plan, and in addition, through topic, site, or area specific supplementary planning guidance.

However, the degree to which the importance of urban design is expressed within the planning process through the production of supplementary planning guidance will inevitably vary from one local authority to another due to differing priorities, influences and development pressures. The following section considers some of the forms of supplementary planning guidance that local authorities can use as planning tools. Urban design frameworks are one of these tools and therefore, their role and scope will be reviewed against other types of guidance.
2.3 Urban Design and Supplementary Planning Guidance

The previous section highlighted the ways in which the importance of urban design has recently begun to be addressed through government policy and guidance, acknowledging that the planning system has a key role to play in achieving good quality urban design within our towns and cities. However, local authorities are responsible for applying local policies in accordance with government guidance through the development plan and also through supplementary planning guidance.

As urban design frameworks are a form of supplementary planning guidance (SPG), the following sections will review and compare their perceived role and function with other forms of SPG. Examples from relevant research will be drawn upon to assist in clarifying the roles of the various forms of guidance, and to help distinguish between the circumstances under which each may be appropriate. Further research issues and questions relating to urban design frameworks may arise out of this discussion, and therefore, the last section of this chapter will revisit the initial research questions and modify them if necessary.

In order to clarify the relationship between supplementary guidance and guidance at the national level, Punter and Carmona (1997) developed a seventeen-level classification (updated to eighteen to include Government advice i.e. circulars, and design bulletins) of guidance which relates, in their view across four distinct spatial levels. These include national, strategic, district/city wide and area/site specific (Punter and Carmona, 1997, pps. 318-320). However, in order for the hierarchy to be successful, they consider that it is down to the role of the development plan to act as the ‘umbrella’ or coordinating framework for all supplementary guidance, one of the main reasons being to ensure consistency across development control.

Others have also stressed the importance of the role that the development plan has in circumstances where supplementary design
guidance is produced. For example, the Urban Design Group (2002) consider that in order for guidance to have supplementary planning guidance status, it must be consistent with the development plan, it must have also undergone a public consultation process, and must have been formally adopted by the local planning authority. The development plan is the fundamental means through which both the government and local commitment to urban design can be conveyed through planning policies and supplementary planning guidance. As the ‘By-Design’ report states, the development plan;

- Provides a vision for the area;
- Identifies the main objectives to realise that vision;
- Defines the local context of people and places:
- Sets out the overall design policy framework (and other considerations) against which the local authority will assess development proposals;
- Provides the policy foundation for supplementary planning guidance

(DTLR/CABE, 2000, p. 42)

The above sets out a very clear remit for the role of the development plan in respect of the way in which it can express concerns of urban design. It could be considered the key ‘tool’ in conveying policies relating to urban design, ensuring that such considerations are addressed within development proposals.

This view is complemented within the guidance outlined within the DETR/CABE By-Design report 2000. Whilst referring to supplementary guidance generally, this states that supplementary planning guidance is only effective if it develops a plan’s principles into a set of ideas appropriate to economic conditions and to the site and its setting. It also states that the effectiveness of a design guide, development brief, or other form of supplementary planning guidance will depend on:
• The degree to which all relevant departments of the Council are committed to it
• The vigour with which council members and officers support it
• The effectiveness of public participation in preparing it
• How logically it is structured, how clearly it is written and how well it is illustrated

(DETR/CABE, 2000, p. 47)

Local authorities are inevitably faced with differing constraints and local circumstances that vary from one authority to another. It is likely, therefore, that factors such as those highlighted above will also vary, in terms of the extent to which the importance of urban design is conveyed within the development plan and SPG.

However, research suggests that overall, local authorities consider urban design to be an important element of the planning process. A local government design survey was conducted by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in 2001, which sought to discover what kinds of advice in the field of design quality was available to planning authorities and in what ways more advice could usefully be provided. The results of their survey state that "The speed with which some people returned the survey, and the extent of in-depth comments they made, indicates a significant interest in design among many respondents and a desire for support in pursuing this." (CABE, 2001, p.1)

The survey was sent to all local planning authorities in England and other organisations with interests in the planning system. The response rate to the survey was 56% of all local authorities which CABE considered to be high for the type of survey. When asked about design guidance that is issued by local authorities, the results indicated that 81% of the local authorities who responded had issued authority-wide design guidance with 59% being adopted as supplementary planning guidance. The
breakdown of the types of design guidance produced by the local authorities is discussed in the following section.

In addition, and although quite dated, the survey of design guides carried out by Chapman and Larkham in 1992 "Discovering the art of relationship: Urban Design, Aesthetic Control, and design guidance," also highlighted that overall, urban design guidance is considered to be a positive factor within the planning process.

The objectives of their survey were "to discover the attitudes of officers to design guidance within the planning process, to further examine the distribution and coverage of design guides, and to appraise the content and presentation of guides." (Chapman and Larkham, 1992, p.12)

The survey reported considerable diversity of views amongst the responses, but overall Chapman and Larkham stated that there was a strong sense of the importance of design as a factor in the planning control process. They cite an example of this:

"Despite government advice in recent years I, in common with many other Chief Planning Officers, find that design advice to the applicant is very necessary and usually appreciated by the applicants themselves and the planning committee." (Chapman and Larkham, 1992, p.13)

However, they also comment that some of the attitudes expressed were considered to be reiterating the sentiments of ministerial guidance of the 80's. For example:-

"In line with the spirit of current Government advice, it seems to me that it is not the local planning authority's role to provide detailed design guidance; the production of a satisfactory design for any particular project is a matter between the client and his architect, and it is not the local planning authority's job to do this. Rather, the planning authority's proper role is to set out policies, standards and guidelines which define the
frame within which the design of urban design, aesthetic control and design guidance individual proposals should fit”
(Chapman and Larkham, 1992, p.12)
Overall, the survey indicated broad support for effective design guidance with the initial conclusions stating that:

- There was wide belief that design guidance can help raise standards in an area over time
- Effective advice is often welcomed by applicants and agents
- To be effective, design advice requires sound policy framework and individual understanding and expertise to deal with issues on site specific basis.
- Policy frameworks are often too generalised to be helpful in the diverse contexts encountered, and that the level of expertise available is inadequate.
- Some local authorities felt the need to raise the level of design awareness amongst staff, applicants, elected members and the public
- There was a sense that greater effectiveness could be gained from published guidance if greater consideration was given to the priorities in local terms and potential for national/regional guidance on some issues.
- Indications that more structured design advice could ultimately save time in negotiation and processing of individual applications.
(Chapman and Larkham, 1992, pps. 17-18)

In terms of the design content within local authorities statutory plans, Chapman and Larkham considered that on the basis of the information submitted within a number of extracts taken from various plans, there was a tendency for the plans to contain general aspirational design policies on a county or district wide basis. The survey indicated that the relationship between statutory plans and the provision of design guidance was unclear, but that they seemed to be treated as separate activities. In
addition, it was concluded that the use, content and styles of design guidance varied widely from authority to authority.

Their findings led them to suggest that the most positive form of guidance mentioned in any of the plans examined was the proposed provision of an urban design strategy "to establish a series of linked spaces open to the public and to provide a context for the consideration of development proposals." (Chapman and Larkham, 1992, p. 19) Unfortunately, the survey results do not extend to examining whether the 'proposed' urban design strategies actually materialised.

There appears to be little research surrounding the preparation and use of urban design frameworks, which are sometimes also referred to as urban design strategies. The following section is therefore concerned with clarifying their role and form against other forms of supplementary planning guidance.
2.4 Roles and Forms of Supplementary Planning Guidance

For the purposes of this research, it is important to clarify the role of urban design frameworks against other forms of design related supplementary planning guidance. It may well be apparent that different local authorities will use varying names for such guidance, but what is important is the context in which they have been produced and their coverage. As a useful starting point in providing such clarification, the Urban Design Group have broken down guidance that can be produced at the local level into four categories which they consider can be distinguished from one another. These are:-

1. Guidance relating to specific places: Urban Design Frameworks (for areas), development briefs (for sites), and master plans (for sites).
2. Guidance relating to specific topics; usually called design guides and can cover topics such as shopfronts, house extensions, lighting and cycling.
3. Guidance relating to specific policies, i.e. on conservation areas, transport corridors, waterfronts, promenades and green belts.
4. Guidance relating to the whole local authority area, i.e. which may give general urban design guidance for the whole district.

(Urban Design Group, 2002, p.12)

This research is concerned primarily with the role of urban design frameworks, considered by the Urban Design Group to fall within category one above. They are grouped alongside other forms of guidance that relate to specific places. However, there can be ambiguities between the form and roles of such guidance and this chapter therefore seeks to clarify these roles, drawing in examples of research where appropriate.
Urban Design Frameworks

Urban design frameworks are considered by the Urban Design Group to be documents that describe and illustrate how planning and design policies and principles should be implemented in an area where there is need to control, guide and promote change. Such frameworks can also include a 2 dimensional vision of future infrastructure requirements. The key distinguishing feature appears to be that they are area specific, and can be used to coordinate more detailed development briefs and master plans (Urban Design Group, 2002, p.12).

Whilst the Urban Design Group refers to area based guidance as design frameworks, Biddulph (1999) refers to them as urban design strategies. He acknowledges that this particular ‘tool’ that the local planning authority might adopt in implementing the urban design agenda is referred to in other guidance as frameworks rather than strategies. However, it would appear that both terms can be used to describe the role and form accorded to guidance that is produced on an area-wide basis, coordinating further guidance aimed at specific sites. Within the hierarchy of design guidance produced by Punter and Carmona (1997), however, a design strategy has been placed within the ‘district or city-wide guidance’ whereas design frameworks are placed within the ‘area or site-specific guidance’, although both are considered within the hierarchy to operate on a scale which enables them to coordinate more detailed design briefs.

According to Biddulph (1999), the purpose of an urban design strategy/framework, is to suggest a physical vision for a specific area, and to provide the mechanisms for delivering that vision. He considers that the strategy itself would be derived from a process involving an appraisal of the relevant area, a process of public discussion and debate, and the application of design principles to site specific local circumstances. He also comments that cities outside of Britain such as New York, San Francisco, Seattle and Portland have been using such design related strategies to shape the physical environment for years.
Turning to the issues that an urban design strategy should address, Biddulph (1999) considers that the following should be included:

- Developing desired patterns of access and public open space;
- The physical implications of introducing new building types or new types of use into an area of a city;
- Promoting environmentally sustainable patterns of development;
- The desired forms of development, and in particular promoting attention to the desired relationship between buildings, and between buildings and adjacent spaces;
- The development of a legible urban form;
- Developing and maintaining acceptable patterns of life in public space

(Biddulph, 1999, pps. 282-283)

Rowland (1999) considers that “An Urban Design Strategy is inherently a framework that will operate over time. It should provide the basic long term urban structure around which shorter term development decisions can take place, all of which, inform and enhance a balanced vision.” (Rowland, 1999, pps. 337-338) He is of the view that because their purpose is to establish confidence for the development industry, local authorities and local communities, the benefits arising from their production can be felt across a number of organisations. He goes on to note that such strategies will help to establish a 3-d and accessible set of concepts that express qualitative issues and enable people to understand the physical implications of policy. Similarly, Biddulph (1999) considers that a strategy would provide an interpretation of how a centre fits into its context which would include illustrating how the scheme has character, provides choice, increases variety and provides links to neighbours.

The DETR By-Design document referred to previously adds one additional potential benefit of producing an urban design framework, in that they can provide a strategy for implementation by “providing the
basis for bidding for public sector funds and securing private sector support.” (DETR, 2000, p.48)

However, whilst Rowland considers that an urban design strategy can “help set the design and development agendas for an area”, he warns that “The strategy is useless if it is only site based and does not recognise the interdependence of a development site and its surroundings.” (Rowland, 1999, p.337)

He also warns that there needs to be recognition that planning decisions without an understanding of the design and physical implications of a scheme can lead to a disaggregated environment. In addition, whilst urban designers should be brought in at an early stage in the development process, Rowland (1999) considers that it is often the case that urban designers are brought in late in the process if at all.

The issue regarding the stage at which a framework/strategy is produced is one that will be addressed within this study and will seek to find out what factors influence the timing of the preparation process.

However, differing local circumstances may affect the type of guidance a local authority considers necessary or appropriate within the site or area in question. An urban design framework may not be as appropriate as other forms of supplementary design guidance, and may be dependent upon what the analysis or appraisal identifies as being necessary.

The results of the CABE design survey in 2001 referred to in section 2.3 indicated that a high percentage of the respondents had produced some form of design guidance (81%). However, the breakdown of the types of guidance produced indicated that a high percentage of the respondents had not produced area based design frameworks. The chart below is taken from the published results of the survey and shows a comparison
between the four categories of design guidance specified within their questionnaire.

The above chart shows that 68% of the respondents had not issued any area based design frameworks in the two years prior to the 2001 survey. However, it should be noted that the question relating to design guidance specifically asked how many instances in the last 2 years had the various forms of guidance been issued. Whilst the results indicate that a low percentage of urban design frameworks had been issued, they do not represent the possible levels of design guidance issued prior to the timescale specified within the survey. There may therefore already be existing guidance that has either been or is in the process of being implemented, that would not have been represented through the above survey question.

A follow up survey was carried out in 2003. The same question relating to forms of design guidance was asked within the survey questionnaire. The published results did not make reference to, or graphically present the
responses to this particular question as they had done within the 2001 results.

However, CABE were contacted for the purposes of this study and provided the details of the 2003 questionnaire that was sent out to all UK local authorities. The information supplied included the breakdown of the local authority responses. This information has enabled the results from their 2003 survey to be compared with the above 2001 chart.

![Types of design guidance issued in last two years](image)

The 2003 survey results indicated that 64% of the respondents had not produced any area based design frameworks in the last two years i.e. since the 2001 survey. The percentage of authorities that had issued 2 or more planning briefs far exceeded all other forms of design guidance stated within the survey. However, as one of the roles of an urban design framework can be to coordinate more detailed, site specific design/planning briefs, it is not surprising that findings from the survey indicates that the number of briefs exceed the number of urban design frameworks issued.

3 The information provided by CABE including the breakdown of local authority responses is annexed in Appendix 3
However, the results from both surveys indicate that larger numbers of design guidance in the form of planning briefs had been issued, with 72% of the respondents stating that they had produced guidance in the form of planning briefs (CABE, 2001, p.8). The use and content of planning briefs also appears to be an area of research that has attracted a greater degree of attention than the use of urban design frameworks. Issues surrounding their preparation, form and content are therefore worth consideration.

Development Briefs

As indicated above, the most common form of guidance produced by local authorities who responded to the CABE survey were planning briefs, another form of design guidance falling within the same category as urban design frameworks outlined by the Urban Design Group, in that they relate to specific places. The Urban Design Group advises that a development brief is a document providing guidance on how a specific site of significant size or sensitivity should be developed in line with relevant planning and design policies.

Whilst referred to as planning briefs within the CABE studies (2001, 2003) Townshend and Madanipour (2001) refer to this form of guidance as design briefs, noting that they can have a variety of meanings and can be used inconsistently. They note that different planning authorities use different terms, i.e. planning brief, development brief, planning framework etc. However, they consider that the common characteristics of the different definitions is that they all offer detailed development guidance for specific sites, distinguishing them from design guides which focus on areas or issues, a view that concurs with the Urban Design Group. In the light of the ascribed role of urban design frameworks, design briefs can be distinguished in that they may relate to a specific site or sites that are located within an area covered by an urban design framework. They may therefore contribute to the overall design vision provided within such a framework.
Turner's (1994) research "Improving the content and utility of design briefs" draws some interesting and relevant points in relation to some of the issues surrounding the preparation and purpose of design briefs. Although the briefs were not examined against the merits of other forms of design guidance, the following bullet points summarise the key findings from the work that are considered relevant to this study.

- The briefing documents had a variety of titles, which indicated their breadth of purpose and varied content

- The titles used didn't always indicate the actual character and emphasis of the particular document

- There appeared to be confusion over the purpose and content of the briefing documents and the titles conveyed little about the purpose of the brief

- The purpose of producing a brief in the context of an urban design framework was number 9 out of 11 most common purposes

- Little reference was made to design related purposes, either as framework planning or as creative/design issues

- Large number of briefs referred to results of public consultation as a positive trend which may be a direct result of enhanced status given to supplementary planning guidance which has been subject to consultation

- Diversity of purposes suggests a lack of consensus and possible confusion about the potential utility of the briefing document

It is interesting to note that one of her findings was that the purpose of producing a brief in the context of an urban design framework was only
rated at number 9 out of 11 common purposes. One of the distinguishing features of an urban design framework discussed earlier is that they can be produced to coordinate more detailed design briefs. Turner's study however, suggests that this is not often the case.

Despite some of the issues surrounding development briefs highlighted by Turner's work, she considers that site specific design is potentially the most effective way to ensure that development achieves a high standard of design and relates appropriately to the character of its site and its context. However, she does not give any reasons as to why she considers this to be the case or why briefs are more beneficial when compared to other forms of design guidance in achieving high design standards. In describing their role, she considers that design briefs include detailed, site specific information allowing a local authority to set out its requirements regarding the quality of design expected of a development and its relationship to its surroundings.

Whilst accepting the importance and potential influence of design briefs, Turner (1994) considered that there is no widely agreed basis or content upon which they can be modelled and she states that neither the RTPI nor the DoE offer any guidance regarding their preparation. However, her research findings in this respect could be considered somewhat dated as the previous chapter demonstrated the ways in which the Government has begun more recently to explicitly acknowledge the importance of urban design, resulting in the publication of documents that assist local authorities in the areas of concern raised by Turner's study i.e. the DoE's guide to Development Briefs (1998), the DETR/CABE By-Design guide (2000), and the Urban Design Group's Urban Design Guidance publication (2002).

At the time of her research, she considered that such lack of guidance contributed to inconsistencies in the structure and content of design briefs prepared by different local authorities, a view also noted by Townshend and Madanipour (2001). She also notes that briefs prepared by one local
authority can be diverse. However, this could be due to the diverse nature of the sites that they relate to, not necessarily through lack of guidance concerning their preparation.

A more recent and in-depth study relating to the use of development briefs was commissioned in 1996 by the DETR and carried out by Llewelyn-Davies with Drivas Jonas looking at the use and effectiveness of development briefs. In summary, the objectives of the research were as follows:

- To clarify the reasons and circumstances of producing development briefs and ways in which they are prepared.
- To examine the content and relationship with the development plan.
- To assess the extent of influencing the design and quality of development
- To evaluate the contribution to the efficiency of development control
- To recommend good practice

The research involved surveys of current practice within Local Authorities in England and Wales, together with a survey of organisations and individuals who use briefs such as landowners and developers. Stage two of the survey involved the evaluation of 150 briefs.

One of the main reasons that the study was commissioned was due to the recognition that at the time, there was no up-to-date guidance on the form, content and the way in which planning and development briefs were prepared. This was one of the key criticisms made by Turner during her study of design briefs in 1994. She considered that this lack of guidance had resulted in wide variations in the content and scope of the briefing documents.
The remit of the DETR study involved the analysis of site specific documents that inform developers and other parties of the constraints and opportunities presented by a site and give guidance on the type of development expected or encouraged by the local authority. The survey findings revealed that there was a wide variety of titles given to the documents that served the purpose of the DETR's definition of a planning brief. These included design briefs, vision statements, planning briefs, development briefs, supplementary planning guidance, some master plans (some sites had master plan and brief) and development strategies for large sites.

Both Townshend and Madanipour (2001) and Turner (1994) made similar observations in terms of the variety of names and purposes ascribed to site specific documents.

The survey results also indicated that there were differing reasons for the production of development briefs. Some were produced at the beginning of the development process to attract developers to a site, whilst others were produced after outline permission had been obtained to influence layout and design of development proposals. One of the clearest findings was the variety in briefing practice, with the process being directly affected by a number of factors i.e. the types of site and the type of location being briefed; public or private ownership of the site; the interaction between planning department and others; the skills of in-house staff; and the stage of the development plan and development process.

The variety of briefs examined for the survey resulted in the suggestion that there were three basic types of briefs in relation to their objectives and content. These were policy orientated briefs which seek to clarify, interpret or elaborate on development plan policy, promotional briefs that seek to attract developers and lastly, design briefs seeking to influence the form of development on a site.
There also appeared to be a correlation between the type of brief described above and their content. It was considered that policy orientated briefs focused on local and national policy, whilst the promotional briefs included information on overcoming site constraints, locational and strategic aspects of sites and on implementation mechanisms. Lastly, it was considered that the design briefs tend to focus on guidance on the form of the required development, providing advice on layout and density, height of buildings, landscaping and materials to be used.

Whilst the analysis of the briefs revealed that in almost all cases, descriptive site information was provided, the majority of cases excluded basic data such as the size of a site, site plan, and reference to relevant development plan policy.

In analysing the circumstances where it would be appropriate to develop a brief, the research found that briefs are sometimes used in situations where they have little, no, or a negative impact on the development process and can occur in a number of situations including:-

- Where the local authority eventually approves development which is significantly different from that required by the brief;
- Where the development implemented is no different from what the developer would have constructed anyway; and
- Where the brief does not add to the information and guidance provided by the development plan

(DETR 1998, p. iii)

The analysis of the briefs led to the suggestion that producers of briefs are sometimes not clear about their objectives resulting in documents that do not state their purpose, and also where the content of the brief is not consistent with its objective. It was considered that the briefs that clearly
state their objectives and concentrate on meeting them are the most useful documents.

As a result of the above study, the DETR published 'Planning and Development Briefs: a guide to better practice' (1998) to assist local authorities in the production of planning briefs, to address the problems that were highlighted within the survey.

Masterplans

The final form of guidance that the Urban Design Group consider can be distinguished from design briefs and urban design frameworks, but that apply to specific places are masterplans. They define these as documents that chart the masterplanning process and explain how a site/series of sites will be developed. They would also describe how the proposal will be implemented and sets out costs, phasing and timing of development. They consider that these documents would usually be prepared by, or on behalf of, the organisation that owns the site or controls the development process. The purpose is to set out principles on matters of importance and not to prescribe in detail how the development should be designed (Urban Design Group, 2002, p. 13).

CABE (2004) state that residents, visitors and ultimate users of the spaces and buildings created are at the heart of any masterplan and that "A successful masterplan will therefore set out how to create and sustain excellent places for living, work and play." (CABE, 2004, p. 9) They have produced a document entitled 'Creating Successful Masterplans – A Guide for Clients' which they state is aimed to help clients commissioning masterplans and should be used as a reference throughout the masterplanning process. The guide states that masterplanning is a positive, proactive process bringing significant benefits by:

- helping shape the three-dimensional physical form that responds to local economic and social dynamics
helping identify the potential of an area or site for development
unlocking previously under-developed land
engaging the local community in thinking about their role in a development or regeneration process
helping build consensus about the future of an area and identify priorities for action
increasing land values, and making more schemes viable

(CABE, 2004, p.10)

The Urban Task Force state that the spatial masterplan is a synthesis of the design-led approach to urban development, considering it to be a fundamental ingredient in achieving an urban renaissance in English towns and cities (Urban Task Force, 1999, p.73). They explain that the 'spatial' masterplan

- Allows us to understand what the public spaces between the buildings will be like before they are built;
- Shows how the streets, squares and open spaces of a neighbourhood are to be connected;
- Defines the heights, massing and bulk of the buildings, (but not the architectural style or detailed design);
- Controls the relationship between buildings and public spaces;
- Determines the distribution of uses, and whether these uses should be accessible at street level;
- Controls the network of movement patterns for people moving on foot, cycle, car or public transport;
- Identifies the location of street furniture, lighting and landscaping;
  and,
- Allows us to understand how well a new urban neighbourhood is integrated with the surrounding urban context and natural environment.

(Urban Task Force, 1999, p.73)
The Urban Task Force also consider that the spatial masterplan provides a vital framework for development. They consider that the most successful projects that they analysed within their report i.e. Barcelona, Rotterdam and Greenwich, were based on implementing a spatial masterplan “which has driven the development process and secured a high quality design product.” (Urban Task Force, 1999, p.73)

In summary, they conclude that to be effective, the masterplanning process must be:

- Visionary and deliverable: it should raise aspirations for a site and provide a vehicle for consensus building and implementation;
- Fully integrated into the land use planning system, but allowing new uses and market opportunities to exploit the full development potential of a site;
- A flexible process, providing the basis for negotiation and dispute resolution;
- A participative process, providing all the stakeholders with a means of expressing their needs and priorities; and,
- Equally applicable to rethinking the role, function and form of existing neighbourhoods as creating new neighbourhoods. (Urban Task Force, 1999, p.75)

Area-wide Guidance

It would appear that there can be many benefits associated with producing supplementary design guidance to assist the planning process. Whilst the responses to the CABE Local Government Design Surveys indicate that a low percentage of urban design frameworks are issued, they considered that the extent of in-depth comments indicated significant interest in design generally.
The objective of their study was primarily to find out what kinds of advice in the field of urban design are available to planning authorities. Therefore, their findings relate more specifically to design skills, the main findings being that there is a need to increase the number of people with design skills in local authorities as well as the depth of skills. Their survey also indicated that design aspects of planning were usually dealt with by negotiation, and that few schemes had been refused solely on design grounds.

The 2001 survey revealed that a large percentage of the respondents had produced area wide guidance (81%) and this was usually adopted as supplementary planning guidance (59%). Most guidance was produced in-house (59%) or by a mixture of in-house staff and consultants (34%) and in 61% of cases, it was normal practice for this type of guidance to be adopted (CABE, 2001, p. 9).

The survey found that the most common forms of authority-wide supplementary planning guidance were those concerned with relatively small scale issues i.e. shopfront design, signage and advertising, house extensions and conservation area appraisals. Design guides are one of these forms of guidance and were the subject of Chapman and Larkham's 1992 survey referred to in section 2.3. They cite the definition given to design guides by Llewellyn-Davies et al (1976) stating that “a design guide is a general set of design principles and standards required by the local authority and applying to a wide area and not just a particular site.” (Llewellyn-Davies et al, 1976, cited in Chapman and Larkham, 1992, p. 5)

In response to their survey, over five hundred guides were supplied by local authorities which were then appraised in terms of their content, presentation and potential effectiveness. The analysis resulted in a number of conclusions and opinions surrounding their preparation, many of which are relevant to this study and are summarised below:
• Considerable time and expense involved in the preparation process
• Large diversity of styles and approaches used
• Guides rarely explicit about broader objectives beyond subject concerned
• Many guides appear to be produced on an ad hoc, reactive basis
• Wide variations in target audiences
• Good practice notes often provided
• Area overviews mainly provided within areas of special character
• Many guides give detail to individual buildings at expense of relationships between developments
• Guides often contrast sharply with policy statements and briefs
• Some guides produced to describe procedures (planning and building regulations applications) and to convey legal requirements i.e. imposed by conservation area or article 4 directions.
• Guides rarely dated, some lacking name of publishing body and relevant contact details
• Not clear if guides have been revised, some are clearly outdated (Chapman and Larkham, 1992, pps. 23-25)

Conclusion

This section has sought to clarify the role and scope of urban design frameworks against other forms of supplementary planning guidance (SPG). Some observations have been drawn from this through research relating to other types of SPG. Although the research examples used were not concerned with urban design frameworks specifically, it is considered that many of the issues, barriers and benefits raise important points that could apply equally to the preparation and use of urban design frameworks. The key observations made in relation to urban design frameworks and SPG are set out below:
• Urban Design Frameworks (also sometimes called Strategies) are documents that can apply urban design principles across areas where there is a need to control, guide and promote change.
• Within the hierarchy of supplementary planning guidance, their role enables them to co-ordinate more detailed site specific guidance such as development briefs or masterplans, however, this does not often appear to be the case.
• Urban Design Frameworks can provide guidance for short term development decisions to be made which contribute to an overall long term vision for an area;
• There can be variations in the title, role and form accorded to SPG that relate to similar spatial contexts;
• The content of SPG may not always reflect its objective;
• SPG should be established at the start of the planning process;
• SPG can help to speed up the planning process;
• SPG is sometimes treated as a separate activity from the development plan;
• The consultation process is key to the credibility of SPG.

It is worth noting, however, that whilst this section has sought to clarify and distinguish the role of urban design frameworks against other forms of design guidance, there appears to be great diversity in terms of the names attributed to documents that relate to similar spatial contexts. Whilst the Urban Design Group make a distinction between the role of urban design frameworks and masterplans, CABE acknowledge that "Many terms can be used to describe strategies for the physical regeneration of an area." (CABE, 2004, p.13) In this respect, they note that some of the most commonly used terms for documents that serve the above purpose are masterplans, development frameworks, regeneration strategies, urban design frameworks, or visions. They also acknowledge that these terms are used interchangeably and can mean different things to different people. Similar views were also expressed within research covering the use and preparation of planning and design briefs.
Therefore, with this in mind, the indications within the CABE design surveys that low numbers of urban design frameworks had been issued by local authorities should be viewed with caution.

An additional influence that will potentially affect the preparation and use of urban design frameworks is the proposed reform to the planning system. The implications of this are outlined within the following section, and will be followed by a review of the highlighted research issues and questions that this study will seek to address within the subsequent chapters.
2.5 Implications of proposed reforms to the planning system

The previous sections have referred to urban design in the context of the UK plan-led planning system that was in place at the time of writing. However, the system is currently undergoing fundamental changes as expressed within the 2001 planning Green Paper 'Delivering a Fundamental Change'. Published by the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister, the paper sets out the proposed reform of the planning system acknowledging the current shortfalls, weaknesses and problems which the government seeks to address. As stated within the introduction, the proposed reforms have now been given statutory force through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which was passed in Parliament in May 2004.

This section will review the emerging reforms to the planning system, focusing on the scope and role that the urban design agenda will have under the new system and where urban design frameworks will fit in, if at all. The previous chapter clarified that urban design frameworks are a form of area specific supplementary design guidance, that can coordinate site specific design or planning briefs and masterplans, providing applicants and developers with a clear vision as to what should be expected from development proposals.

The key changes to the planning system involves the abolition of structure plans, local plans and unitary development plans, to be replaced with a single level of plan called Local Development Frameworks, comprising a number of local development documents. The principle content of the framework would set out:

- A statement of core policies setting out the local authority's vision and strategy to be applied in promoting and controlling development throughout its area;
• More detailed action plans for smaller local areas of change, such as urban extensions, town centres and neighbourhoods undergoing renewal; and
• A map showing the areas of change for which action plans are to be prepared and existing designations, such as conservation areas.

(Planning Green Paper, 2001, Para 4.8)

The reforms to the system will not only affect local planning, but will affect the complete hierarchical structure of guidance from national to the local level. The new hierarchy will incorporate National Planning Policy Statements (PPS), Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS), and Local Development Frameworks (LDF).

The new PPS documents will replace the existing Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes. PPS 1 – Creating Sustainable Communities, replaces the existing PPG1 and is currently undergoing a consultation process. As discussed previously, PPG1 was updated in 1997 to incorporate guidance on design issues, and whilst the replacement PPS1 has not yet formally been adopted, it is worthwhile considering its proposed content to see what weight is given to urban design within the reforms to the planning system.

The introduction to draft PPS 1 states that the policies and principles that should underpin the planning system are built around themes of:

- Sustainable Development
- The Spatial Planning Approach
- Community involvement in planning

(Draft, PPS 1, p.1)

Within Chapter one – ‘Creating Sustainable Communities’ of PPS 1, the government sets out the ways in which planning should facilitate and promote sustainable patterns of urban and rural development including
"Ensuring high quality development through good design" (Draft PPS 1, para 1.5)

Paragraph 1.27 - Sustainable Development and Design, acknowledges that high quality design is a key element in achieving sustainable development. It goes on to state that "Good design is not just about the architecture of individual buildings, but also about the functionality and impact of the development on the overall character, quality and sustainability of an area including resource efficiency" (Draft PPS1, para 1.27)

Further guidance on design matters is set out in Annex C of the PPS\(^4\). This contains similar advice to that set out in Annex A to PPG1 and states that "Local Planning Authorities should plan positively for the achievement of good quality urban design by adopting clear policies and guidance that establish the key principles and criteria for future development." (Annex C to Draft PPS 1, para 1).

However, in terms of good practice in achieving the above, the Annex refers to the more detailed advice set out within the 2001 DETR By-Design publication. At the time that PPG1 was amended in 1997, such a document did not exist to provide local authorities with detailed good practice advice on design issues.

Draft PPS12 'Local Development Frameworks' has also recently undergone public consultation. This will replace PPG 12 and is intended to assist local authorities in the preparation of Local Development Frameworks and explains in detail what their content will contain. It sets out government guidance on the preparation of local development documents that will form the local development framework.

\(^4\) Annex C to draft PPS1 is cited in full in appendix 4
Chapter 2 of the draft PPS sets out the plan content and level of detail that will be expected. It states that the development plan documents that local authorities will be required to produce will include the following:

i. Core Strategy
ii. Site specific allocations of land
iii. Area action plans (where needed); and
iv. Proposals map (with inset maps, where necessary)

(Draft PPS12, 2003, p. 15)

Of particular relevance to this study, paragraph 2.2.12 of the draft PPS sets out the role of Area Action Plans (AAPs) and states that they should:

i. deliver planned growth areas
ii. stimulate regeneration
iii. protect areas sensitive to change
iv. resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures; or
v. focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiatives.

(Draft PPS12, 2003, para 2.2.12)

Given the scope accorded to the role of AAPs mentioned above, it could be considered that urban design frameworks could be a form of AAP under the emerging reforms to the planning system. This concurs with the advice given by Carmona et al (2002) contained within the guidance document ‘from design policy to design quality – The treatment of design in community strategies, local development frameworks and action plans’, produced for the RTPI. A useful comparison table of the ‘new and old’ design policy hierarchy within the guidance indicates that under the new Local Development Framework system, all previous area or site-specific supplementary planning guidance could potentially be a form of area action plan. It also states that “These are proactive documents most likely establishing a design strategy for areas of change....They can be formally..."
adopted as part of the local development framework or can remain non-statutory.” (Carmona et al, 2002, p.88)

The draft ODPM guidance document 2002 on the production of Local Development Frameworks (Creating Local Development Frameworks) also states that there will still be a role for supplementary planning documents such as design guides, site development briefs, and issue or thematic-based documents. It states that they are intended to elaborate upon the policy and proposals in development plan documents such as the AAPs mentioned above. As with existing supplementary planning guidance, this guidance stipulates that such supplementary planning documents should be consistent with national planning policy statements, regional spatial strategies together with the policies set out in the development plan documents. It is also made clear that they should, in addition, be clearly cross-referenced to the relevant development plan document policy that they supplement (ODPM, 2002, p. 33).

Referring to the role of AAPs, paragraph 2.2.14 of draft PPS 12 also acknowledges that, "further detail, such as the layout of uses within these allocations and design requirements etc, may be provided in the relevant area action plan or in one or more supplementary planning documents". (Draft PPS 12, p. 17)

Conclusion

It would appear that under the reformed planning system, there will be a positive role for area based design frameworks and strategies, especially in relation to the emphasis being placed upon a more spatial approach to planning. As stated above, these could potentially be formally adopted as local development documents such as the AAPs mentioned above, that would in themselves, be part of the adopted Local Development Framework. Additionally, draft PPS 12 acknowledges that if details of design are not part of the action plans, then such guidance can be included as supplementary guidance to the AAP. This could be
considered as a positive change in respect of the linkage between design related SPG and the development plan, since research has indicated (Chapman and Larkham, 1992) that statutory plans and design guidance are often treated as separate activities.

Some of the observations made in relation to the literature review associated with this study have resulted in the need for the initial research questions to be revisited and modified. These are set out in the following section.
2.6 Modified Research Questions

On the basis of some of the issues highlighted within the literature review (summarised within sections 2.4 and 2.5), the initial research questions have been slightly modified. The changes made relate to the spatial context, objectives and content of urban design frameworks. On the basis of the discussion within section 2.5, the original question relating to the reformed planning system has also been modified. It is considered that the revised questions will enable a more in-depth analysis of their overall role, and future purpose. Following these modifications, the key research questions are as follows:

- What are urban design frameworks and what is their purpose and function?
- Where do urban design frameworks fit within the hierarchy of supplementary planning guidance?
- Who produces the guidance and who are they produced for?
- Is there a consultation process surrounding their preparation?
- Are there variations in terms of their form, content, and objectives?
- Does their content reflect their objective/s?
- Do they cover the same spatial contexts?
- What are their advantages/disadvantages?
- Will there be an increase in the publication of area based design guidance documents by local authorities as a result of the requirement under the new planning system for Area Action Plans?

Whilst the literature review has enabled some initial conclusions to be made in relation to some of the above questions (as summarised at the end of section 2.4 and 2.5 respectively), the overall conclusions to this study will reflect not only the conclusions made within the literature review, but also those drawn from the case studies used in association
with the research. The methodology in the following chapter sets out the rationale for adopting the case study approach for addressing the above research questions.
3.0 Methodology

This chapter will explain the rationale behind the chosen methodology for the study. It will also highlight the constraints and advantages of the methods proposed, with a justification as to why such methods are considered appropriate in this instance.

The first part to the study involves a review of existing relevant literature to set the context for the study. This includes literature surrounding the emergence of urban design in the context of the planning system, together with government guidance and publications and other surveys relevant to this research topic. The literature review is not intended as a definitive account of all literature surrounding this research area, however, it seeks to provide an overview of key issues that will set the context for the second part to the study. In this respect, it is proposed that a qualitative approach will be adopted through the use of in-depth case studies of three London local authorities.

Through the literature review, some initial conclusions may be drawn in relation to a number of the broad research questions such as what urban design frameworks are, and where they fit within the hierarchy of supplementary planning guidance. However, the credibility of any initial findings may be further informed through conclusions arising from the case studies that form part two to the research. In addition, a number of the research questions seek to understand the advantages and disadvantages and processes surrounding urban design frameworks. It is considered that a qualitative case study approach is the most beneficial method of obtaining an understanding of the above. Wisker (2001) acknowledges that the understanding of meanings, beliefs and experience are better understood through the use of qualitative data, and it is for this reason that this approach is considered appropriate in this instance.
Robson (1993) considers that "case study is a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson, 1993, p.5). Bell (1993) notes that case study has been described as 'an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus on inquiry around an instance' (Adelman et al. 1997, cited in Bell, 1993, p. 8).

It is proposed that the case study method associated with this research will be two-fold. The methods of data collection associated with this are justified in full in Section 3.3. In summary, part one will involve the content analysis of urban design frameworks associated with each case (the selection for which is set out in section 3.2). This will be followed by semi-structured interviews. Bell (1993) acknowledges that the case-study approach is particularly appropriate for individual researchers because it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth within a limited time scale (Bell, 1993, p. 8).

In justifying this approach, Denscombe (1998) acknowledges that the use of case studies has become widespread in social research, particularly within small-scale research and considers that there are five key advantages to this approach.

These are summarised as follows:

**Spotlight on one instance:**
There can be many insights to be gained from looking at the individual case that can have wider implications. The aim of this is to "illuminate the general by looking at the particular" (Denscombe, 1998, p. 30).
In-depth study:
The second key advantage of the case study approach in Denscombe's view, is that it can look at things in detail which a survey can not do (Denscombe, 1998, p.30). He considers that when efforts are devoted to researching one instance, there is far greater opportunity to delve into things in more detail, and to discover things that may not have been apparent through more superficial research.

Focus on relationships and processes:
As Denscombe highlights, relationships and processes within social settings tend to be interconnected and interrelated. Therefore, to understand one thing it is necessary to understand many others and how the various parts are linked. In this respect, he argues that a case study gives more chance to go into sufficient detail to unravel the complexities of a given situation and therefore they tend to be 'holistic' rather than deal with 'isolated factors' (Denscombe, 1998, p.31).

He therefore considers that the real value of a case study offers the opportunity to explain why certain outcomes might happen, more than just find out what those outcomes are.

Natural setting:
Denscombe considers that 'The case' that forms the basis of the investigation is normally something that already exists and not a situation that is artificially generated for purposes of research. The case in question exists prior to the research project, and continues to exist once the research has finished.

Multiple sources and multiple methods:
The final key advantage of using case studies as identified by Denscombe is that multiple sources and multiple methods can be used. He states that
"Observations of events within the case study setting can be combined with the collection of documents from official meetings and informal interviews with people involved......Whatever is appropriate, can be used for investigating the relationships and processes that are of interest." (Denscombe, 1998, p.31)

All five key advantages to case study method highlighted by Denscombe and referred to above are considered to be relevant justifications to the proposed use of case studies for this work. The literature review to this study indicates that there is a lack of specific research surrounding the production of this type of urban design guidance. Therefore, the case study approach is considered most appropriate in that it will focus on the production of urban design frameworks within three London local authorities, to enable an in-depth insight into the relationships and interrelated factors that influence their production, form, content, objectives and impact.

However, this method is not adopted without acknowledging its constraints. As Wisker (2001) points out, you cannot easily generalize from one case. She therefore considers that the case needs to be contextualized and carefully described for others to consider its usefulness in other contexts and examples, or a few cases should be taken, to establish a range of examples and interpretations of a situation, event or development. It is the latter form of case study approach that this study will adopt i.e. through the use of three case studies, but it is acknowledged that there will be limitations in terms of making generalizations from the findings. Denscombe (1998) also acknowledges that the use of case studies will be vulnerable to criticism relating to the credibility of generalizations. He considers a further disadvantage being that case studies can be perceived as producing 'soft' data i.e. focuses on processes rather than measurable end products, relying on qualitative data and interpretative methods rather than quantitative data and statistical procedures. However, the use of three case studies will
enable the information gathered to be triangulated and therefore it is considered that any conclusions drawn will be more credible than those drawn from using one case alone.
3.1 Rationale behind selection of case studies

As stated above, it is considered that the case study method will be the most appropriate in seeking to answer the research questions associated with this study, through the use of three case studies in this instance. In justifying this, Robson (1993) acknowledges that it can be appropriate to study more than one case. He makes reference to Yin's analogy that "carrying out multiple case studies is more like doing multiple experiments" (Yin, cited in Robson, 1993, p.161). However, once the case study method is considered the most appropriate method for the chosen study, Denscombe (1998) points out that further consideration must be given to the selection of cases. He considers that the case study approach calls for the researcher to make choices from among a number of possible events, people and organizations and therefore, the researcher needs to pick out one example (or just a few) from a wider range of examples of the class of thing being investigated. He advises that whatever the subject matter, the case study normally depends on a conscious and explicit choice about which cases to select and that this selection needs to be justified.

In respect of the above, Denscombe (1998) considers three justifications for the selection of case studies, these being selection on the basis of 'suitability', selection on a 'pragmatic' basis and thirdly, selection on the basis of 'no real choice'.

According to Denscombe, the most common ground upon which to justify the selection on the basis of suitability is upon it being a 'typical instance'. He is of the view that the logic behind this is that the particular case is similar in crucial respects with the others that might have been chosen and that the findings are likely to apply elsewhere (Denscombe, 1998, p. 33).
In relation to case study selection on a ‘pragmatic’ basis, Denscombe acknowledges that “In the practical world of research, with its limits to time and resources, the selection of cases is quite likely to include a consideration of convenience.” (Denscombe, 1998, p. 34) He advises that convenience should only come into play when deciding between equally suitable alternatives. A selection on the basis of ‘first to hand’ ‘the easiest’ ‘the cheapest’ is not a criterion in its own right that can justify the selection of cases.

It was originally intended that this study would involve conducting an initial survey of a number of local authorities with the aim of identifying an indication of the extent to which Urban Design Frameworks were being produced. However, the literature review associated with this study revealed that in 2001, the Commission for Architecture in the Built Environment (CABE) carried out a design skill survey that is referred to in the previous chapter, which involved contacting all local authorities in England. Part of their questionnaire sought to identify the types of design guidance being produced by local authorities, and a high number of respondents (68%) indicated that they did not produce area based design guidance in the form of urban design frameworks. The overall response rate for their survey was 56% of all local authorities in England, which is both a much greater sample size and response rate than would be expected from conducting a questionnaire survey within an MPhil project. The purpose of conducting a survey for this study would be mainly to identify the extent to which urban design frameworks were being produced within local authorities, with a view to furthering the findings through the use of case studies.

In the light of the extent of and response rate to the CABE survey, the results of the CABE study have been used to select the case studies for this piece of research. Whilst their survey did not publish the breakdown of responses from the local authorities who had responded to the survey, they were
contacted to ask whether this information would be available for the purposes of this work. CABE have provided a full breakdown of the local authorities whom responded to the 2003 follow up survey to their initial 2001 study. Out of the responses to the follow up survey, the results indicate which local authorities produce area specific design guidance. It is from this information, that the case studies are selected for the purposes of this work.

In this respect the method of 'purposive sampling' is adopted in that, the sample is 'hand picked' for the research (Denscombe, 1993, p.15). This is applied in situations where the researcher already knows something about the specific people or events and deliberately selects particular cases as they are seen as instances that are likely to produce the most valuable data. The CABE survey has provided an indicative list of local authorities who produce urban design frameworks. The use of London local authorities is considered appropriate in view of the recognition identified through the recently published London Plan that good design has a role in relation to accommodating pressures of rapid population growth within London. Chapter 4B – designs on London states:

"Good design is central to all the objectives of this plan. It is a tool for helping to accommodate London's growth within its boundaries." (The London Plan, 2004, p.173).

As discussed within Chapter 2, PPG3 implicates a strong role for area based supplementary planning guidance in encouraging new housing developments that relate considerations of design and layout to the wider context (PPG3, para.56). In addition, the Urban Design Group (2002) consider that urban design frameworks are appropriate for areas where there is a need to control, guide and promote change.

5 The information provided by CABE together with the breakdown of local authority responses is annexed in Appendix 3
It is for the reasons above, that is considered appropriate to use London Borough case studies. The selected cases are the Boroughs of Redbridge, Merton and Lewisham. The CABE design survey results revealed that 7 London local authorities indicated that they had issued area-wide design guidance in the form of urban design frameworks. Each authority was therefore contacted by letter\(^6\), which requested details of their respective frameworks. They were also asked whether they would have any objections to being used as a case study for the research project. Two out of the seven local authorities (Merton and Lewisham) initially responded to the letter, providing details of their relevant guidance. Merton sent a copy of their Mitcham Urban Village SPG and Lewisham sent a copy of their Deptford Urban Design and Development Framework, and details of their Forest Hill Urban Design Framework and Development Strategy that is available from their Council website.

A follow up e-mail was subsequently sent to the remaining local authorities and a further two authorities responded (Redbridge and Kingston). However, the information sent from Kingston indicated that the urban design framework (K+20 Strategy) was still in the preliminary stages of the preparation process and would therefore not be suitable for the purposes of this study. The urban design framework produced by Redbridge is also not officially published, but at the time of writing is undergoing its final consultation period. It was therefore considered that although this document has not been formally adopted, it would still be possible to consider its content and the issues surrounding its preparation.

London local authorities have therefore been selected on the basis of suitability and to some extent a pragmatic basis. Three examples have been selected rather than two, to avoid the analysis becoming a direct comparison between two local authorities.

\(^6\) A copy of the template of the letter sent to each local authority is annexed in Appendix 5
There is also a degree of convenience in selecting London authorities as case studies in that geographically, they are easy to travel to for the purposes of carrying out interviews. However, their selection is not primarily based upon this factor, it is merely an advantage when faced with time and resource constraints associated with personal research.

Denscombe (1998) considers that the advantage of using this method is that it allows the researcher to home in on people or events which there are good grounds for believing will be critical for the research. It is on this basis that the results of the CABE design survey have been used to purposefully pick three London Borough’s who stated that they produce urban design frameworks. Through their analysis, they will be used to seek to address the research questions that form this study with a view to drawing valid conclusions and recommendations for further areas of research.
3.2 Methods of Data collection

The data collection techniques adopted within the case study approach will be two-fold. The content analysis of the urban design frameworks referred to in section 3.2 will form part one to the case study approach, followed by semi-structured interviews forming part two. Chapter 2 noted that Rowland (1999) considers that urban design frameworks can establish confidence for the development industry, local authorities and local communities. With this in mind, it is proposed that a local developer and a local community representative associated with each case study will be interviewed. It is also proposed that interviews will be conducted with an officer from each local authority who has been involved with the preparation process of the urban design frameworks.

Bell (1993) considers that a major advantage of carrying out an interview is its adaptability as it can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings (Bell, 1993, p. 91). She notes that Moser and Kalton describe the survey interview as “a conversation between interviewer and respondent with the purpose of eliciting certain information from the respondent”. (Moser and Kalton, cited in Bell, 1993, p.91).

Wisker (2001) is of the view that semi-structured interviews are able to address the need for comparable responses, but also the need to be developed by the conversation between interviewer and interviewee, which, in her view can be very rich and rewarding (Wisker 2001, p. 168). It is considered that this form of interview, over other common types, i.e. fully structured or unstructured will be the most appropriate for the purposes of this study since they allow the interviewer the freedom to modify the order of set questions, omit irrelevant questions that seem inappropriate with a particular interviewee or can include additional ones to follow up on interesting points (Robson, 1993).
A fully structured interview may result in restrictions to the interviewee who may want to expand upon or explain more fully an answer to a particular question. On the other hand, a completely unstructured interview may result in difficulties when analyzing and comparing the answers with other responses.

It is noted, however, that there are disadvantages in respect of using the interviews as a research method generally, irrespective of which type is being adopted as part of the study. Bell (1993) warns that there is always a danger of bias creeping in to interviews since there are many factors that can influence responses. Borg (1981) draws attention to this and considers that:

"Eagerness of the respondent to please the interviewer, a vague antagonism that sometimes arises between interviewer and respondent, or the tendency of the interviewer to seek out the answers that support his preconceived notions are but few of the factors that may contribute to biasing of data obtained from the interview. These factors are called response effect by survey researchers."

(Borg 1981, p.87, cited in Bell, 1993, p.95)

It is proposed that the same set of questions will form the basis of the semi-structured interview format in order that all interviewees are given an equal opportunity to respond to the same questions.

In addition, the advantage of using multiple methods (in this case, the content analysis of documents followed by semi-structured interviews) enables cross-checking in the form of triangulation to take place. This has been described as:
Sophie Fitch: A study into the use and effectiveness of urban design frameworks as a planning tool

"cross-checking the existence of certain phenomena and the veracity of individual accounts by gathering data from a number of informants and a number of sources and subsequently comparing and contrasting one account with another in order to produce as full and balanced a study as possible."


Robson (1993) also notes that multiple methods can also be used in complementary fashion to enhance interpretability. This will be relevant to this study since the interpretation of information contained within the documents to be analysed may be altered or strengthened upon the execution of the associated interviews.
3.3 Limitations to the research

This research is carried out with acknowledgement to its barriers and limitations. Firstly, there are constraints such as time and resource pressures which will have inevitably influenced the selection of proposed methods, both in terms of type of methods and their extent i.e. in selecting three case studies rather than say 5 or 10. The outcome will be that there is likely to be scepticism surrounding the findings insofar as whether it is reasonable to generalise from the findings of three cases.

However, Denscombe (1993) considers that whilst the researcher can emphasise the limitations as to how far the findings should be generalized to others, the crucial tasks are to:

   a) identify significant features on which comparison with others in the class can be made; and
   b) show how the case study compares with others in the class in terms of these significant features

   (Denscombe, 1998, p. 37)

There may be difficulties encountered regarding the comparison of documents between each local authority, dependent upon the ways in which the information is presented. There is therefore the hazard that the analysis will be subject to a degree of interpretation. Whilst it is acknowledged that the methods proposed have associated implications of bias or misinterpretation, these downfalls are acknowledged as potential weaknesses to the study. However, it is considered that the selected methods are the most suitable for seeking to explore and answer the set of research questions posed, baring in mind that no research method alone could be adopted without warnings of potential criticism.
4.0 Case Studies

4.1 Content Analysis

Part one to the case study approach for this research involves the content analysis of four urban design framework documents. The rationale behind the selection of local authorities and their documents for this purpose is justified within Chapter 3. The map below indicates the geographical location of the three case study areas.

As stated within Chapter 3, Merton's guidance is supplementary planning guidance (SPG) for Mitcham town centre. Lewisham's documents are urban design frameworks relating to two areas within the borough. The Forest Hill Urban Design Framework and Development Strategy relates to the town centre of Forest Hill, an area located in the south west of the borough, and the Deptford Urban Design and Development Framework is
a focus upon the Deptford High Street, an area located in the north of the borough. The London Borough of Redbridge is in the final stages of producing an authority-wide Urban Design Framework supplementary planning guidance. At the time of writing, the document is in final draft form.

The content analysis is a useful exercise in that it will enable an in-depth analysis of the key components to each document. The literature review highlighted through examples of relevant research (Turner 1994, DETR, 1998) that supplementary planning guidance relating to similar spatial contexts can differ in respect of their content, role, and scope. The comparable elements to the content analysis are considered to be the key issues that relate to the production of supplementary planning guidance and are drawn from the discussions and observations within Chapter 2. They cover the following:

- Background to preparation of documents
- Objectives
- Consultation process
- Analysis/Appraisal of area covered by document
- Issues covered
- Relationship to the development plan and other SPG
- Funding/Implementation Mechanisms
- Relationship to planning process
- Status
- Clarity and Expression

It is considered that through observation and discussion surrounding each of the above elements, the overall purpose, content and character of each document will be apparent. As stated within the methodology, the selection of the documents is based on the local authority responses to the CABE 2003 design survey. The documents examined are therefore those that the local authority responses indicated were most closely
related to the category of area based design frameworks. The content analysis should therefore enable conclusions to be drawn in relation to the differences or similarities between the documents that have broadly been categorised as area based design frameworks.

**Background**

The background to the production of each document is not necessarily explicit in all cases. However, this is sometimes implicit within the information supplied relating to the history of the area covered by the guidance.

Merton’s Mitcham Urban Village SPG provides a descriptive history to the study area, stating that it was once a prosperous north Surrey village and local centre, but has been in decline since the late 1960s. It attributes the deterioration of the area to the competing hierarchy of local/district centres and the growth of rival retail centres such as Croydon, Sutton, Colliers Wood and Wimbledon. It is considered that the area has suffered further from the lack of inward investment and declining Council budget. There are also limited public transport links, with a reliance on buses and taxis as the area is not served directly by rail or tube services. A further identified weakness of the area is consequently the high levels of traffic congestion.

The SPG states that the Urban Village approach to the town centre was promoted by the Urban Villages forum in the 1990s as an alternative approach to achieving successful urban regeneration. It states that:

> "An urban village developed according to these principles should provide an attractive environment comprising a mix of uses, higher density residential development, buildings designed to high architectural standards and well designed public spaces related to a human scale with priority given to walking, cycling and public transport modes. These"
principles are in line with the policy approach taken to promoting Sustainable Suburbs in the draft London Plan".

(LB Merton, 2003, para 2.1)

The adopted approach is justified with reference to the London Plan and relevant documents that emphasise the value of area based SPG and good design i.e. PPG 12, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill (2003), the DETR By-Design (2000) guidance, and the Urban White Paper (2000). The guidance states that it supplements Merton’s Unitary Development Plan, and should be taken into account when considering development proposals for the regeneration of the area.

Redbridge’s Urban Design Framework states that the SPG makes a positive contribution to the Council’s current Regeneration initiatives as well as providing important guidance in decision making for more modest developments and changes to the borough’s townscapes. Within the introduction, it states that the document provides clarification to the UDP policies, and rather than being prescriptive, it should be used to encourage ideas.

Whilst the document does not provide a detailed history relating to the reasons behind producing the framework, it’s underlying principle is stated as being “For Redbridge to be a thriving Borough where people want to live, work and invest.” (LB Redbridge, 2004, p.4)

Lewisham’s Forest Hill Urban Design Framework and Development Strategy acknowledges that “Forest Hill has many fine assets in its landscape, building heritage and community scale, and there is real and tangible potential demonstrated in recent initiatives in the town centre” (LB Lewisham, 2003, Section 1.2).
It explains the reason behind the strategy, stating:

"However, the centre suffers from a lack of cohesive sense of quality around the station area. In addition there are pressures for redevelopment of certain areas to be addressed. This framework addresses both pressures with generic and specific guidance. The overall message of this report is that these elements of improvement and regeneration should be underpinned by the pursuit of an urban quality agenda with the highest aspirations."

(LB Lewisham, 2003, Section 1.2)

Lewisham’s Deptford framework is also explicit in stating the purpose of the document, and notes that there are a number of factors driving change within the area. It states that Deptford’s future is therefore at a crucial point. A number of major development proposals are listed which are stated as having been completed, have planning permission or are at the proposals stage. The framework states that the challenge and opportunity is to ensure that the High Street benefits from local regeneration and investment initiatives, rather than declining as other areas become regenerated.

In the cases of Lewisham and Merton, the justification of the need for the guidance appears explicitly related to surrounding development pressures. The pressures cited within the Mitcham guidance are not necessarily related to the immediate locality, but rather from neighbouring centres that appear to have attracted investment to the detriment of the Mitcham area. The Deptford and Forest Hill frameworks both cite local development pressures as instigating the need for the guidance. In all three cases, however, the need for the guidance appears to relate to the recognised need for a co-ordinated approach to encouraging future development within each area. This concurs with the Urban Design Group’s view that urban design frameworks are appropriate in areas where there is the need to control, guide and promote change (Urban Design Group, 2002).
Objectives

The nature of the stated objectives within each document varies. Three of the documents state an overall aspiration for the area as well as stating the specific objectives of the guidance itself.

Lewisham’s Deptford urban design and development framework states:

"The overarching objective of the framework is to ensure the long-term success of the High Street as an attractive and welcoming focus for all local communities, as a centre for shopping, leisure, work, living and creativity."

(LB Lewisham, 2004, p.5)

It also states that:

The Framework is intended to provide guidance on:

- The type of built development expected in Deptford
- Urban design principles to guide future development; and
- Opportunities for improvements in the quality of streets, routes and public spaces

(LB Lewisham, 2004, p.5)

In addition to the underlying principle referred to on page 83 above for Redbridge to be a place where people want to live, work and invest, the document states that three further elements of good urban design are covered by the Framework, including:-

1) PROVIDING A VISION

Provide a coherent and proactive approach to development in the borough to improve visual and social inter-relationships and the overall image of the borough.
ii) CONTROL
    Provide a coherent and consistent policy relating to design for all parties involved in regulating development (in accordance with the Unitary Development Plan)

iii) CO-ORDINATION
    Tie into and promote other plans, initiatives and strategies either directly or indirectly related to the urban environment, particularly the Unitary Development Plan/Local Development Document and Area Action Plans

(LB Redbridge, 2004, pps. 4-5)

Within the introduction to Lewisham's Forest Hill urban design framework, the stated underlying principle of the document is:

"to guide and inspire the Council and other Stakeholders' regeneration work and to attract new investment into Forest Hill."

(LB Lewisham, 2003, p.1)

Within Section 3 – The Overall Framework, objectives are set out relating to the overall 'vision' for Forest Hill. It states:

The vision for Forest Hill is of a centre that:

- Creates an attractive, safe and high quality place at its heart.
- Is friendly and of a human scale.
- Has a focus, and a series of routes, spaces and landmarks that help to make the centre easily accessible and understood by all who use it.
- Maximises development potential on underused sites without compromising local character.
- Has a fine grained mix of uses that create a vital and viable place.

(LB Lewisham, 2003, sec 3.1)
Mertons' Mitcham Urban Village SPG cites the following guiding principles to promoting the regeneration of Mitcham Urban Village:

- **Create a Better Place to Live** – Streets should be safe, attractive and easy to use for pedestrians and shoppers, buildings and public spaces should be designed to enhance the area’s overall attractiveness and a range of community facilities provided.
- **Promote Social Diversity** – a more balanced housing stock, including the provision of affordable housing, will contribute to the creation of a more sustainable, vital and viable community.
- **Mixed Uses** – to reinforce the existing socio-economic base of the area by business, community and leisure activities.
- **Priority to Sustainable Transport** – to encourage the development of safe and efficient transport infrastructure giving priority to movement by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and to reduce the reliance on and provision for private cars.
- **Open Up Public Spaces** – public open spaces should be remodelled to provide a more attractively landscaped setting for the buildings around them.
- **Buildings should make a Positive Contribution to the Environment** – by respecting the existing street pattern or by defining new public spaces refurbishments and new buildings should be generally three or four storeys high, make a positive contribution to the public realm and be adaptable in mixed use formats to changing economic circumstances.

(LB Merton, 2003, para 3.2)

None of the documents examined cite an objective for the guidance as being to provide design guidance alone. The essence of the overall aspirations for each area inherent within the stated objectives appear similar to the qualities associated with the ‘making-places’ tradition of urban design thought discussed in chapter one. However, whilst this may be the case, research (DETR, 1998) indicates that the content of supplementary planning guidance (SPG) is not always consistent with its objective. Further consideration will therefore be given to whether the nature and extent of the guidance provided within the documents is considered to be reflective of their objectives as cited above.
Consultation Process

The importance of the consultation process associated with the preparation of supplementary guidance has been highlighted not only within relevant research findings (Turner, 1994; Urban Task Force, 1999; CABE, 2004) but also within Government publications i.e. Annex A to PPG 1 and draft PPS 1.

Details of the consultation process associated with the preparation of the guidance documents are only expressed in detail within both of Lewisham's urban design frameworks. The Forest Hill urban design framework states that the consultation exercise consisted of two events at stages 1 and 3 of the process, which involved consulting land owners, residents' groups and other key stakeholders. A list of the key stakeholders is provided within the introduction, stating that the guidance is designed to be a reference document for the Council, its Members and officers, the private sector and the community in developing projects and programmes within the area.

The Deptford framework sets out full details of the various consultation events that took place throughout the study process. This included 'issues' and 'ideas' consultation workshops, a walking tour, a public exhibition, and a visit to a local school. It also states that the key findings from the consultation are summarised throughout the report, and that the comments and ideas received have been carefully considered in producing the final framework document. However, it is not expressly stated who the final document is intended for.

There is no reference to the consultation process within Redbridge's urban design framework. However, this could be attributed to the fact that the document is not yet published and has recently reached the end of the consultation process. However, the introduction clearly states who the document is intended for, including:-
The consultation process relating to Merton's Mitcham Urban Village SPG is also not referred to within the document. However, it states that the guidance given is to landowners, the Council, the Mitcham Urban Village Partnership Board and prospective developers.

Although the consultation process associated with the preparation of the documents is not expressed in all cases, an assumption should not be made that there has not been a consultation process or that the consultees' views have not been taken into consideration within the preparation process.

The interviews forming part two to this chapter will therefore seek to clarify whether there was a consultation process within the preparation process for each document. Where evident, the nature, extent and responses to the process will be examined. If it transpires that any of the documents have been issued without a consultation process, the reasons for this will be examined.

Area Character and Analysis

The geographical area covered by each document varies considerably. Merton's Mitcham Urban Village SPG covers a radius within the area of approximately 600-800 metres, whilst the Redbridge guidance is authority-wide applying to the whole borough. Lewisham's Deptford framework specifies that although the study area for the framework
Sophie Fitch: A study into the use and effectiveness of urban design frameworks as a planning tool

covers a large area, the detailed design guidance is a focus upon the Deptford High Street. Lewisham's Forest Hill framework is a focus upon the town centre area.

The Forest Hill framework raises twelve key issues relating to the area based upon an urban design analysis of issues including:-

- Access, gateways and barriers/severance
- Views and landmarks
- Places, spaces and frontages
- Development sites and project areas

Each of the above are annotated on diagrams and are drawn together to form a conceptual framework diagram for the study area which illustrates the following:

- Key attractions
- Landmark station building and public space
- Important connections
- East side development opportunity
- Improved pedestrian links
- East-west links at the station
- Better quality streets and important routes

By contrast, the context for the Redbridge framework is based around a descriptive character assessment of seven urban areas within the borough. Particular attention is paid to key areas and buildings which are considered to provide the borough with a unique distinctiveness and an enhanced legibility. The character assessments of the various areas broadly cover information including: a brief history; prevailing land uses; predominant housing form; whether the area falls within a conservation area; communication links; common building fabrics; important buildings. The key elements arising from the character assessments are
summarised at end of the section within a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) table of analysis.

Merton's Mitcham Urban Village SPG also adopts a descriptive method of explaining the character of the 5 sub-areas covered by the guidance. The identified areas are the Mitcham Village Centre, The Elms, The Glebes, Mitcham Employment Centre and Lower Mitcham. The areas have been defined according to their predominant land use, function and urban characteristics. Section 4 of the SPG – Proposals by Sub-Area, provides a brief description of the nature of each area stating which is under the most development pressure (Mitcham Village Centre) and which has the greatest potential for change (Mitcham Employment Centre) and which is the most historically significant (Lower Mitcham).

Section 02 of Lewisham's Deptford Urban Design Framework has identified strengths and weaknesses of the area based upon a townscape analysis of the High Street. The analysis is annotated on a map highlighting: Buildings of good townscape qualities; Buildings of medium townscape qualities; Buildings with low townscape qualities; Landmark Buildings; and Buildings that detract from the image of the area. Photographs have been used to illustrate examples of buildings of good townscape quality, landmark architecture and the vibrant street market and also to illustrate the identified weaknesses of the area.

Further analysis relating to Deptford High Street was carried out against a table of indicators of streetscape quality. The considerations arising from the analysis that are addressed through the framework include:

- Quality of pedestrian environment
- Range of functions within the High Street
- Design of new development and public spaces; and
- Arrangements for access and servicing to new development.

(LB Lewisham, 2004, p.9)
The framework also refers to a range of perceived problems with the High Street that were identified through the consultation process. They are summarised as being: the lack of good quality shopping and evening uses in the High Street; the negative image presented by the derelict sites and premises, and the generally poor quality of the environment, which included the design and management of the streets, public spaces and pedestrian routes. The summary of the best and worst things about Deptford High Street identified through the consultation process is also inset within this section.

As mentioned previously, the literature review indicated that supplementary planning guidance with varying titles can relate to similar spatial contexts. Whilst overall, Lewisham's frameworks and Merton's SPG relate to town centres, the spatial contexts of the areas covered by the guidance vary considerably. In addition, the more detailed analysis of the respective areas appears to be evident within the guidance that focuses on a smaller geographical area, i.e. within the Forest Hill and Deptford frameworks. In the cases of both the Redbridge and Merton guidance, the wider geographical area appears concurrent with a more general analysis involving a descriptive narrative of the area/s. The implications of this may be that there will be significant variations in the general nature of the guidance. However, further analysis of their overall content is necessary before any conclusions can be drawn in this respect.

**Issues Covered**

The Deptford Urban Design and Development Framework incorporates a mix of policy and design based guidance. Activity focus areas have been identified within Chapter 3, which are highlighted on a plan and include areas of: Core retail; Non-core Retail; Community Focus; Evening Activity Hubs; Creative Industry Cluster and the Street Market. The remainder of the chapter is broken down into further sections, each setting out the types of uses and developments that would be encouraged under the
headings of:- Shopping and Leisure; Leisure Uses: Bars, Cafes and Restaurants; Street Market; Creative Industries and Tourism; Community Facilities; Housing.

A summary of the comments arising from the public consultation exercise relating to ‘uses and activities’ in Deptford High Street is also cited at the end of the chapter.

Specific design guidance relating to the framework area is introduced within Chapter 4 – Built Form and Development Opportunities. Four main development opportunity sites are identified and varying levels of advice is given for each site, expressing what the issues are and specifying what type of improvements/development would be expected in each location. The guidance for each area is broken down into 3 sections covering:- Existing Conditions, Development Opportunities and Urban Design Principles.

The guidance provided for these areas include details of the types of uses that would be appropriate within each site. This is followed by more detailed design advice. Specific advice relates to diagrammatically annotated ‘blocks’ and covers the following:
- Appropriate development floor area
- Suitable uses
- Appropriate housing density levels within new development
- Suitable number of storeys for each development (specifies which floors appropriate for different uses)
- Car parking provisions

Urban design principles are set out which are accompanied by illustrative cross-sectional images of the suggested new frontages and suggested scale of new development within the areas. These are accompanied by ‘before’ and ‘after’ artist impressions of new development along Giffin Street.
Chapter 05 – Public Realm and Open Space, sets out a number of proposed public realm projects within the area and states that the following five public realm principles should guide future investment in the public realm in Deptford:

- An integrated network of quality pedestrian and cycle routes should be developed to link key destinations, and major open spaces;
- Enhancement in public spaces, and effective maintenance, should be used to signal confidence in the area and commitment to its future;
- New development should be used to enhance public spaces, and ensure a clear definition between public spaces and private spaces;
- Public spaces should be designed as a positive resource for the community; and
- Public spaces should be carefully designed with high quality and robust materials.

(LB Lewisham, 2004, p.27)

A series of objectives and design principles are set out against each public realm project, illustrated by mapped annotations and plans. Photographic illustrations together with 'before' and 'after' artist impressions are also used.

Through the guidance provided, it is considered that the three stated objectives of the framework as referred to within the ‘Objectives’ section above are clearly met. It is also considered that parallels can be drawn in relation to the nature of the guidance provided within the framework and that associated with a spatial masterplan as defined by the Urban Task Force (1999) in section 2.4. The key similarities are considered to be in relation to the provision of detail relating to the heights and massing of buildings; the relationship between buildings and public spaces; the
distribution of uses and the network of movement patterns. However, as mentioned previously, CABE (2003) acknowledges that there are many terms that can be used to describe strategies that relate to the physical regeneration of an area.

The guidance provided within the Mitcham Urban Village SPG relates to 5 sub-areas located within the Urban Village, the boundaries of which are marked on an area map.

Separate guidance is provided for each of the 5 sub-areas, the nature of which is descriptive and broadly covers the following elements:

- Types of land uses encouraged within each area
- Appropriate housing density levels
- Appropriate floor area sizes for new development
- Suitable number of storeys (specifies which floors are appropriate for different uses)
- Improvements to public transport and cycling infrastructure
- Improvements to the street scene
- Improvements to public open spaces
- Parking provisions
- Traffic calming

It is considered that through the narrative provided for each area, the guidance links back to the criteria associated with meeting the overarching principles as stated within the introduction to the document. However, the guidance appears to treat each sub-area in isolation, with no reference to how the areas are linked or integrated with one another.

Redbridge provides a range of design guidance within chapters 3, 4 and 5 of its framework. Overall, the guidance provided relates to the following principles:
1. Ease of Movement
2. Continuity of Enclosure
3. Orientation and Ownership
4. Diversity and Mix of Uses
5. Legibility/Character (Visual Appropriateness)
6. Adaptability
7. Quality of the Public Realm
8. Transportation Issues including Public Transport
9. Sustainability and Balance with Nature
10. Value
11. Inclusivity

(LB Redbridge 2004, p.24)

Each of the above principles are subsequently explained in terms of what they mean, why they are important, and how they can be achieved i.e. 'What', 'Why', and 'How'. Diagrams and photographs are used to accompany the above. The framework is Borough-wide, therefore the guidance provided is generic and makes no reference to any particular site or area to which it should specifically relate. This appears consistent with one of the stated objectives of the framework in that it provides a 'coherent and consistent policy relating to design' (LB Redbridge, 2004, p.5).

Section 4 sets out the requirements for submitting a planning application. In doing so, reference is made to a design checklist that has been developed around the 11 principles set out above. It is expressed that the checklist is intended for use in considering planning applications as well as the regular review of urban areas in Redbridge. This section also sets out the requirement to provide a design statement, stating its purpose and what its content should include.

In meeting its objective relating to the co-ordination of other plans, initiatives and strategies, Section 5 provides more detailed guidance to:
i) assist the development control system, and  
ii) feed into Area Action Plans and development briefs  
(LB Redbridge, 2004, p.36)

The detailed guidance is provided on a number of issues set out under the following headings:

- Layout of Areas  
- Built Environment  
- Natural Environment  
- Planning/Partnership

The overall impression given through the nature and extent of the guidance provided is that the document is an overarching design framework for the borough. The guidance provided has similarities to the qualities attributed to a design guide, and although dated, the definition provided by Llewellyn-Davies et al in 1976, appears closely related to the overall nature of the Redbridge framework. They stated that:

"a design guide is a general set of design principles and standards required by the local authority and applying to a wide area and not just a particular site"
(Llewellyn-Davies et al, 1976, cited in Chapman and Larkham, 1992, p.5)

It is considered that the framework incorporates further guidance that is associated with other prevalent qualities of design guides as noted by Chapman and Larkham (1992). This includes the provision of procedural guidance relating to the submission of a planning application and design statement, and also the focus upon key areas and buildings within the area character assessments.

Section 4 of Lewisham's Forest Hill Urban Design Framework provides guidance relating to considerations of urban quality. These include:
- The Street Landscape
- Signage and legibility
- Lighting
- Public art and heritage interpretation
- Frontages and shopfronts
- A palette of materials and styles

(LB Lewisham, 2003, Paras 4.2.1-4.2.6)

Section 4.3 - Guidance for priority areas, sets out a number of short term environmental enhancement actions stating that they would contribute to setting up a quality public realm framework within which new development could take place. It is also considered that such improvements would attract investors and new residents to the area.

The four priority areas identified as suitable for short term enhancement actions include:
- The station area
- The route to the Horniman
- Perry Vale
- Bus/rail interchange improvements

General and descriptive guidance is provided in relation to the above areas with further details provided within Section 5 – Development Strategy. In this section, the above areas are addressed further through guidance that relates to key sites identified for redevelopment. It is stated that the guidance provided are the preferred options which arose out of the consultation exercise. The development context for each of the above sites is set out, providing a descriptive summary of the issues that were initially highlighted within the earlier analysis. This is followed by a list of development principles, presented as bullet point guidance relating to each site.

The overall stated objective of the guidance relates to guiding and promoting investment within the area. The framework endeavours to
meet this objective through the provision of clear guidance relating to opportunities for both short and long term enhancements.

The breadth of issues covered within the guidance provided appears to strengthen the acknowledgement in recent years that considerations urban design principles are not simply restricted to aesthetic concerns. Although each document expresses guidance in differing levels of expression and detail, their focus is predominantly on encouraging a mix of uses, activities, improved linkages, enhanced connections, and variety, all of which are considered to amount to the overall improvement and promotion of the areas. Similarly to the nature of the area analysis associated with each document, the more detailed and explicit guidance appears to relate to the frameworks that focus upon a smaller geographical area.

Relationship to the Development Plan and other SPG

The documents examined vary in terms of their explicitly stated relationship with the associated Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and also in terms of cross references to relevant UDP policy within the areas covered by each of the frameworks. As stated within Chapter 2, the Urban Design Group (2002) considers that for guidance to have supplementary planning guidance status, it must, (amongst other factors) be consistent with the development plan. However, earlier indications (Chapman and Larkham, 1992) have been that the relationship between statutory plans and design guidance can be unclear, and the two can be treated as separate activities.

The Mitcham Urban Village SPG is the only document to make any reference to national planning policy. It considers that the urban village approach to the regeneration of Mitcham is consistent with Planning and Policy Guidance (PPG) note 1 (General Policies and Principles) and PPG 12 (Development Plans). It states that PPG1:
"emphasises the importance of local authorities promoting mixed use and well designed sustainable development proposals including "urban villages" as a contribution to achieving regeneration objectives"

(LB Merton, 2003, para 2.3).

Reference is also made to PPG 12 stating that it acknowledges the valuable role that SPGs perform in support of plan policies/proposals.

In relation to local development plan policies, the guidance lists specific policies relating to the urban village approach to regeneration which are contained within its draft Unitary Development Plan 2000. It also refers to a list of UDP policies that it considers are formulated to:

"improve the quality of the built environment, urban design and protect the special character of conservation areas, archaeology and listed buildings"

(LB Merton, 2003, para 2.6)

However, whilst these are listed in terms of their policy reference and title, the document does not elaborate on what the policies are or how the guidance provided later in the document relates to or accords with them. The Unitary Development Plan is now adopted, although the SPG refers to the draft version.

With regards to the relationship with other SPG, the plan outlining the boundary to Mitcham village centre highlights 10 UDP site proposal areas. Further reference is made to these development brief sites within the appendix, stating that they have been informed through the urban design principles referred to in section 3 of the guidance. The information provided includes an annotated plan accompanied by a brief description of the expected development on each site. Although these individual sites are indicated on a map within the proposals section of the document, there are limited cross-references made to the sites within the main guidance provided for the village centre area.
The draft Urban Design Framework being produced by Redbridge states within its introduction that:

“This Supplementary Planning Guidance will provide clarification to the Policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) by defining policy in greater detail and collating together areas of policy related to urban design across the UDP to assist planners, developers, landowners and other stakeholders.”

(LB Redbridge, 2004, p.4)

References to the most relevant UDP design policies are cited within section 4 ‘Guidance for Planning Applications’. A short summary of these policies is provided, and reference is made to other design related policies which are appended at the end of the framework document.

As mentioned within the ‘Issues Covered’ section above, Section 5 of Redbridge’s framework provides guidance relating to Design Guidance, Forward Planning and Area Action Plans. It states that:

“Area Action Plans are developed in accordance with London Borough of Redbridge’s UDP (adopted November 2003). These focus on town centres, but also potentially, residential areas, other commercial areas and other areas of potential improvement, might be considered. Development Briefs are suitable to address site-specific issues, used to complement existing planning documents, aimed at improving the quality of planning applications.”

(LB Redbridge, 2004, p.36)

However, whilst guidance is provided in relation to the required content of the Area Action Plans (AAPs) no other details of the emerging AAPs (other than reference on a location map) or draft or adopted development briefs within the Borough are provided.
In a similar approach to the Mitcham Urban Village SPG, Lewisham’s Forest Hill urban design framework makes reference to relevant UDP policies within its introduction. It states that the framework has been prepared to supplement policies contained within Lewisham’s adopted and emerging UDP. The document states that it accords with and supplements many of the Urban Design, Transport, Leisure and Implementation Policies of the adopted and revised deposit draft of Lewisham’s UDP. However, the UDP policies referred to within the introduction are not clarified or mentioned any further within the remainder of the framework document.

Within the introduction to Lewisham’s Deptford Urban Design and Development Framework, the relationship between the framework and the UDP is not stated. However, references to relevant UDP policies are referred to within later sections of the document. Section 03 ‘Activity Focus Areas’ acknowledges the importance of Deptford High Street as a shopping location. In this respect, UDP policy STC4 relating to ‘Shopping Core Area’ and Policy STC 5 ‘Non-Core Shopping Area’ are fully cited.

The only other reference to relevant development plan policy within the document is under section 3.7 – Housing. It states that because of the recognised importance of Deptford High Street as a residential area, the Council seeks to promote new housing development which will add to the vitality of the area. In view of this, the document advises that the area has been designated as a ‘Sustainable Living Area’ within the deposit draft UDP 2000. Policy HSG13 is quoted as stating:

“*When considering applications for residential development, new build and conversion, in Sustainable Living Areas (SLAs)...the Council may apply density, parking and other planning standards more flexibly, subject to the quality of the design of the proposed scheme.*”

Two out of the four documents (Merton and Redbridge) refer specifically to other supplementary planning guidance for areas/sites located within the respective guidance areas. However, it would appear that the scope for further detailed guidance within the Forest Hill and Deptford frameworks is inherent within the identification of a number of development opportunity sites. It may be considered however, that the level of guidance provided in relation to some of these sites may be detailed enough to negate the need for a further SPG.

**Implementation/Funding Mechanisms**

Each document has devoted a section relating to the implementation/funding mechanisms associated with the guidance. Section 6 of Lewisham’s Forest Hill urban design framework sets out how the improvements specified within the framework will be implemented. It states that as some of the specific improvements are related to the development of specific sites, it is envisaged that the costs of implementing the improvements will be sought through planning obligations with prospective developers. This would be in association with their development proposals for the town centre.

The framework states that the current market indications are such that the potential for successful development including retail and/or residential is very high. However, the importance of developing further detailed viability studies with interested developers to embed the projects in partnership arrangements with landowners and the local authority is also stated.

Merton’s Urban Village SPG states that the development of the Mitcham Urban Village will be achieved through an Implementation Plan embracing detailed site specific and public realm proposals. It states that the Plan should provide the necessary assurance to the development industry that:
• all the major stakeholders are committed to achieving the objectives of the Plan.
• effective administrative and management structures are in place to coordinate the activities of the Board, including promotional activity.
• a consistent approach is taken over the long term to secure the improvement of the social, economic and physical conditions of the area.

(LB Merton, 2003, para 5.2)

The preparation and execution of the Plan is responsibility of Mitcham Urban Village Partnership Board comprising representatives of stakeholders in the area i.e. private, public, voluntary sectors and the local community. It is intended that the Partnership Board would operate in tandem with investors/developers who will provide the majority of necessary funding.

A key issue that is cited within the guidance is that the Council has scarce capital resources for funding projects. In addition, it states that Merton is not categorised as an assisted area in terms of European Union programmes nor included in the Government’s current Index of Local Deprivation for Neighbourhood Renewal schemes. As Mitcham Urban Village is not featured as a policy area in the London Plan, or as an area of strategic significance, it is therefore not a priority for investment by the Greater London Authority. Therefore, it is envisaged that most investment in new development schemes will be funded by private sector or derived from private sector funds through Section.106 legal agreements.

Within the guidance relating to the implementation/funding of Redbridge’s urban design framework, it is stated that development briefs may be required if the development plan and any existing supplementary planning guidance do not adequately cover site-specific issues which need to be addressed prior to the submission of a planning application.
Possible sources of funding opportunities available are stated as being dependent upon the type of development but may include the following:

- The Developer
- The Local Authority
- Local Businesses, e.g. through Town Centre Partnerships or Business Improvement Districts
- Regeneration organisations e.g. English Partnerships, London Development Agency
- European funds e.g. European Social Fund
- Central Gov, through area based initiatives or subject specific initiatives e.g. SRB, New Deal for Communities (NDC), Neighbourhood Wardens Lottery
- Landfill Tax
- Grant Giving Trusts
- Local Organisations
- Local residents

(LB Redbridge, 2004, pps. 54-55)

Lewisham's Deptford framework sets out the details of intended implementation mechanisms to the proposals of the framework within Chapter 06 – Implementation. Three tables under the headings of Uses and Activities, Built Form, and Development Opportunities and Public Realm Projects set out the following details:

- The design or development principles to be addressed;
- An indication of the relative priority of projects (where 1 is higher priority, 5 is lower) and in some cases an indicative timescale over which delivery could be anticipated;
- A suggestion of potential sources of funding, and where appropriate an indication of the capital funding requirement;
• An indication of the range of organisations to be involved in the
detailed formulation and delivery of each project, including the
identification of a lead organisation to take responsibility for the
delivery of the project; and
• A suggestion of an appropriate organisation or mechanisms for
any long term management role.

(LB Lewisham, 2004, p.31)

The detail of the information provided above is considered to be a further
demonstration of the similarity between the character of the Deptford
framework and that of a spatial masterplan. As the Urban Design Group
(2002) considers, details such as costs, phasing and the timing of
development such as those above are all elements that would be
appropriate within a masterplan.

The majority of projects indicate that the funding will be secured through
them being private development schemes. However, other indicative
sources of funding for some of the projects include:

- Conservation Area Grants
- Gap funding from the London Development Agency
- Private Developments
- LDA Strategic Rail Partnership
- English Heritage
- LB Lewisham budgets

In each case, there appears to be a heavy reliance upon external sources
of funding, particularly from developers and central government grants.
This therefore indicates reliance upon favourable regulatory and market
conditions, and could be considered indicative of one of the ways in
which different contexts of urban design are related and perhaps reliant to
some extent upon each other.
Relationship to the planning process

The relationship between the production of the documents to the planning process links in some respects to the background surrounding their preparation. In the cases of Lewisham's Deptford High Street framework and the Mitcham Urban Village guidance, a strong influence surrounding their preparation stemmed from development pressures emerging in neighbouring areas. In the case of the Mitcham Urban Village guidance, the growth of competing neighbouring centres such as Croydon, Sutton, Colliers Wood and Wimbledon have resulted in a lack of investment within Mitcham, thus contributing to the area's deterioration. The guidance therefore seeks to encourage development proposals that will increase investment within the area.

Similarly, Deptford's framework clearly states that its future is at a crucial point with one of the immediate pressures being the number of existing and emerging major mixed use and housing development proposals in surrounding areas. The guidance therefore seeks to prevent the high street suffering from further degradation as other areas are regenerated.

The pressures cited within Lewisham's Forest Hill framework relate to the immediate locality and include elements such as the poor quality of shopping facilities and severances relating to routes and access within the area covered by the guidance. To encourage development within the area in the long term, the guidance identifies enhancements to be secured in the short-term.

Due to the citations of surrounding development pressures resulting in the identified need for the guidance, the above documents could be considered to have been produced on a 'reactionary' basis to the planning process.

As the history surrounding the Redbridge urban design framework is not provided, the context of its preparation in relation to the planning process is not evident. Although character assessments of seven urban areas are
specified, this information describes the areas rather than conveying any particular information relating to development pressures within the Borough. Therefore, rather than being a reactive framework as the above documents above appear to be, the Redbridge framework appears to be more of a proactive document. This concurs with one of the stated objectives, this being to provide a coherent and proactive approach to development.

**Status**

Three out of the four documents are formally adopted supplementary planning guidance (SPG). The Mitcham Urban Village SPG was adopted in January 2003, the Forest Hill framework was adopted in March 2004 and the Deptford framework was adopted in April 2004. The consultation period for the Redbridge urban design framework has recently ended (18 June 2004).

The Mitcham Urban Village SPG and the Redbridge Urban Design Framework don’t indicate who prepared the documents, although the absence of this information could suggest that they have been produced in-house. This will be clarified through the interviews. However, it is expressly stated within both of the Lewisham frameworks that consultants were commissioned to prepare the documents. A different consultant was used for each framework; EDAW planning consultants were used for the Deptford framework and Llewelyn-Davies for the Forest Hill framework. The reasons behind either commissioning consultants or producing the documents in-house and any advantages/disadvantages associated with each approach will be addressed within the interviews forming part two to this chapter,
Clarity and Expression

The format and presentation of the documents examined varies in a number of ways. In terms of what could be considered as basic document details, the urban design framework being produced by Redbridge is the only document that includes all information such as a contents page, a summary, a plan indicating the area covered by the framework, a location plan, and a contact at the authority. The omissions in this respect within the Deptford design framework include a plan indicating the area covered by the framework, and a contact within the authority. The Mitcham Urban Village SPG omits a contents page, and although there is a plan indicating the boundaries to each sub-area within the guidance, this is not shown within the context of the wider area. Similarly, the Forest Hill framework does not include a strategic location plan of the area covered by the document. However, its cover page does set out the contents of the guidance.

All four documents are set out in a report format in that they are all structured numerically, however, the style and expression of the guidance provided varies considerably.

The Redbridge urban design framework comprises a section of descriptive text relating to the character assessments of the seven identified urban areas within the borough. This is followed by specific design guidance (referred to in 'Issues Covered' above) set out either as bullet point form, or as descriptive text accompanied by illustrative plans and photographs. Although the document is lengthy (87 pages) due to the breadth and depth of the guidance provided, the format is clear and legible. As the emphasis of the document is to provide generic design guidance for the whole Borough, it is considered that the overall character of the guidance is similar to a design guide.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the DETR (1998) survey of development briefs concluded that overall, there were three types of briefs (Policy,
Promotional and Design based) and that the type of brief correlated with the emphasis of the guidance provided. Using the DETR’s analogy of the differing types of briefs, the overall character of the Redbridge framework is considered to be a design focused document.

Mitcham’s Urban Village SPG is presented as descriptive guidance relating to the five sub-areas referred to previously. Within the text, specific references are made to buildings and street names, however, these are not identified on the indicative maps that show the sub-area boundaries. The presence of plans and photographs contained within some of the other documents highlights their absence in this case. The appendix to the document contains site specific guidance in relation to 10 proposal sites identified within the UDP that fall within the Mitcham Village Centre. Their siting within the appendices renders them disjointed from the specific guidance to which they relate. Their context would perhaps be better understood if they were incorporated within the guidance relating to the sub-area within which they fall. It is considered that the overall emphasis of the document is presented as clarification of policy for each sub-area. However, the guidance is not prescriptive, and in some instances it explicitly states examples of where it would be appropriate for policies or standards to be relaxed.

The Deptford framework is predominantly presented as descriptive and annotated guidance, expressing principles that would be expected to be covered within any development proposals. The guidance is accompanied throughout with plans, photographs, and artist impressions, all of which facilitate the expression and understanding of the context of the guidance. Although the overriding nature of the framework is considered to be expressed as design guidance, there is a promotional element to it through the provision of the detailed guidance associated with a number of opportunity sites.

The Forest Hill framework incorporates a mixture of descriptive and abbreviated guidance relating to the various areas identified within the
framework. There are a number of annotated maps relating to both the initial analysis of the area, and to the development principles associated with the five key sites identified for proposed short-term enhancements. The character of the document appears as a promotional framework that incorporates design guidance focusing upon raising the profile of particular sites which are considered will attract investment into the area.

Conclusions

Overall, the nature of the documents examined for the purposes of this study differ in many ways. The main differences broadly include their geographical context, the extent and nature of the guidance provided and the way in which the guidance is expressed. A summary of the overall conclusions made are set out below:

- There are variations in relation to the spatial contexts of the frameworks which appears to correlate with the nature of the guidance provided;
- Some frameworks explicitly co-ordinate more detailed site specific SPG, but where this is not evident, it could be that the guidance provided within is detailed enough;
- The overall character and expression of the frameworks vary, and their emphasis can vary between being policy, promotional or design guidance based;
- There are examples of where the content coverage of the frameworks are similar to a design guide or spatial masterplan;
- The overall guidance within the frameworks reinforces the multilayered nature of urban design i.e. expressed through the ‘making places’ objectives and guidance associated with each area;
- The implementation of the frameworks rely heavily on favourable market conditions;
- Frameworks issued by the same borough differ in their role and scope;
Some frameworks appear to be produced on a reactionary basis to surrounding development pressures; Others can be more proactive;
- The guidance provided within the frameworks is considered to meet their overall stated objectives.

However, the content analysis of the documents is limited in that it doesn’t enable an examination of the processes and barriers surrounding their preparation, use and effectiveness. These elements are better understood through seeking views from those who have been involved within the preparation process and those who will potentially be governed or affected by the guidance within the documents. The following section addresses such issues through the interviews that were carried out for the purposes of this research. Chapter 5 will then draw together the overall conclusions and recommendations.
4.2 Interviews

The content analysis enabled a close examination of each document, concluding that there appears to be wide variations in relation to their role, form, expression and spatial context. However, the documents themselves do not allow an understanding of the processes and issues that relate to their preparation and use. It is considered that this is better understood through discussions with those associated with the process.

Chapter 3 set out the rationale behind carrying out interviews in association with the case study method for the purposes of this study. As stated, it was initially proposed that 3 interviews associated with each case study would be conducted in order to get a broad overview of the key issues surrounding the preparation and use of each of the urban design frameworks. The three local authorities were contacted and a representative from each authority who had been involved in the preparation process agreed to be interviewed. Once contact had been made with each representative, they were asked to provide details of a local developer and community representative who had also been involved within the preparation process through consultation.

The representative at Lewisham forwarded details of a local developer (MacDonald Egan) and community group (Creekside Forum) who were subsequently contacted and agreed to be interviewed. Once the consultation period had expired for the Redbridge Urban design framework, details of a local architect/developer and amenity group representative were also forwarded. However, despite several attempts to contact both the architect and amenity group, responses have not been forthcoming. The interviewee at Merton provided details of a further internal contact to whom a request for a developer and community group associated with Merton’s SPG was made. After following up this initial request, the officer stated that a local developer had been approached, but had declined to be interviewed. In addition, the local resident had not given permission for their details to be passed on.
Regrettably, through time and resource constraints associated with carrying out personal research, it has not been possible to pursue any other interviews. In this respect, it is therefore acknowledged that although a developer, a community group representative, and an officer from each local authority were interviewed, there will be limitations to the extent of any conclusions drawn. This, and other limitations associated with the research are cited in full within Chapter 5.

The Managing Director from MacDonald Egan Developments attended the interview. The company is a local development firm operating mainly in and around the Lewisham area. A representative from the Creekside Forum was also interviewed. The forum was established in 1997 (initially set up in relation to the Creekside Single Regeneration Budget) and represents the interests of the local community within the Lewisham area.

Each of the interviewees from the local authorities have been involved in the preparation of their associated urban design framework documents. The interviewee at Redbridge is a Planner/Urban Designer who has been in post for 2 1/4 years. Merton’s interviewee is the Team Leader for the Sites and Projects team and has been in post for 8 years. Lewisham’s interviewee is the Project Manager for Urban Design and Conservation and has been in the current post for 2 years.

Although the Forest Hill and Deptford frameworks issued by Lewisham were examined within the content analysis, the interviewee had only been involved in-depth with the Deptford framework. It should be noted, therefore, that where comments are quoted, they are in relation to the Deptford framework document unless explicitly stated otherwise.

As explained within the methodology, interviews enable a closer examination of the issues surrounding a number of the research questions associated with the production and use of the frameworks that is not possible through content analysis alone. The questions within the interviews were broadly structured around the following elements:
Background

The content analysis highlighted that in most cases, the background to the preparation of the frameworks was either explicit or implicit in the context of external factors and development pressures within each area. However, there may have also been internal factors within each local authority that influenced their production which are not evident within the analysis of the documents themselves. The local authority interviewees were therefore asked what factors had influenced the preparation of the framework documents.

The interviewee at Redbridge stated the following as being the main reason behind the preparation of the urban design framework:

"I was brought in in 2002 as the first urban designer within the borough, so my job in some respects was to define the post and create an urban design context that was suitable for the planning department. I was aware that they didn’t have a framework and felt that this was something that was very definitely needed, so it was the first thing I did really."
The interviewee was subsequently asked what factors had influenced it being produced. He stated that:

"I wasn’t quite sure how to do my job without something to work from”

Merton’s response to the same question differed in that the reasons given related to an awareness of the area and the problems it had faced in previous years. The following was stated as the main reason behind the guidance being produced:

"It was the recognition that Mitcham as an area was challenged, physically, economically and socially and that despite the Council’s best efforts over the last 20 – 25 years, it remains an area in decline and has been overtaken by competing centres and there was a feeling by me and others that it needed something to help it break this cycle of decline and we felt that doing an SPG would encourage the regeneration of Mitcham Urban Village…”

Lewisham’s interviewee stated that the reasons behind the production of the Deptford framework related to the lack of coherent guidance that applied to the whole area:

"I felt these areas were initially being dealt with through piecemeal strategies like conservation area strategies which involve conservation area appraisals and what that clearly does is only deal with conservation areas and the historic environment, and what it doesn’t do is join those up in what is the rest of the urban fabric, whereas urban design is everything regardless of whether it’s a conservation area, it doesn’t discriminate against quality throughout, it actually encourages quality outside of conservation areas.”

There also appeared to be other external factors that influenced the context of the documents. In the case of Merton, as well as the Urban
Villages Forum being cited as the key influence surrounding the nature of the document, the interviewee stated:

"It was also based on research into current theory and practice, we used a lot of the By-Design ideas which came out the ODPM. So it was well researched in terms of current government thinking and government encouragement through all these documents."

Further influences cited by Lewisham's interviewee related to the national incentive to look at quality identified through the Richard Rogers report (Urban Task Force). He also referred to the significance of the role that CABE has played in raising the design agenda.

The raised profile of urban design through government guidance and the recommendations of the Urban Task Force were discussed in Chapter two. The cases of Merton and Lewisham above demonstrate examples of how such guidance has been influential at the local level, encouraging the importance of urban design to be addressed locally.

The content analysis identified that it was explicitly stated that the two documents issued by Lewisham had been prepared by external consultants. It was also stated within some of the documents, who the potential 'users' of the document would be. Both Merton's and Redbridge confirmed within their interviews that their guidance had been produced 'in-house'. The factors that influenced who produced the documents and the associated advantages/disadvantages are worth consideration.

The key reason behind Lewisham commissioning consultants to prepare the framework was stated as being due to the lack of in-house resources. However, it was considered that one of the advantages to this was that there was the internal skill that enabled the work being produced to be overseen. However, the potential problems of using consultants were highlighted:
"The worrying thing or the concern is that if you don’t have the skill in-house to rifle through the work and critique it, then how do you know whether you’re actually getting what you set out to get in the first place. So for me that was significantly important because there were a quite a few issues that I didn’t necessarily agree with the consultant on and we had to deal with those issues until we were satisfied. I don’t believe I could critique this work or give my opinion without the knowledge I’ve gained to do it. So one of the things for me is that it’s absolutely essential for local authorities to have the skill, not actually to do the work, but to be the bridge or the co-ordinator of the work.”

In clarifying how the consultants EDAW had been selected to carry out the work, it was stated that:

“In this case, we had jointly commissioned a piece of work for Creekside with Greenwich. The eastside is in Greenwich the Westside is in Lewisham, so together with Greenwich we commissioned this piece of work, which EDAW were selected through the usual process of about 5 or 6 candidates. And in Lewisham’s view, that was a highly skilled and good piece of work that we felt could be built upon as you come away from the Borough boundary and into Deptford itself and particularly the spine of the area which is the high street and we felt that EDAW were well placed to begin to expand that piece of work. Having said that, being an urban designer, I was able to know who was out there, what they do and who would be worth inviting to deliver the piece of work that Lewisham was interested in.”

The main advantages of producing the documents in-house, as cited by both the Merton and Redbridge interviewees related firstly to the cost savings and the fact that it enabled control over the quality of the document. Their knowledge of the respective areas was also considered to be an advantage. Redbridge stated that a further advantage was that a closer working relationship had been established through the liaison with other departments.
However, although Lewisham commissioned external consultants to carry out the work, the chosen consultant had carried out a piece of work previously albeit in a different part of the Borough, and it was considered that through it, they had built up a good knowledge of the area. Therefore, the lack of local knowledge associated with using an external consultant was not considered an issue in Lewisham’s case. This could, however, be considered to be a potential disadvantage associated with the use of consultants in other cases.

The disadvantages that the Redbridge interviewee considered were associated with producing the documents in-house related to concerns of resources and lack of experience:

"The main barriers are that you are constrained to the fact that you haven't got dedicated staff to this one particular project, I guess consultancies would face the same problem but you’re always lured away to other projects, there was a particular project at Gants Hill, a development brief which took 7 months and so I just put this to one side for quite a considerable time. Also lack of experience I think, I would have to say that despite the fact that I felt confident enough to write it, I’m not particularly well qualified in urban design work or experience, so I've done what I feel is an adequate job, but only in the context of what has been there in the past."

However, Merton’s interviewee only considered there to be one disadvantage to producing the document in-house, stating:

"It's less glossy than you would get from a consultant, if that matters. I don’t think it lacks intellectual rigour, so I would say that there weren’t any disadvantages."

Choosing to commission consultants to carry out the work also appears to have potential disadvantages. As Lewisham’s interviewee stated:
"... it does cost money to produce these documents, and you have to justify the spend of that money, so that is a disadvantage because a lot of Borough's are cash strapped and can't necessarily pay for the work. So that's one disadvantage. The other disadvantage, purely through the process and certainly with this piece of work was the dissatisfaction from the community that the Borough was jetting in outsiders to tell them what's good and what's bad. I think that becomes a disadvantage in that a huge part of this type of work is consultation, and if the community feel that way, that makes consultation incredibly difficult. It's difficult anyway, in my view, but essential. But then when you've got people who are not happy from the outset, you're starting off on the wrong foot. So those two are the key disadvantages."

Two out of the three case studies produced their guidance documents in house. However, it would appear that there are advantages and disadvantages associated with producing them either internally or through using consultants. Through the views expressed within the interviews, the key advantages to producing them internally appears associated with the cost savings, knowledge of the area and maintaining overall control over the documents. Whilst the Lewisham interviewee acknowledged the expense of using consultants to prepare the Deptford framework, it was considered that the urban design skills in-house enabled the overall work to be overseen and reviewed where necessary. It is acknowledged, however, that there are likely to be cases where the decision to use consultants relates to both a lack of resources and to there being no in-house skill available to review or oversee the work.

The main disadvantages associated with producing the documents internally relates to the lack of dedicated resources to the task, the resultant effect being the amount of time taken to produce the final document. Although Merton's interviewee only expressed one disadvantage associated with producing the guidance internally, it was confirmed that external temporary staff had been employed to work on
parts of the document. This therefore indicates that there were internal resource constraints associated with its preparation.

The key disadvantages associated with using consultants to prepare the guidance appears to relate to the cost involved and the local reaction to ‘outsiders’ being brought in to determine the future of the area. Whilst Lewisham’s interviewee considered that the consultant had been able to build up knowledge of the area based on a previous project in the locality, there are likely to be instances where this is not the case and could therefore be considered a disadvantage.

Consultation Process

The importance of public involvement within the preparation process has been highlighted within the literature review to this study. However, as stated within the content analysis, evidence of the consultation process associated with the preparation of each document was not explicit in each case. Through the interviews, however, it has been clarified that there was a consultation process associated with the preparation of each document. However, the nature, extent, and responses to the consultation vary in each case.

The consultation exercise surrounding the Redbridge framework consisted of 3 stages. Stage one involved a lunchtime seminar with the planning department to get an overview of what they considered the urban design issues to be within the borough. Stage two involved other internal departments. Each stage to the consultation process took place a year apart, with stage 3 involving external consultees, and has only recently ended (June 2004). In confirming who was consulted, the interviewee stated:

"The consultation involved Redbridge departments, statutory organisations, such as the Highways Agency, CABE, English Heritage, community groups and developers and architects. I sent copies to 10
residents associations who I felt would be better equipped to respond to the document. I did try and cover the Borough. I sent out a huge number of documents otherwise you don’t get feedback as people are not going to pay for these things just to give you feedback.”

Merton’s consultation process consisted of sending out a consultation draft of the document to a wide range of consultees. In selecting who to consult, Merton’s interviewee stated:

“There are no rules about who you consult, so you have to use your common sense and I consulted all the stakeholders in the area, certainly the ward members, statutory bodies such as the GLA, TfL, English Heritage, local businesses, land owners, and big land holders like the gas board, so it was fairly wide ranging.”

Lewisham’s method of consultation for their Deptford framework initially involved workshops for various stakeholders. This is referred to within the content analysis as some of the responses to the different stages of the consultation are cited within the framework. However, in selecting who should be consulted, Lewisham’s interviewee considered that knowing who to consult related to the acquired skills of being an urban designer:

“Again through skill and knowledge of being an urban designer, part of that education is how you engage with various people, communities, developers, architects, the Council itself. That skill is actually ingrained in many urban design courses, so you actually learn how to go out and consult with people and there’s a myriad of ways of doing that. So again having that knowledge, you can actually inform the consultants of what type of consultation would work best in certain areas.”

There appears to be great diversity in the nature of the consultation process adopted by each local authority. This relates to both the stage in the preparation process that the consultation took place, as well as the methods used. In the cases of Redbridge and Merton, the guidance
documents had reached draft form before external consultees were involved. However, in Lewisham's case, workshops with the local community were held at the start of the process. The following section examines what responses, if any, were received in relation to the consultation exercise and will consider whether there appears to be any correlation between the consultation method adopted and the extent and nature of responses received.

Responses to the consultation process

The developer and community group representative both confirmed that they had been consulted through the preparation of the Deptford urban design framework, in the form of invitations to the 'workshop' meetings referred to above.

Overall, the developers' views were extremely positive in relation to the consultation process and to the document in general. They stated that:

"In general, we share very similar aspirations with the Council, because we know the key players in the Council so well, and we agree with their aspirations for the High Street. The High Street is very important, it's a very important part of the Borough. We call it Downtown Deptford. That road I think is one of the last remaining good High Streets in London and so we're quite passionate about it along with Lewisham, and I think they felt very much at ease asking us to participate."

Comments made in respect of the consultation process were also positive:

"They did mount public exhibitions around the High Street and they also mounted big public exhibitions on the High Street when it came to the final draft, so they did do quite a lot with the local stakeholders, the market traders, shoppers, people that live nearby, freeholders. I thought they did that particularly well. When I was there, there was a stall with a
crowd around it and a quite animated discussion was going on, people were showing real interest”.

The developer was also asked what the main issues facing developers were considered to be within the framework area. The response was that this particular developer did not have any problems, stating:

“There might well be other occasions where we’d take exception, but I think this is about the preservation of the High Street and the enhancement of the High Street. Lewisham is a very different Borough, they are very proactive.”

It is acknowledged that the views expressed by the developer interviewed for this study will not necessarily be reflective of the views of other developers who have either been involved with the Deptford framework specifically, or with other frameworks generally.

The community representative from the Creekside Forum expressed their response to the Deptford framework consultation exercise, stating:

“Like most of the rest of Deptford, as the meetings took place at the time the High Street was overrun with rats, basically people took the attitude of hang on a minute, instead of faffing about with design guidelines, how about a little bit of management around here. And there’s always the worry with Lewisham that policy and capital spend becomes a substitute for managing problems, well of course it’s pointless doing policy and capital spend if you don’t sort out the day to day management problems.”

There were also issues associated with the consultants who were used which stemmed from a co-joined project that had taken place around the Greenwich/Lewisham border around 2 years before. It was felt that the comments that had been expressed in relation to that scheme had been totally ignored. In relation to the Deptford framework, it was felt that the consultants had started the process with a number of assumptions based
on previous consultant's work in the area in previous years. They also felt that the consultants had used subjective views in relation to some of the buildings within the area.

The key issues raised by the local community therefore related to issues of management within the area. This included issues surrounding waste collection, vermin, footway and roadway maintenance and lighting. In this case, it was considered that their comments had largely been taken on board. However, the interviewee acknowledged that this may not necessarily have been through the guidance itself, since there are now other drivers instigating changes within the area such as the appointment of a town centre manager.

Merton's interviewee stated that there had been no serious criticisms in response to the consultation exercise. It would have been beneficial to have been able to carry out interviews with other stakeholders associated with the document in order to seek the views from a number of sources rather than from the person directly involved in its preparation alone.

Redbridge also confirmed that the consultation exercise had not resulted in a widespread response. As their interviewee stated:

"It was a fairly limited response, I selected consultees on the basis that they would have resources to be able to respond to the document, because it is quite a technical document. I have had a criticism that it's not written in plain English but I think it's a difficult balance to make, because there are quite a lot of technical issues, it does have to respond to planning issues."

Overall, it was considered that the comments received were largely constructive, although the Disability Rights Commission made the point of responding to state that they did not have the resources to respond to the document. However, the interviewee considered that the comments made by the Council's Access Officer would have covered any issues raised by
the Disability Rights Commission. However, whilst this may be considered to be the case in some instances, an assumption should not be made that this would necessarily apply in all cases where external consultees are not able to provide a response.

The following points summarise the key observations made in relation to the consultation process surrounding the three case studies:

- There is great variety in the nature and depth of consultation methods used;
- No consistent method adopted; the level of consultation appears to be at the discretion of the local authority;
- The absence of responses does not necessarily equate to satisfaction with the document, other factors resulting in non response may relate to lack of resources;
- There may be a correlation between the type of guidance and the nature of consultation method adopted;
- There may be a correlation between the nature of consultation and extent of responses, i.e. the cases where the guidance was sent to consultees in draft form appeared to result in lower response

**Overall Purpose of SPG**

The literature review highlighted that research relating to development briefs (DETR, 1998) concluded that there appeared to be three different types of briefs, these being clarification of UDP policy, promotional, or design guidance. Within the content analysis, it was considered that based on the nature and extent of the guidance provided, the overall nature of one the four documents was considered to be clarification of policy (Mitcham Village SPG). It was considered that the overall nature of the Forest Hill framework was to provide promotional guidance. The emphasis within the Deptford and Redbridge frameworks was considered to be to provide design guidance. However, the observations made
differed to the overriding nature of the guidance as perceived by the interviewees.

The Redbridge interviewee considered that the main purpose of the urban design framework was to Clarify UDP policy. Merton’s interviewee stated that the main purpose of the Mitcham SPG was to amplify rather than clarify UDP Policy. However, it was emphasised that the guidance doesn’t create new policies, but it shows how UDP policies are applied within the guidance area. Lewisham’s interviewee was the only respondent to state that the overall purpose of the guidance was to provide design guidance for the area which concurred with the observation made within the content analysis. However, it was stated that the other purposes were also important but felt that providing design guidance was its overriding purpose.

Both the developer and community representative also considered that the overarching purpose of the guidance with which they are familiar with (Deptford framework) is to clarify, enhance and illuminate Council policy.

The content analysis highlighted that although UDP policy had been referred to in all the documents examined, this was often only cited within the introduction. However, the responses expressed above indicate that there is considered to be a clear relationship between the framework documents and the policies within the respective development plans.

**Impact of Guidance**

In assessing the overall impact that the framework documents have had within the relevant areas covered by the guidance, a number of questions were asked relating to the relationship between the guidance and any development proposals that have subsequently been submitted, the usefulness of the document to the developer and whether any benefits had been felt within the community.
The local authority interviewees were firstly asked whether any development proposals had been forthcoming since the SPG was issued, and if so, whether they were considered to be reflective of the guidance provided. They were also asked whether any submitted proposals had subsequently been revised on the basis of the guidance.

Although Redbridge has not formally adopted their urban design framework, the interviewee stated that the urban design checklist (referred to within the content analysis) contained within the framework had been issued to developers since 2002. He stated that:

"That's the core of the document in many respects, and it's been to maybe a dozen developers, and I'd like to think that maybe at least four of them have responded to the checklist, not necessarily through their own initiatives, but certainly through conversations and raising points where changes have actually been made."

However, in acknowledging that the checklist has been a useful tool for dialogue between developers and the Council, the interviewee also acknowledged that planning applications are invariably changed to comply with the UDP, and therefore, whilst the design checklist may have had an influence over amendments to some applications, it may not necessarily be the sole reason for such changes. However, the following were expressed as two examples where the officer felt that the guidance had informed development proposals:

"The Odeon site which is in Gants Hill is still under the planning application process. I was quite happy that we managed to convince them to put residential premises on the ground floor. That related to planning policy but we would not necessarily have made that point with only that policy in mind. And also Five Oaks Lane, that's a new urban village and we were talking about landmarks and such like, now again, you can relate it to a policy but it's not the policy that influenced the
Merton's interviewee confirmed that development proposals had been submitted since the adoption of the SPG that accord with the guidance provided. However, it was considered that where this was the case, they tended to be related to the smaller sites falling within the guidance area.

As Lewisham's Deptford framework was only recently adopted in April 2004, the interviewee considered that most of the applications that have been forthcoming since are still at the proposals stage. However, before the framework document was commissioned, there were other large development proposals which are considered to have been informed and influenced by the guidance. The example given relates to an application on a 40 acre site, where the initial proposal was for a residential redevelopment scheme comprising high rise departments. The current status of the application is outline permission for a mixed use scheme that retains part of a protected wharf. It is considered to be a very different proposal to the scheme that was originally submitted, having been informed by the principles within the urban design framework. The interviewee stated that:

"In this case (Convoys Wharf), we were able to build on the work here (Deptford urban design framework) to get a better urban design approach. So yes, this document and the Creekside document actually does, I believe help to inform sites adjacent to large areas that you're studying, to deliver a much better linked, and ungated neighbourhood."

The local developer was asked in what ways the guidance assists them. Their response was:

"It's a framework that we're participants in and that we sort of signed up to, and thereafter, you endeavour to work within the framework. If you come across opportunities that can work within the framework, then you
Sophie Fitch: A study into the use and effectiveness of urban design frameworks as a planning tool

might acquire them. Or I think if you come across an opportunity that doesn’t quite fit the framework......the framework can’t cover everything, it can’t be all encompassing...., so I suspect that if we came up with a jolly good idea that happened to fit most of the framework, we could approach Lewisham and they would adapt, subject to the quality of the application.”

The local authority interviewees were also asked whether any proposals had been forthcoming that are not considered to accord with the guidance within the SPG, and if so, what their status is.

Merton’s interviewee stated that there was one major development scheme in particular under consideration that is not considered to be reflective of the guidance of the Mitcham Urban Village SPG. However, the Council and the developer in question are currently in discussion over this, since the developer is of the view that the scheme does accord with the guidance.

Similarly, Lewisham’s interviewee stated that there are current proposals under consideration that do not reflect the guidance with the Deptford framework. In the case of both Merton and Lewisham, the interviewees stated that unless the proposals are amended in accordance with the guidance, then they will be refused in due course.

When asked the same question, the Redbridge interviewee stated that since the framework is not yet formally adopted SPG, there are no examples of development proposals that have yet been refused on the basis that they don’t conform to the guidance.

In each of the three case studies, there are no examples of applications that reached the stage where they have been refused on the basis that they don’t conform to the guidance of the SPG. This would be an interesting issue to follow up at a later stage i.e. to examine cases where
the refusal for development proposals falling within the respective SPG is on the basis that it does not conform to the guidance. Associated with this, would be to examine the outcome of the appeals process in terms of the accorded weight that the Inspector gives to the guidance within the SPG.

Securing additional Funding

The literature review highlighted that the DETR (2000) considers that urban design frameworks can provide the basis for bidding to secure additional public and private sector funding. The content analysis also highlighted that the implementation mechanisms of the proposals within each document appears heavily reliant upon securing private funding. The interviewees were therefore asked whether any funding had been secured through the preparation of the guidance. In the cases of Lewisham and Merton, additional funding through Section 106 legal agreements had been secured. However, the Redbridge interviewee stated that additional funding would be secured through the proposals associated with the Area Action Plans (AAPs) and development briefs.

The Lewisham interviewee stated that a number of planning permissions had been granted subject to Section 106 agreements which had enabled a number of improvements to be undertaken within the guidance area:

“We've got a number of sites and planning applications which have received planning permission and have secured 106 monies which link back to the High Street through this piece of work.”

In addition to funding being secured from private developers, it was felt that the guidance had also facilitated public sector monies being secured:

“The other thing that we've been able to do, is partly to do with some of the funding is create some of these new spaces which are linked to the public realm and public space. So, for example, we were able to
redevelop this old Council depot and create a new urban park. That was a combination of section 106 and LDA money.”

The interviewee considered that Local Development Agency (LDA) money had been secured as a result of the framework fitting their funding criteria. Additional funding had also been secured from English Heritage:

“we’ve got an English Heritage partnership scheme that runs in the market area, so south of the railway viaduct it’s called a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme, so we assist shopkeepers with funding for them to be able to do up their shopfronts in an architecturally traditional fashion.”

It was acknowledged that the guidance was not the sole reason behind attracting other funding sources, however, it was considered that it facilitated the application process.

Merton’s interviewee stated that section 106 monies are sought through most development proposals submitted in line with the Mitcham SPG. However, no examples where this has happened were expressed. Additional funding for the area has also been secured for public transport schemes associated with the SPG through Transport for London (TfL). The interviewee felt that the SPG had enabled the Council’s approach in this respect to be expressed clearly to TfL which helped justify the bid to secure additional funding to finance some of the proposals.

The local developer was also asked whether they had received planning permission for any schemes within the guidance area that was subject to any legal agreement:

“There will be, not yet though, but Theatre Place and Shaftesbury Row will be subject to a 106. Most of that is Theatre Place and that’s Shaftesbury Row. We’re about to develop that into 6 nice houses. When we do that and that, we’re going to regenerate this green area here which
Sophie Fitch: A study into the use and effectiveness of urban design frameworks as a planning tool

at the moment is in a bit of a mess, and the Road and the public thoroughfare, and the proposal is about to be submitted for that.”

Whilst the above has demonstrated examples of where additional funding has or is envisaged being secured, changing circumstances in the economy and/or central government funding priorities could impact upon the availability of external sources of funding, to the detriment of the feasibility or viability of the proposals set out within the frameworks.

Co-ordination of other supplementary planning guidance (SPG)

As highlighted within the content analysis, Merton’s SPG and Redbridge framework make reference to other SPG falling within the areas covered by the guidance. Merton’s SPG provides details of indicative development briefs within the document appendix and the Redbridge framework provides guidance for potential development briefs and emerging Area Action Plans. Whilst there is no specific reference to any other forms of SPG within Lewisham’s Deptford framework, the interviewee confirmed that through the preparation of the document, a number of sites had been identified for redevelopment for which discussions surrounding developing a brief or masterplan were currently in progress. This concurs with the observation made within the content analysis that the preparation of site specific guidance could be encouraged through the identification of a number of development opportunity sites within the framework area.

Although the literature review highlighted research (Turner, 1994) that related to the observation that urban design frameworks do not often appear to co-ordinate more detailed site specific guidance, the indications within the case studies used for this study possibly questions this previous observation. One of the stated key objectives of the Redbridge framework is for it to be a co-ordinating framework that ties into and promotes other plans, initiatives and strategies, and clear guidance is provided that relate to meeting the objective. Whilst the co-ordination of more detailed briefs is not necessarily a stated key objective of the other
documents examined, the co-ordinating role of urban design frameworks is perhaps inherent through the presence of indicative briefs within Merton’s SPG and through the identification of development opportunity sites within Lewisham’s Deptford and Forest Hill framework documents.

**Speeding up the planning process**

All three local authority interviewees considered one of the key benefits of their respective urban design frameworks to be that it helped speed up the planning process. The Lewisham interviewee expressed specifically that an application was under consideration that met with the guidance:

"We've received a planning application for area 4, and it totally fits with the guidance of the report, so therefore, it will run a quite a minimum term in the planning process because it's in line with what the guidance suggests. If we didn't have this, that planning application could run for a long time."

Amongst other benefits, the developer also considered that the guidance helps to speed the planning process through the identification of opportunity sites expressed within the guidance.

**Other advantages and disadvantages**

Through the above discussions, a number of advantages and disadvantages surrounding the preparation of the various framework documents have been highlighted. However, the Creekside Forum interviewee considered that whilst overall, the guidance is capable of being used positively, its usefulness could be undermined through issues such as poor management. When asked whether they considered that areas would benefit from more guidance of this nature, the response was:

"Only in conjunction with a thorough review of management issues. If done alongside a thorough review of management issues then yes, they
can be very useful indeed. I think management issues have to be the priority.”

However, the Lewisham council interviewee acknowledged that the need for better management of the High Street had been highlighted within the consultation resulting in appointing a town centre manager for the Deptford High Street. Whilst it was acknowledged that this was not necessarily through the guidance in the document, the issue itself had been raised within the consultation of the document enabling the Council to respond accordingly.

Whilst the developer expressed positive views throughout the interview in relation to the Deptford framework, it was considered that an influential factor associated with this was attributable to the way the Council was run. It was stated that:

"Because of the nature of the way the Borough is run, there are fewer barriers than there might be in other Boroughs”.

The examination of the relationship between the political constitution of the local authority case studies and the support behind the preparation of the framework documents was not undertaken for the purposes of this study. This could be considered one of the limitations to the research in that the corporate priorities of the councils may have influenced the degree of support and funding behind the production of the guidance.

Future Production

In view of the requirement to produce Area Action Plans (AAPs) under the reforms to the planning system, and their apparent similarities to urban design frameworks as highlighted within Chapter 2, the local authority interviewees were asked whether they felt that more guidance of this nature would be issued in the future. In all three cases, the interviewees confirmed that more guidance would be produced. In the
case of Redbridge, emerging AAPs are already being prepared in the context of their overall urban design framework. Merton’s interviewee confirmed that more area-wide guidance relating to town centres would be issued and Lewisham’s interviewee confirmed that similar guidance was already being prepared for other areas within the Borough.

Whilst in all three cases, the interviewees confirmed that more area wide guidance would be produced, it is difficult to make a distinction between whether this is directly as a result of the emerging AAP requirement or whether it’s through the proven success or usefulness of similar guidance elsewhere in their Boroughs.
5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has set out to answer a set of research questions surrounding the preparation and use of urban design frameworks. The literature review examined a number of relevant aspects surrounding urban design within the context of the planning system. This resulted in the need to revisit and modify the initial set of questions. Emerging conclusions have been cited throughout the literature review, content analysis and interviews associated with this study. The research questions are therefore revisited below citing a summary of the overall conclusions drawn in relation to each. This will be followed by a summary of the overall limitations to the research and recommendations relating to suggested further research.

- What are urban design frameworks and what is their purpose and function?
  - Urban design frameworks are a form of supplementary planning guidance (SPG) that apply to areas where guidance is needed to promote or guide change over a period of time. They can encourage change within areas through the co-ordination and expression of principles and dimensions of urban design;
  - Urban design frameworks can provide a coordinated and visionary approach to development by encouraging certain uses and by clarifying and expressing design and development principles within an area;
  - Urban design frameworks can promote and encourage the redevelopment of smaller sites through identifying development opportunities within the framework area;
  - Urban design frameworks may be known under a variety of other names including Urban Design Strategies, Design and Development Frameworks, Development Frameworks, and Spatial Masterplans.
• Where do urban design frameworks fit within the hierarchy of supplementary planning guidance?

- Urban design frameworks are produced at the local level to supplement Unitary Development Plans. Within the hierarchy of local level SPG, their scope enables them to either co-ordinate or express further detailed or site specific guidance;
- Under the emerging reforms to the planning system, there will still be scope for urban design frameworks to be produced as SPG to the new Local Development Frameworks (LDF). Because of their similarities to the emerging Area Action Plans, they could also form a Local Development Document (LDD) within the LDF itself.

• Do they cover the same spatial contexts?

- There can be wide geographical differences in the areas covered by urban design frameworks. This can vary from being a focus upon providing guidance in relation to a particular street to a general set of principles that apply borough-wide. The case studies show, however, that their overall focus tends to be related to town centres with varying levels of guidance being expressed in each case.

• Are there variations in terms of their form, content, and objectives?

- The stated objectives of urban design frameworks can vary, although their overall essence appears to be associated with aiming to create better places for local communities. The main objectives relate to clarifying UDP policy, providing design guidance or to attract investment into an area.
The overall character and expression of the frameworks tends to correlate with the nature of the emphasis being either policy, promotional or design guidance based.

The range of issues covered within urban design frameworks can be similar, however, they differ in terms of the varying emphasis and detail provided.

There appears to be a correlation between the spatial context of the guidance and the type of guidance provided. Borough-wide guidance had similarities to design guide i.e. setting out set of design related principles that apply to the whole borough. Guidance that is a focus upon a smaller spatial context can be expressed as a form of spatial masterplan.

Some frameworks explicitly co-ordinate more detailed site specific SPG, but where this is not evident, it could be that the guidance provided within is detailed enough.

- Does their content reflect their objective/s?

In the case studies examined, the nature of the guidance provided was considered to meet the stated objectives. However, where the overall objective of the document relates to the general aspirations of the area, further assessments of its overall impact would need to be carried out to assess this.

- Who produces the guidance and who are they produced for?

Urban design frameworks are usually issued by the local authority responsible for the area/s covered by the guidance. The frameworks may be produced in-house or by external consultants.

The advantages of the frameworks being produced in-house relate to the cost savings and overall control over the document. The disadvantages relate to the lack of resources, experience and the lengthy preparation process.
The advantages associated with using consultants to prepare the documents can relate to the benefit of dedicated resources to the task and therefore the speed of the overall preparation process. The disadvantages include the cost involved and sometimes the local reaction to 'outsiders' being brought in to determine the future of an area.

Whilst the urban design frameworks may cite a list of potential 'users' of the guidance, their use appears to be predominantly associated with the negotiation between developers and council officers.

- **Is there a consultation process surrounding their preparation?**
  - There is a consultation process surrounding the preparation of urban design frameworks, however, the nature, extent and responses can vary from case to case.
  - There does not appear to be a set procedure relating to best practice on consultation methods and processes and therefore the consultation can often be carried out on an ad hoc basis.
  - A lack of responses to the consultation exercise is not necessarily indicative of satisfaction with the guidance. Other factors affecting non-response could be accountable to lack of time, resources or an understanding of the guidance.

- **What are their advantages/disadvantages?**
  The main advantages associated with urban design frameworks are that they:
  - Can provide a forum for engagement with the community, however, this doesn't always happen;
  - Reduce the investment risk to developers and provide more certainty surrounding the development process;
  - Speed up planning process; planning applications submitted in accordance are likely to be processed more quickly;
Identify opportunities for more detailed site specific guidance or sometimes provide the detailed site specific guidance within the framework itself;

- May illuminate other issues within the community through the consultation process that can be addressed through other means;

- Provide leverage to local authorities for securing additional external sources of funding.

However, their associated disadvantages are as follows:

- Although the frameworks help to speed up the planning process, their preparation process can be lengthy. This can be as a result of a lack of resources and also the time taken to revise on the basis of comments received;

- The successful implementation of the frameworks rely heavily upon favourable market conditions.

- **Will there be an increase in the publication of area based design guidance documents by local authorities as a result of the requirement under the new planning system for Area Action Plans?**

- Although the indications are that more area based design guidance documents will be produced, it is difficult to distinguish between whether this is solely related to the requirement for Area Action Plans or whether there are any other determining factors.

- There are implications of resource constraints associated with the requirement to produce AAPs. There are already constraints associated with the preparation of SPG generally and this is likely to increase through this new requirement.
Recommendations

In association with the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

- Through the provision of further Government guidance, local authorities should be required to adopt a consistent approach to consultation surrounding the preparation of supplementary planning guidance to ensure a fair and democratic process in each case;

- Additional funding should be provided to local authorities to assist with the additional resources that will be needed to successfully produce Area Action Plans;

- Further Government guidance relating to the clarification of the hierarchy of supplementary planning guidance should be provided to local authorities to avoid future confusion of the roles of Area Action Plans and separate SPG.

Limitations

This study has been carried out with the acknowledgement that there are certain limitations associated with personal research. However, in addition to the limitations cited within the methodology, there are further limitations associated with the case studies. Firstly, as explained within Section 4.2, not all of the proposed interviews were carried out which therefore resulted in a heavy reliance upon interpretative information from both the content analysis and the views expressed by the local authority representatives. A wider selection of interviewees would have enabled a more in-depth triangulation of evidence, resulting in more robust conclusions being drawn.
It is also considered that time and resource constraints associated with the research has affected both the depth and breadth of the study. It is acknowledged that it would have been useful to have carried out an examination of the political constitution of each Council, the relationship between the internal departments, and the associated endorsed support given to the preparation of the documents.

An examination of relevant UDP policies was not undertaken and therefore it is difficult to isolate the impact of the guidance in terms of the extent to which the guidance informs development proposals over and above the policies contained within each relevant UDP.

**Recommendations for future research**

The following are recommendations made for possible future studies that are considered would enrich the overall depth and breadth of the study:

- A future study to assess the impact (if any) of the urban design framework guidance within the respective areas. This would include an assessment relating to whether any of the development proposals have been implemented and whether they accord with the guidance.

- In association with the above, a further study into planning refusals where the reason/s for refusal are associated with non-compliance with the SPG. This would also involve an examination of any subsequent appeal decisions and what weight the Inspector has given to the guidance within the SPG.

- Associated with one of the limitations with this study, a further study could assess the relationship between the guidance provided in the SPG and that of the associated development plan or emerging development framework. This would give an indication
of the ways in which the guidance provided within the SPG adds to or expresses the statutory policy guidance.
Sophie Fitch: A study into the use and effectiveness of urban design frameworks as a planning tool

Bibliography


Bell, J. (1993), Doing Your Research Project, Open University Press, Buckingham


CABE (2001), Local Government Design Survey – the results, CABE, London

CABE (2003), Survey Results –Review of local authority planning departments, CABE, London


Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment/Department of Environment, Transport and Regions (CABE/DETR) (2001), the value of urban design; A research project commissioned by CABE and DETR to examine the value added by good urban design, Thomas Telford, Tonbridge


Donovan, J. and Larkham, P. (1996), Rethinking Design Guidance, Planning Practice and Research, 11, 303-318


London Borough of Merton, (2003), *Supplementary Planning Guidance, Mitcham Urban Village – A Sustainable Suburb*


Punter, J. and Bell, A. (1999), *The role of policy in design appeals*, Town Planning Review, 70 (2), 231-257


www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/business_city/key_city_orgs/london_map.htm

www.lewisham.gov.uk/planning/planning_briefs_foresthill.asp

www.redbridge.gov.uk/planning/urbdesframe.cfm
APPENDICES

Appendix one: Annex A to PPG1
Appendix two: Annex D to PPG3
Appendix three: CABE 2003 Survey questionnaire responses
Appendix four: Annex C to Draft PPS1
Appendix five: Template of letter sent to local authorities
APPENDIX ONE

Annex A to PPG1
Annex A: Handling Of Design Issues

A1. Development plans should set out design policies against which development proposals are to be considered. Policies should be based on a proper assessment of the character of the surrounding built and natural environment, and should take account of the defining characteristics of each local area, for example local or regional building traditions and materials. The fact that a design or layout is appropriate for one area does not mean it is appropriate everywhere. Plan policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.

A2. Development plans may refer to supplementary design guidance, including local design guides and site-specific development briefs, which can usefully elucidate and exemplify plan policies, thereby giving greater certainty to all those involved in the design and development process. Where appropriate, such guidance should also explain how relevant general advice, including that relating to the design of roads and footways, is to be interpreted and applied at a local level in order to take account of the character of each area. Supplementary design guidance may usefully include advice about matters such as lighting and materials, where these are likely to have a significant impact on the character or quality of the existing environment.

A3. The weight accorded to supplementary design guidance in planning decisions will be expected to increase where it has been prepared in consultation with the public and with those whose work it may affect, and has been formally adopted by the local planning authority. Local planning authorities should include with such guidance a statement of the consultation undertaken and their response to representations made.

A4. Applicants for planning permission should, as a minimum, provide a short written statement setting out the design principles adopted as well as illustrative material in plan and elevation. This material should show the wider context and not just the development site and its immediately adjacent buildings. Inclusion of relevant perspective views can also be of
value. Such material will be particularly important in relation to complex or large-scale development proposals, and those involving sensitive sites. For straightforward or small-scale proposals, this level of detail is unlikely to be necessary. Instead, illustrative material might simply comprise photographs of the development site and its surroundings, drawings of the proposed design itself and, where appropriate, plans of the proposed layout in relation to neighbouring development and uses.

A5. Applicants are encouraged to consult at an early stage with those, including local planning authorities, who may be expected to have a relevant and legitimate interest in the design aspects of their development proposals. Where applicants do so, local planning authorities should respond constructively by giving clear indications of their design expectations. Careful and early consideration of design issues can speed up the planning process by helping to make proposals for development acceptable to local planning authorities and local communities, thereby helping to avoid costly delay later.

A6. The use of conditions or planning obligations can be helpful in securing a high quality of design. Where design aspects of an approved development proposal are subject to conditions consistent with the advice in DOE Circular 11/95, or are subject to planning obligations consistent with the advice in DOE Circular 1/97, development which results from the grant of planning permission must comply with the approved design, unless subsequent changes to the design are justified, and are authorised by the local planning authority.

A7. In considering the design of proposed new development, local planning authorities, developers and designers should take into account the advice contained in DOE Circular 5/94, "Planning out Crime". In doing so, the approach adopted should be sufficiently flexible to allow solutions to remain sensitive to local circumstances.
APPENDIX TWO

Annex D to PPG3
Further guidance and advice published by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions which is relevant to implementing this guidance includes:

**Sustainable Development**


**Layout and design of new development**

- *Planning Policy Guidance note 1: General Policy and Principles, especially Annex 1 on design*

**Density**

Urban Housing Capacity Studies


Phasing

- Good practice guidance in preparation

Monitoring

APPENDIX THREE

CABE 2003 Survey questionnaire and responses
cabe WANTS YOUR VIEWS

In 2001 CABE undertook a survey of Local Authority Planning Departments and the results from this survey helped to shape CABE's strategy for our work within Local Government over the last two years.

We are keen to gauge how things have changed since the last survey and also how successful we have been in helping Local Planning Authorities strive to deliver high quality places.

This short questionnaire aims to:

- Help CABE understand how design issues are handled within planning departments
- Provide you with an opportunity to tell CABE how we could improve our service to you

Please return completed questionnaire by the 3rd October 2003 to Lee Scott at CABE, The Tower Building, 11 York Road, London SE1 7NX

1.0 Your details
1.1 Name
1.2 Position
1.3 Local authority

2.0 Planning department professional staff
2.1 Does the assessment of planning applications in your department involve professional staff members who are

Qualified in urban design
Registered architects
Qualified landscape architects

2.2 Do you think there is a need for further design skills within your department?

Yes  No

3.0 Advisory panels
3.1 In addition to (or instead of) any conservation area advisory committee(s), does your authority make use of any other design panel of any kind in assessing the design quality of planning applications generally?

Yes  No

If the answer to Q3.1 is yes:

3.2 What is your view of the quality of advice given?

Good  Variable  Poor  No opinion
3.5 How influential is the advice on decision-making?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Influential</th>
<th>Sometimes Influential</th>
<th>Not Influential</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 If the answer to Q5 is no, would you like to have access to advice from a design panel?

Yes      No

3.5 If yes, at what level do you think this could most usefully be organised?

Local  County, metropolitan or sub-regional  Regional

3.6 If your authority has or participates in a design panel or panels please give further details:

Name of panel
Contact person
Approximate number of meetings per annum
Approximate number of projects reviewed per annum
Information on nature of projects seen
Information on nature of panel membership

4.0 Championing design

4.1 Does your authority run any design award schemes?

Yes      No

Further information

4.2 The Government has nominated a Minister and an official as ‘design champion’ in each Government Department whose role it is to promote the cause of good design in all areas of the department’s activities.

Does your authority have someone who fulfils this role (either formally or informally) across all areas of your authority’s activities?

Yes      No
4.3 If you do have a design champion is this person

Council officer  Council member  Other

If other please specify
Please give name / contact details if possible

If officer, what tier?
If member, are they on the Cabinet or a Chair?

4.4 Do you think it would be desirable for all local authorities to nominate someone for this role?

Yes  No

4.5 Would you like more information about the role and responsibilities of local authority design champions?

Yes  No

4.6 Has your authority run a training course for planning committee members on design issues?

Within the last year  Within the last two years  Never

Further information

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________
6.0 Planning for good design

6.1 Has your authority issued any authority-wide design guidance (other than policies contained in your local plan or UDP)?

Yes No In preparation

6.2 If yes, has this been adopted as supplementary planning guidance?

Yes No

Further information

([If possible, please forward a copy of any adopted design guidance])

6.3 In the last two years, how many instances of the following types of design guidance have been issued by your authority?

- Conservation area appraisals
- Topic-based design guidance (eg shopfront design guide)
- Area-based design frameworks
- Planning briefs

6.4 Is it normal practice for your authority to produce this guidance in-house or to use outside consultants?

In-house Consultants Neither Not applicable

6.5 Is it normal practice for this type of guidance to be adopted as supplementary planning guidance?

Normal Sometimes Never Not applicable

6.6 Approximately how often has your authority refused planning permission principally on design grounds during the past year?

- Never / less than 5 instances
- Between 5 and 20 instances
- More than 20 instances

6.7 What are the main barriers to refusing planning permission on design grounds?
6.0 CABE: Providing a better service

6.1 Is your department clear about the circumstances in which to consult CABE?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

6.2 If you think you would like access to design advice in a way not available to you at present, please let us have any thoughts on what form this should take.

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

6.3 Please indicate how you would prefer CABE to inform you of new initiatives.

Letter [ ] Email [ ] The radio/ newspaper [ ] Professional journal [ ] Website [ ]

Other (please state) [ ]

6.4 How do you view CABE?

Government agency [ ] Independent body [ ] Campaigner [ ] Thinktank [ ]

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

6.5 Do you think CABE has successfully managed to raise the profile of good design?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

6.6 If not, why?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

6.7 How do you think CABE can work better to promote good design?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

6.8 Please give details of how CABE can provide you with a better service

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

6.9 Any further comments or observations

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for completing this survey.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning for Design</th>
<th>1.3</th>
<th>5.1</th>
<th>5.2</th>
<th>5.3</th>
<th>5.3i</th>
<th>5.3ii</th>
<th>5.3iii</th>
<th>5.3iv</th>
<th>5.4</th>
<th>5.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>99 Blank</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Num</td>
<td>Num</td>
<td>Num</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>in-house</td>
<td>a Normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>(comment)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>Consult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 In prep</td>
<td>99 Blank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>99 Blank</td>
<td>99 Blank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| South Beds DC | 1 | Limited, shopfronts/advert/entrance | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | w | a |
| Thurock Council | 1 | 0 | Thames Gateway London Partnership Design Standard - Heroic Change | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | y | b |
| Luton Borough Council | 1 | 1 | tends to relate to security issues but also sustainability | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | w | a |
| Uxbridge District Council | 1 | 1 | Essex Design Guide adopted as SPG, other design SPG is being prepared | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | w | b |
| Three Rivers District Council | 1 | 1 | Separate and key section in our local plan | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | y | b |
| Essex County Council | 1 | 1 | The Essex design guide is a nationally recognised document - you will have a copy. | 0 | 0 | 0 | in as in ast | w | b |
| Cambridge City Council | 0 | 99 | | 99 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | y | a |
| Granta Borough Council | 1 | 1 | Use Essex design guide, adopted as SPG - comprehensive county wide guidance on design | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 | y | a |
| Southend on Sea B.C. | 2 | 1 | Currently being developed | 0 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 2 | w | b |
| South Norfolk Council | 1 | 1 | Various guides, extensions, infill, residential extensions/buildings | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | w | b |
| Suffolk County Council | 1 | 1 | Suffolk Design Guide, adopted by all Suffolk Local Authorities, currently adopting to review. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | z | d |
| Harlow DC | 1 | 1 | Essex Design Guide is SPG | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | w | b |
| Norfolk County Council | 1 | 0 | | | | | | | |
| Hartlepool Borough Council | 2 | 99 | It is intended to be adopted as SPG | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 99 | 99 |
| Braintree D.C. | 1 | 1 | Contributed to Essex Design Guide | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4-5 | y | a |
| Bedford Borough Council | 0 | 99 | | 99 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | y | a |
| Daventry District Council | 1 | 1 | | 99 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 5 | w | a |
| District of Bolsover | 1 | 1 | | 99 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | w (current brk) | a |
| High Peak Borough Council | 1 | 1 | | 99 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | w | a |
| North Kesteven District Council | 1 | 1 | Residential estate design guide (covers all Lincolnshire county) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | w | a |
| Gedling Borough Council | 1 | 1 | | 99 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | w | a |
| Nottinghamshire County Council | 1 | 1 | Countryside appraisal Document, Green Design Guide, Sustainable Developer Guide to be provided this year | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 99 | 99 |
| South Holland D.C. | 0 | 0 | We use the Lincolnshire Design Guide | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | w | b |
| South Northants Council | 1 | 1 | Village design statement for every settlement | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 | w | a |
| Lincoln City Council | 0 | 99 | | 99 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | y | a |
| South Derbyshire D.C. | 1 | 1 | | 99 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | y | a |
| Derbyshire County Council | 1 | 1 | Design guidance on highway signing & traffic calming | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | y | b |
| Newark & Sherwood D.C. | 2 | 99 | yes it will be | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 3 | w | a |
| Lincolnshire County Council | 1 | 1 | Lincolnshire Residential Design Guide - see website | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | w | 99 |
| Rutland County Council | 1 | 1 | House extensions SPG, Shopfront SPG | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 10 | w | a |
| Chesterfield Borough Council | 0 | 99 | | 99 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | w | c |
| Boston B.C. | 0 | 99 | | 99 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | y | a |
| Wellingborough Borough Council | 1 | 1 | Building better places - Guide to Sustainable Development obtainable from www.wellingborough.gov | 0 | 4 | 1 | 15 | 1 | y | a |
| Northamptonshire County Council | 2 | 99 | These were in the course of doing so through UDP review process | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 1 | y | a |
| Moseley District Council | 2 | 99 | These were in the course of doing so through UDP review process | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 1 | y | a |
| L.B. Lewisham | 2 | 99 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | y | b |
| L.B. Sutton | 0 | 99 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | w | a |
| L.B. Ealing | 2 | 99 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | y | b |
| L. B. Southwark | 0 | 0 | But in course of doing so through UDP review process | 0 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 2 | w | a |
| L.B. Barnet and Enfield | 0 | 99 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 4 | w | a |
| Royal Borough of Kingston &amp;amp;amp;amp; Kelvin | 0 | 99 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | y | a |
| Royal Borough of Kensington &amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;amp;..
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council</th>
<th>SPG Type</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LB. Hounslow</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB. Redbridge</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation of London</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Borough of Merton</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croydon Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Borough of Harrow</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enfield</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB. Ealing</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Morpeth Borough Council</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlington Borough Council</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockton-on-Tees B.C.</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Borough of Merton</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Borough of Harrow</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enfield</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB. Ealing</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Morpeth Borough Council</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlington Borough Council</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockton-on-Tees B.C.</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Borough of Merton</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Borough of Harrow</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enfield</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB. Ealing</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Morpeth Borough Council</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumberland County Council</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton BC</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congleton BC</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macclesfield Borough Council</td>
<td>SPG's, adverts, shopfronts and signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribble Valley B.C.</td>
<td>General info on extensions, B&amp;C, limited documentation re conservation area proposals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Lancashire BC</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackburn with Darwen Borough</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pendle Borough Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyre B.C.</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester City Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preston City Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blyth Port and Newtown Borough</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastbourne Borough Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Sussex District Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherwell District Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelthorne Borough Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Sussex County Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewes District Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wokingham Unitary</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herefordshire Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey County Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent County Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotherham District Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonbridge and Malling Borough</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Hampshire District Council</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tandridge D.C.</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wycombe District</td>
<td>Draft SPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough Authority</td>
<td>Type of Design Guidance</td>
<td>Development of Guidelines/Plan Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slough Borough Council</td>
<td>Some has - Range of development control guidelines/planning briefs etc.</td>
<td>Quite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Borough Council</td>
<td>1 Mainly SPGs to clarify design policies in local plan - especially for housing. But also topic based guidance</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woking BC</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mole Valley District Council</td>
<td>1 We have guidance on house extensions, designing to save energy and shop front design. The latter is Still under preparation</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Berkshire District Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampshire County Council</td>
<td>1 Explanations design Guide - Currently being updated</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxfordshire County Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Oxfordshire District Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exmoor National Park Authority</td>
<td>1 Design guide in Exmoor was prepared and consulted upon in parallel with local plan in 1996</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Devon District Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Devon District Council</td>
<td>2 Draft SPGs</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Forest District Council</td>
<td>1 Residential Design Guide for rural areas of NF District. Shop Front Design Guide. Conservation Area guidance</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vale of White Horse District Co.</td>
<td>1 In the course of being updated</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christchurch Borough Council</td>
<td>1 Presently going through the adoption process. Christchurch wide character assessment. Christchurch town centre design guidance</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wychavon District Council</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dorset District Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Dorset D.C.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter City Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset County Council</td>
<td>1 The farm guidance is SPG and the equestrian guidance is at the consultation stage.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol City Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purbeck District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salisbury District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotswold District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Gloucestershire County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerrier D.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartmoor National Authority</td>
<td>1 Design guide produced in 1979 and adopted as SPG. New guidance leaflets in preparation</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totnesbridge District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester City Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devon County Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedgemoor District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunneaton and Bedworth Borough</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Shropshire District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coventry City Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgenorth District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burton D.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcestershire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratford on Avon D.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Warwickshire Borough Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Staffordshire Borough Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire Dales National Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North York Moors National Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield City Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Riding of Yorkshire Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hull City Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnsley Metropolitan Borough</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmondshire District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rydelese D.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampshire District Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX FOUR

Annex C to Draft PPS1
Annex C

DESIGN

1. Planning should encourage good design. Good design addresses the way places work as well as how they look; the connections between people and places, especially jobs and key services that people need to access, movement and urban form and the natural and built environment; and the processes for ensuring successful, safe and inclusive villages, towns and cities. Local planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of good quality urban design by adopting clear policies and guidance that establish the key principles and criteria for future development. In doing so, local planning authorities should have regard to good practice set out in "By Design." Design can play a key role also in crime prevention.

2. Local planning authorities should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily. Design policies and guidance should focus on encouraging good, inclusive design and should avoid stifling innovation, originality or initiative, for example, where this can help address environmental considerations such as resource efficiency. Such policies and guidance should recognise that the qualities of an outstanding scheme may exceptionally justify departing from them.

3. Development Plans policies should be based on a proper assessment of the character of the surrounding built environment and landscape, and should take account of the defining characteristics of each local area, for example local or regional building traditions and materials. A design or layout that is appropriate for one area does not mean it is appropriate everywhere. Supplementary Planning Documents are a useful mechanism for highlighting key design issues of local importance.

4. Development plans should also contain clear and comprehensive inclusive access policies. Such policies should consider people's diverse needs and aim to break down the unnecessary barriers and exclusions in a manner that benefits the entire community. Although society and individuals have invested heavily in enabling people to manage their personal circumstances, many people are unnecessarily affected by ill-conceived design, with the mobility needs of, for example, disabled people, elderly people and others considered separately from others and only once designs are completed.

5. Local planning authorities should ensure that they have sufficient information on which to make an informed decision on the design, timing and accessibility of each scheme. Such information is likely to include:
   - The key design principles.
   - Density
   - The mix and distribution of uses.
   - The timescale for the development.
   - How access needs have been considered in developing the scheme, including any steps taken to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

* By Design Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice (DETR CABE 2003).
* Further guidance on design and crime prevention is included in Safer Places the Planning System and Crime Prevention (DDPM, Home Office, forthcoming).
* Further guidance on access and inclusion is included in Planning and Access for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide (DDPM, March 2003).
APPENDIX FIVE

Template of letter sent to local authorities
April 2004

(Name)
(Address)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: MPhil Research Project on Urban Design Frameworks

I am a part-time final year student completing my MPhil in Town and Country Planning at the Bartlett School of Planning, University College London. My research project is "A study into the use and effectiveness of Urban Design Frameworks as a planning tool."

As part of my work, I have contacted the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) to obtain the breakdown of the local authorities who had responded to their recent 2003 design survey. Question 5.3 of the survey asked:

"In the last two years, how many instances of the following types of design guidance have been issued by your authority?

Conservation Area Appraisals

Topic-based design guidance (e.g. shopfront design guidance)

Area-based design frameworks

Planning briefs"

(Name) Borough Council was one of seven London local authorities who indicated that area-based design frameworks had either been issued, or were in the process of being produced.

Your response indicated that (Insert no.) documents of this nature have been issued. I would therefore be grateful if you could provide me with the details of the titles of the documents that have been issued to date within the next 7 days, either in writing or via e-mail (address above) indicating whether it is possible to obtain a copy of it from your offices or whether it is available on your Council website to download.

I shall be reviewing the content of these documents with a view to selecting three case studies for further exploration. I would therefore also be grateful if you could confirm whether you would have any objection to your local authority being used as a case study for the purposes of my work.
Thanking you in advance for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sophie Fitch