Design Quality in Government Buildings

Professor Geoffrey London
Office of The Government Architect
Government Architect

Purpose of Position - as advertised

> To provide leadership and strategic advice to Government to achieve the objective of improving the design of public buildings and spaces and enhancing the quality of the built environment.

Organisation Environment and Reporting Relationships

> To have a whole of Government focus and, where requested, provide advice to the highest levels of Government. The Government Architect will report to the Minister for Housing and Works and will be located in the Department of Housing and Works, who will provide secretarial and office support.
OGA Key Functions - as advertised

> Provision of expert, independent advice to the Premier and to the Minister for Housing and Works on:

- Key projects and developments undertaken by Government.
- Landscape architecture and civic design matters generally.
- Strategic approaches to major development projects; and
- Initiatives to improve the design of public buildings.

> Take a whole of Government leadership role in architectural design and other building related issues.

> Undertake brokerage of design solutions and outcomes on behalf of Government.

> Promote community awareness in architectural design and other building related issues. Facilitate linkages between community expectation and Government policy initiatives in these area.

> Maintain effective relationships and strong links with the building design professions and the architecture schools within the State and facilitate constructive working relationships between these bodies and Government.

> Work closely with WAPC, the Heritage Council of WA, relevant areas of the DHW, other Government agencies and where appropriate, other levels of Government in the pursuit of better built outcomes.

> Represent the Government on key architectural committees and bodies; and

> Provide advice to Local Government as required.
In an environment which is well designed, attractive, clearly defined and well maintained, people are likely to take pride in their surroundings... feel comfortable and safe and have a sense of shared ownership and responsibility.’

UK Association of Chief Police Officers
March 2004

Project Summary 06/07

Department of Housing & Works – Major Projects

Perth Arena – advisory role on site selection, design review and DA brokerage.

New Performing Arts Venue - advisory role.

Perth Modern School – design review.

AK Reserve – design review.

Central TAFE – design review and DA brokerage.

Fiona Stanley Hospital – advisory role for project procurement and participation in masterplanning workshops and design reviews.

CLC Courts – design advisory role for project team.

District Courts – design advisory role for project team.

Supreme Courts - advisory role.

Albany Entertainment Centre – design review.

Old Treasury Buildings and Cathedral Square Redevelopment – advisory role.

Hedland Health Campus – design review and urban design brokerage.

Denmark Health Campus – design review.
We all have to start demanding more, raising expectations and coercing builders into building homes that suit our needs.

Wayne Hemingway, designer and chair Building for Life initiative

Department of Housing & Works – Housing

Keystart & First Start Housing Projects – design review process ongoing and input into briefing/scoping documents.

Ellenbrook Sustainable Demonstration Housing – Scope and brief development input.

Campbell Street and Pier Street Housing – design reviews.

Wungong Urban Water Project – built form report and ongoing design review of masterplan and town centre proposal.

Harrisdale Sustainable Subdivision – input into structure plan, testing of housing models and selection panel role for joint venture partners.

Midland Workshops housing - design reviews.
Project Summary 06/07

Department of Health

> Fiona Stanley Hospital – advisory role for project procurement strategy, architectural services procurement, participation in Murdoch masterplan workshops, cost benchmarking strategies, and design reviews.

> Healthcare Design Internships – assisting with the process of appointing recent architecture graduates to healthcare ‘internships’ for 06-07.

> Hedland Health Campus – design review processes complete.

> Denmark Health Campus – design review processes complete.

Department of The Attorney General

> District Court Building – advisory role to project team.

> Supreme Courts – advisory role to project team.

> Central Law Court – advisory role to project team.
Project Summary 06/07

Department of Planning & Infrastructure & LandCorp

>140 William Street – EOI evaluation panel activities, RFP drafting panel activities, RFP evaluation panel tasks, all complete. OGA encouraged pursuit of a quality design outcome with strong focus on sustainability.

Department of Planning & Infrastructure

>Wanneroo Cultural Learning Centre – stage 1 design review complete.

Department of Culture & Arts

>New Performing Arts Venue – design review processes complete.

>Art Gallery of WA - major peer design review of Gallery and its precinct.

Department of Industry & Resources

>Bentley Technology Park – participation in masterplan design reviews, defining architectural standards and advice regarding procurement of key buildings.

New Performing Arts Venue
Kerry Hill Architects

‘One of the main tasks of the executive is to bring about improvements in the lives of people not only through better services and economic opportunity but also through improvements in the physical environments in which individuals and communities live and work.’

Allan Wilson, Deputy Minister for Sport, the Arts and Culture, Scotland.
Good design is not just about the aesthetic improvement of our environment, it is as much about improved quality of life, equality or opportunity and economic growth.

CABE UK

> Project Summary 06/07

**East Perth Redevelopment Authority**

> Riverside and other projects – design review role.
> Northbridge Link – facilitation of major peer review and reporting on draft master plan design issues.

**Armadale Redevelopment Authority**

> Chairing Wungong Urban Water Project Built Form Group.
> Project master plan review processes.
> Report on built form outcomes and contribution to built form guidelines for Wungong Urban Water Project.

**Western Australian Planning Commission**

> 140 William Street – EOI evaluation panel activities, RFP drafting panel activities, RFP evaluation panel tasks. OGA encouraged pursuit of a quality design outcome with strong focus on sustainability.

**Gascoyne Development Commission**

> Ningaloo Eco-lodge – coordination tasks for national architectural design competition.
Wungong Urban Water Project
Initiatives 06/07

Promoting Good Design within DHW

- Design Based Architect Selection policy – two stage process used for selected projects.
- Architecture Policy – draft prepared with the assistance of a broad based working party including previous DHW Director General
- Design Reviews – regular design review of projects.
- Emerging Architects Panel & Award – initiation.
- Advice on EOI and RFP content to encourage better design outcomes.
Public


> Proposition 6707 – initiating and ongoing involvement with a national architectural competition for an eco-lodge tourist resort for Ningaloo.

> Public Talks:
  - Infrastructure Conference
  - New Frontiers in Housing Conference
  - Inner City Housing Development Association
  - Shelter
  - HIA
  - TABMA
  - Radio guest ABC local
  - University of the Third Age
  - AIBS, HIA, AIBD, ABSA Conference
  - Capitals Alliance Conference
  - Property Council Conference
  - Australian Planning Institute Conference
  - Institute of Public Administration, Australia
  - ReHousing Conference
  - Placemakers Conference
OGA Proposition 6707 National Architectural Design Competition

INTRODUCTION

Proposition 6707 is a series of annual architectural and urban design competition aimed at promoting critical investigation into the development of strategic locations around Australia. The competition this year involved a focus on how to create sustainable urban nodes in fragile and remote coastal environments and demonstrate design excellence and sustainability in such environments.

Proposition 6707 specifically engages the single most important renewable resource: the sun. How to manage solar in a way that is both aesthetically pleasing and qualitative that the visitors come to experience. Such a development must be considered holistically, including the provision of appropriate facilities and experiences beyond accommodation.

The competition focuses on the Cape Range National Park (North West), about 1300 km north of Perth. The area is particularly noted for its significant natural and cultural heritage qualities. It is part of the Western Australian Geographical Province and includes the Ningaloo Marine Park, one of the largest marine parks in the world. It is renowned for its marine life and its bio-diversity. The competition seeks to explore innovative strategies for the site. With the site for the competition is a small section within Cape Range National Park, this does not mean any decision made within respect to the location of an eco Lodge within the park boundaries. The Conservation Commission of Western Australia and the Department of Environment and Conservation will consider any proposals to be located within the area, including eco-tourism facilities, within the context of the review of the management plan for Cape Range National Park once approved.

Proposition 6707 is one of the most important renewable resources: the sun. How to manage solar in a way that is both aesthetically pleasing and qualitative that the visitors come to experience. Such a development must be considered holistically, including the provision of appropriate facilities and experiences beyond accommodation.

The Cape Range National Park, which is managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation, is a site of significant interest and has been identified as an area of national importance within the Ningaloo Coast Regional Strategy. This strategy is a fifteen-year strategic plan that sets the framework for sustainable tourism and land use on the Ningaloo Coast. The strategy seeks to protect and manage the coastal environment and to provide for tourism opportunities in a way that is harmonious with the coastal environment and the cultural heritage of the area. The competition supports such objectives by encouraging development in line with the strategic vision.

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Perth, Western Australia

Saturday 18 August
New Trends of Architecture—a focus on the exhibitor's work

International and Australian architects featured in the exhibition present their work, and engage in dialogues with Perth's stakeholders regarding key urban issues facing Perth.

0830 Symposium registration
0900 Welcome and introduction
Governor; Architect
Professor Geoffrey London will chair the morning's proceedings

0910 Keynote address
Don Bates LAB

0930 Adrian Iredale, Finn Pedersen and Martyn Hook
Iredale Pedersen Hook
Architects

1040 Morning Tea
1100 Eva Frates and Ricardo Flores
Flores and Frates Architects

1150 Sean Godsell
Sean Godsell Architects

1200 Themes of the morning: wrap-up by
Geoffrey London

1230 Lunch Break
Research into methods of building procurement that promote innovative architecture - Australian Research Council Linkage Grant.

Research into international best practice for major public projects and spaces to demonstrate what is possible in WA including:

- innovation in sustainable building initiatives.
- alternative and low-cost housing models.
- alternative building materials, and
- improved procurement strategies.

> Initiatives 06/07

An example of international best practice:
German Federal Environment Agency Headquarters
Sauerbruch Hutton Architects
Better Public Buildings

A proud legacy for the future
Foreword by the Prime Minister

Better Public Buildings

100 years ago public buildings were often the pride of Britain's towns and cities. Schools, railway stations, post offices and libraries set high standards of building design that the private sector tried to emulate. The best embodied a strong sense of civic pride.

More recently, however, the public sector has too often been associated with poor design and bad management. Too many of the housing estates, schools and hospitals built in the second half of the twentieth century were ugly, ill-suited to the needs of their users and costly to maintain.

Yet we know that good design provides a host of benefits. The best designed schools encourage children to learn. The best designed hospitals help patients recover their spirits and their health. Well-designed parks and town centres help to bring communities together.

It is widely believed that good design is a costly luxury. But this is simply not true. As Sir John O'Connor's report 'Rethinking Construction' demonstrated, best practice in integrating design and construction delivers better value for money as well as better buildings, particularly when attention is paid to the full costs of a building over its whole lifetime.

That is why I have asked ministers and departments across government to work towards achieving a step change in the quality of building design in the public sector. The government is already substantially increasing capital spending; I am determined that this additional money should be well spent, leaving behind a legacy of high quality buildings that can match the best of what we inherited from the Victorians and other past generations. And I am determined that good design should not be confined to high profile buildings in the big cities; all of the users of public services, wherever they are, should be able to benefit from better design.

The good news is that a lot of progress is already being made, helped by the new Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment which is bringing some of the best architects together with schools, courts, Sure Start centres and benefit offices. Through the Achieving Excellence initiative, government organisations have started addressing their performance as clients by setting measurable targets and objectives with a strong focus on lifetime costs, quality and design. As this report shows, there are some outstanding examples for the rest of the public sector to learn from.

Over the last few years Britain has benefited from a host of new landmark buildings, many of them funded through the lottery. Now we need to apply the same energy and imagination to improving the tens of thousands of everyday public buildings which play such a vital role in our lives.
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This report has been prepared by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport for:

**The Better Public Buildings Group** chaired by Lord Falconer.

The Group embraces:

The Cabinet Office  
The Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions  
H M Treasury (Office of Government Commerce)  
The Ministry of Defence  
The Department of Health  
The Department for Education and Employment  
The Department of Social Security  
The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

The work of the Group is closely associated with the Movement for Innovation and the Achieving Excellence Initiative.

The text was written by Paul Finch, a member of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, drawing on material previously prepared by members of the Better Public Buildings Group.
DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

BETTER PUBLIC BUILDINGS

The Better Public Buildings report includes a checklist of do’s and don’ts for how to ensure quality buildings, from schools and hospitals to theatres and bridges. These are helpful advice to local authorities developing a new approach to design quality.

Stop:

- Regarding good design as an optional extra
- Treating lowest cost as best value
- Valuing initial capital cost as more important than whole-life cost
- Treating buildings as purely functional plant without civil significance
- Imagining that effectiveness and efficiency are divorced from design
- Being frightened to take calculated risks
- Assuming that the public does not care

Start:

- Identifying the high-level post which should incorporate the role of ‘design champion’
- Insisting that measures to ensure the appointment of good designers are reviewed by the design champion
- Promoting high-quality design on PFI projects in line with Treasury Note 7
- Insisting on appropriately high design standards for all projects
- Allowing enough design time for projects of real quality to emerge
- Measuring efficiency and waste in construction
- Appointing integrated teams focusing on the whole-life impact and performance of a development
- Encouraging longer-term relationships with integrated project teams as part of long-term programmes, always subject to rigorous performance review
- Using whole-life costing in the value-for-money assessment of buildings
- Ensuring there is a single-point client responsibility for any given project, with authority

THE PRIME MINISTER’S BETTER PUBLIC BUILDING AWARD

To encourage and acknowledge good practice in public buildings, the Prime Minister has endorsed an accolade to be awarded annually to a project which demonstrates excellence in design and procurement. It is open to schemes of any size, commissioned by or on behalf of central or local government or grant-aided organisations.
CABE champions the creation of great buildings and public spaces. It is a non-departmental public body set up by the government in 1999. Through public campaigns and support to professionals, CABE encourages the development of well-designed homes, streets, parks, offices, schools, hospitals and other public buildings.
RUNNING A DESIGN PANEL

A number of local authorities have set up design panels to review development proposals. Panels’ members are drawn from local design practices and the public sector, and provide advice to the authorities’ planning officers and Elected Members. The following points provide helpful advice on how to run a design panel:

- get the panel involved in schemes at the earliest possible stage so that they take ownership of them, rather than simply reacting
- do not swamp the panel; better that they undertake 3 or 4 key schemes well over a period of time, than dot around a whole host of smaller schemes
- be prepared to use individual members or sub-groups of the panel on particular cases
- ensure you have urban design as well as pure architectural skills
- keep the panel relatively small, probably no more than ten people
- go for individuals of recognised quality within their field
- consider offering a small honoraria to the members, as this stresses the importance of the panel and can yield a much more serious response in return
- do not be afraid to go for one or two members who may not know the area as knowledge of geography can be gained quickly, professional skills cannot
- the panel must clearly work within the open and accountable development control process of local planning authorities

Design Review includes detailed guidance on how to run a Design Panel and is illustrated with projects which have been seen by the CABE design review committee in the last two years.
ST MARY LE PORT
BRISTOL

Background
St Mary Le Port was the original Saxon settlement of Bristol and formed part of the city's commercial centre until it was destroyed by bombing in 1940. Two of its churches and medieval walls under the High Street still survive. After the war, the shopping district was rebuilt down the hill on Broadmead. A modern site and estate development was planned for the area, but there was no room for new development. The current office buildings were eventually built on the site of St Mary Le Port in the 1960s. The area was turned into Castle Park in the 1970s. The site occupied by the Floating Harbour to the north and high Street to the west, and it was close to the then relatively undeveloped lane of the old city.

Proposals
The scheme proposed to decommission the port waiting area and to create a new square. One of the masterplan's objectives is to transpose to key areas, the church tower is therefore the focal point of a new public space.

CABE's view
CABE on the masterplan was looking at the design development of the site layout and design of individual buildings. The approach was to use a different design demonstrated by the project, and the potential for a successful new office to the east was welcomed. The design team then responded to this potential, and this led in part to a new route and the west area to be pedestrianised, which the city has contributed to the success of the proposals. Mon to Fri that they have been treated with a sense of place.

The Design Review committee thought the design was perfectly suited to the area of development and showed a clear understanding of the local area's context. The project presented a new design, the "right" scale and density, high without overlooking poorly developed.

Public access and pedestrian links have been greatly improved in the city, and the development's street route through to the Floating Harbour was suggested as a way to increase the city's permeability, thereby making the most of the development and giving a sense of place to the Harbour.

The following opportunities were identified for consideration and development:

1. The potential to create a gateway into the site, the development of the city.
2. The creation of a new public space could be made accessible and new pedestrian bridges across the Floating Harbour could be provided.

Achieving the乖乖 rates approved the approach for a new twenty-first-century office building was a dual challenge in design, first the commercial needs of the development and second the architectural design of the building.

In conclusion, the design team has developed a plan in collaboration with the architect who designed the office building, the active street frontage along a slightly constrained site, the building plot can be developed to a high standard of architecture with minimal modifications. This process is highly based on a concept, and the design will be seen as the lead to the offices.

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Improving Standards of Design
in the Procurement of Public Buildings
campaigning for better places
BETTER CIVIC BUILDINGS AND SPACES

cabe
Physical capital
How great places boost public value
BUILDING in context

New development in historic areas
The Project

The project, designed by Katrina Birnbaum, consists of the extension and adaptation of a Great War listed Victorian sewer hall in order to provide better facilities for audiences and performers. This includes bar, office, accommodation, ticket sales, meeting and function rooms and Box office. There was also a need to provide disabled access to all parts of the hall.

The Site

The site is immediately adjacent to the existing Victoria Hall, a classical building of the 1840s. In brief, the Victoria Hall is a narrow rectangular building with a central entrance and a shallow triangular pediment. The extension to the site of the extension is a potential development site in use as a surface car park, and beyond the Victoria Hall is a new development site for the Victoria Hall and a new building identified as a 19th-century classical building.

The Problems

The key problem presented by the Victoria Hall centre was that of reorganizing the street and road areas. The existing street and road network is limited and difficult to access, and the site itself is limited in size. Within that context, the Victoria Hall is a very attractive model for housing, but also has the potential to become a central feature of the area, enhancing the street and road network.

The Solutions

The new extension is provided as a range of small-scale buildings running the length of the site and linking to the rear of the existing building. The new buildings are linked by a series of bridges, providing access to the performance space, which itself has been restructured.

The space within the new building is organized as a series of small, self-contained spaces. The small buildings are designed to be modular and flexible, providing opportunities for a wide range of events. The new buildings are designed to be flexible and adaptable, providing opportunities for a wide range of events.

The exterior of the new building provides a new entrance to the list of buildings in two ways in particular. In the first place, it is a new building that has been designed to respect the existing building, while in the second place, it is a new building that has been designed to respect the existing building.
The value of good design

How buildings and spaces create economic and social value

cabe
A. The value of design in healthcare

A1. A study by Sheffield University for NHS Estates compared patient outcomes in a newly established orthopaedic unit at Robe Hospital with those in a 1960s conventional ward. The study found that patients treated on the refurbished ward required less analgesic medication than those on the older ward. Patients not undergoing operations were discharged significantly more quickly from the new ward after 6.4 days compared with 9.1 days.

A2. The Sheffield study also compared psychiatric patients treated at Mill View Hospital, a purpose-built unit in Hove, with those at two older wards at University Mental Health Unit within Brighton General Hospital, located in a former Victorian workhouse. The length of stay was again lower on the new unit. Patients treated entirely in the new building had an average reduction of 14% in their length of stay – 30.5 days compared with 42.4 days. In the same new unit at Mill View Hospital 79% of the patients were judged by staff to have made good progress (compared to 60% in the old unit, and the level of verbal abuse and threatening behaviour was reduced by 24% and 42% respectively.

A3. A King's Fund document published in 2002 highlighted the example of Newham Hospital in south east London, where levels of staff morale increased by 65% following the redesign of the hospital. When asked if they felt valued, 78% of staff said yes after the redesign compared to 22% three years previously.

A4. Research by the National Institute for Health and the National Institute on Ageing in the US showed that certain design features in Special Care Units and Assisted Living Treatment Residences for people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias made people calmer whilst certain others generated more agitation behaviour. For example, unobtrusive and secure extra reduced sensory stimuli, and increased bedroom privacy and better through routes in common areas reduced both verbal and physical agitation and aggression. The study concluded that the benefits of these design features on health and quality of life were independent of the quality of other care characteristics.

A5. A study carried out by the University of Nottingham which compared three healthcare environments before and after they were redesigned found clear benefits to patient health and associated improvements in the efficiency of medical resource due to good design. The schemes included a chemotherapy ward with improved lighting, better external views and clustering of beds in smaller groups; a waiting area with enhanced artificial lighting, better seating and interior design; and a coronary care unit with better beds and patient facilities, larger windows and a relax area. The new ward was perceived by patients and staff as more pleasant, relaxing and welcoming. It resulted in lower pulse rates and blood pressure readings amongst patients, shorter post-operative stays – 8 days down from 11 days – and lower prescribed drug doses.
A6. A study carried out by the University of Nottingham which compared three healthcare environments before and after they were redesigned found clear benefits to patient health and associated improvements in the efficiency of medical resourcing due to good design. The schemes included a cardiology ward with improved lighting, better external views and clustering of beds in smaller groups; a waiting area with enhanced artificial lighting, better seating and interior design; and a coronary day-care unit with better beds and patient facilities, larger windows and a visitors area. The new ward was perceived by patients and staff as more pleasant, relaxing and welcoming. It resulted in lower pulse rates and blood pressure readings amongst patients, shorter post operative stays – 8 days down from 11 days – and lower prescribed drug intakes.
B. The value of design in educational environments

B1. A study carried out in 2000 by PriceWaterhouseCoopers for the Department for Education and Skills examined the relationship between capital investment in school buildings and pupil performance. It found that capital investment in school buildings had the strongest influence on staff morale, pupil motivation and effective learning time. The study highlighted one school where the design of playgrounds and the school hall had enabled a reduction of lunchtime assistants from 8 to 5, with the saved resources switched to direct educational expenditure.

B2. A study carried out at Georgetown University in Washington DC showed that after controlling other variables, such as a student's economic status, students' standardized achievement scores rose by 5.6% as a school's physical environment improved from one design category to the next, eg from 'poor' to 'fair' to 'excellent'. If a school improved its condition from 'poor' to 'excellent' an average increase of 10.9% could be expected.

B3. A French study of two new school building projects in Marseille and Paris found that educational environments designed to integrate information and communication technology were more conducive to learning. After the completion of the Marseille project the repeat rate among sixth grade students was only 2.5%, compared to the national rate of 6.9%, the rate of progression from sixth to tenth grade was 71.6% compared to the national norm of 64.2%, and incidents of truancy declined despite the large size of campus. After the completion of the Paris project the baccalauréat success rate was 68%, compared to the national average of 72%, the rate of progression from tenth grade to baccalauréat was 73% compared to the national average of only 67% and the number of scholarship applications from private school pupils has steadily risen – 17.4% of the students aged 15-16 now come from these schools.

B4. A series of American studies on the relationship between pupil performance, achievement, behaviour and the built environment found that scores for the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) amongst students aged 10-17 in well designed high schools in North Dakota were between 1 and 1.1% higher than those in poorly designed high school buildings.

B5. A study of Academic Proficiency test results in small, rural high schools in Virginia, USA indicated a positive relationship between building condition and student achievement. Results were generally higher in school buildings with better structural and aesthetic qualities. Combined results on test scores were 1% higher for students in better designed schools.

B6. A related study which used the same methodology to look at large, urban high schools in Virginia found a greater range of differences between students' test scores in poorly designed and well designed buildings than those in the rural high schools in Virginia and North Dakota high schools study above, with some of the differences as great as 17%.

B7. A separate study carried out in Gemtinno analysed the test scores results of over 21,000 student records from three school districts in the US, controlling for other variables. It found that students with the most natural daylighting in their classrooms improved 20% faster on maths tests and 26% on reading tests in one year than those with the least natural light.

B8. Research carried out at the School Design and Planning Laboratory, University of Georgia, found that elementary schools with more than 100 square feet of building space per student tend to have significantly higher science, social studies and overall Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) scores than schools with under 100 square feet per student. A separate study by the same university found evidence of improved child behaviour in schools with over 100 square feet per child. The impact of additional space on behavioural patterns was most noticeable on children with special learning needs.

B9. A doctoral dissertation from the University of Georgia found that junior high school pupils based in newly renovated school facilities showed more positive attitudes towards school than pupils based in other buildings and that students in classrooms with the most daylight had 7-16% higher scores than those with the least daylight.
A study carried out at Georgetown University in Washington DC showed that after controlling other variables, such as a student’s economic status, students’ standardised achievement scores rose by 5.5% as a school’s physical environment improved from one design category to the next, eg from ‘poor’ to ‘fair’ to ‘excellent’. If a school improved its condition from ‘poor’ to ‘excellent’ an average increase of 10.9% could be expected.
C. The value of design in housing

A study for the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors carried out in 1997 estimated that more money - as much as £2 billion per year - is spent on buying a house in London as on housing costs, with the next highest being Paris. The study highlighted the need for better design in housing. It is estimated that the UK, with its high population density, has the highest rate of housing design costs in the world. The study found that the average cost of housing design in the UK is around £35 per square foot, compared to £15 per square foot in Japan and £20 per square foot in the US. The study also found that the value of design in housing is not only related to cost, but also to psychological factors, such as the feeling of security and the sense of community. The study concluded that better design in housing can lead to a better quality of life for residents and a higher economic value for the property.

In a recent MORI poll commissioned by the RIBA in the summer of 2000, nearly two-thirds of those interviewed (62%) said that they believed well-designed housing would increase their property value, with 8% of respondents (9%) disagreeing with the statement. The poll also found that 70% of respondents felt that the design of their home was important, with 20% feeling that the design of their home was very important. The poll also found that 41% of respondents felt that the design of their home was not important, with 11% of respondents feeling that the design of their home was very important. The poll also found that 41% of respondents felt that the design of their home was not important, with 11% of respondents feeling that the design of their home was very important.

A recent international research project by the University of California in the US and Europe, using post occupancy surveys, discovered that not only did the overall impression of the interior of the house and its surrounding dwellings have an impact on how people feel about their homes, but also on how the household's personal sense of worth.

An Urban Land Institute study of over 60,000 housing transactions in four parts of housing development in the United States revealed an average sales premium of $30,000 or 11% on schemes upholding the urban design principles similar to those set out in the recent UK Planning Guidance Better Places to Live.

The University of Bristol carried out a study of 300 households in a large suburban housing estate with little or no distinct design quality. The researchers found that those residents exhibited more difficulty in selling and experienced more negative equity than those living in more distinctly designed developments.

The Positive Housing Forum used over 300 interviews and discussion groups across the UK to explore public attitudes to the appearance and style of new housing. Appearance of the neighbourhood was considered to be more important than the design of the home itself.

A preliminary study carried out by international property consultants Savills in 2000 indicated that volume house builders who had invested in higher quality design in residential schemes could expect to yield a residual value per house of up to 15% more than conventionally designed schemes.
CHAMPIONING QUALITY

For design quality to be delivered it needs leadership and championing. A local authority design champion may be the means of delivering this leadership.

A design champion would:

- provide a symbol of commitment to good design
- create leadership, to generate enthusiasm and commitment for design quality and provide a point of contact for external bodies
- co-ordinate effort across the authority, joining up the different departments and combating organisational ghettos
- promote the benefits of good design and ensure every new investment in the built environment, from a building to a road-crossing is of a high quality,
- ensure all investment is seen as a piece of urban or rural design, rather than in isolation.

Although the status and role of a design champion will vary according to the needs of individual local authorities, there are a number of shared principles. Generally, the design champion should be embedded within the council. A design champion should be someone senior, either a member or an official. Political and organisational support for the design champion is vital.

At Leeds City Council the City Architect, an officer of the local authority, acts as the design champion, supported by the Chair of the Environment Committee. Birmingham has taken a different approach, creating a strong Urban Design Department. Such a team within the local authority would ideally combine building design, highways, town planning, urban design, landscape design and property maintenance and management. In some cases it would be appropriate to have support from an external design panel. This local design panel would be consulted by the Council on all significant design issues within the local authority and all major planning applications.

Lack of resources, particularly in small authorities, is a concern, as any design champion must be properly resourced. There may be a case for design services to be provided at a regional or sub-regional level. This could be done via the evolving network of local Built Environment Centres. In addition, geographically close authorities facing similar issues could band together to share a design champion’s skills.
What is Good Design?

Good design refers to how things work, not just how they look. Within the built environment, good design is about functionality, performance, build-quality, as much as about innovation and creativity. Good design is sustainable and resource efficient. It embraces its context and makes a positive contribution to its environment.

Good design delivers value-for-money as well as better buildings, particularly when attention is paid to the full costs of a building over its whole lifetime.

Good design is not an optional extra - and, completing a project on time and on budget, while necessary, is not enough.

Through our work we seek to ensure that good design is a core requirement in public project procurement.
The Value of Good Design

When properly pursued good design offers economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits to everyone. The UK based CABE has conducted research into the value of good design and the results are summarised as follows:

Economic

> Produces high returns on investments (good rental returns and enhanced capital values).
> Places developments above the competition in their local markets at relatively little cost.
> Responds to occupier demand.
> Helps to deliver more lettable area (higher densities).
> Reduces management, maintenance, energy and security costs.
> Contributes to more contented and productive workforces.
> Supports ‘life giving’ mixed use elements in developments.
> Differentiates places and increases prestige.
> Raises confidence in development opportunities and opens up investment opportunities.
> Reduces cost to public purse by rectifying built environment mistakes.

‘Investment in excellence will pay both the clients and the public back, many times over’

Lee Spark, OBE

‘Investment in the layout of the working environment can directly affect the success of a business. It can act as a powerful way for a company to project its brand, as well as delivering higher staff productivity. And good urban design boosts the economic well-being of our towns and cities.

CABE UK
The Value of Good Design

Social

> Creates well connected, inclusive and accessible new places and buildings.
> Delivers mixed environments with a broad range of facilities and amenities available to all.
> Boosts civic pride and enhances civic image.
> Enhances the sense of safety and security within and beyond developments.
> Returns inaccessible or run down areas and amenities to beneficial public use.
> Revitalises urban heritage.
> Increases public building attendance and usage.

‘Good design should not be confined to iconic buildings in big cities. High-quality public buildings and open spaces, where local residents can meet and socialise, give communities a sense of pride and belonging.’

CABE UK
The Value of Good Design

Environmental

> Delivers developments sensitive to their context.
> Creates more energy-efficient and less polluting development.
> Delivers compact neighbourhoods, integrates parking and transport infrastructure to encourage walking and cycling.
> Reduces life-cycle costs.
> Minimises waste and turnover.

‘Good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development.’

UK Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005

‘Good-quality design can encourage living and working patterns that mean less car use, reduced consumption of natural resources and increased biodiversity.’

CABE UK

30 The Bond
Lendlease
The Value of Good Design

Cultural

> Encourages a distinctive approach to architecture and nurtures emerging local firms.
> Informs the local profession and creates an environment that actively supports, aims for and encourages design excellence.
> Fosters opportunities for local publications, awards, commissions, exhibitions and talks.
> Educates the broader community and establishes productive dialogues.

CODA
Community Housing, Northbridge

‘In an environment which is well designed, attractive, clearly defined and well maintained, people are likely to take pride in their surroundings…feel comfortable and safe and have a shared ownership and responsibility.’

In March 2000, Bob Carr, Premier of NSW, convened a forum that brought together 233 developers, architects, planners and local council and government representatives. The aim of the forum was to determine ways of improving the design quality of residential flat development and SEPP 65 and the Residential Design Code is the result.

SEPP 65 sets out to ensure that residential flat developments:

>Are a long term asset to the community
>Are better designed to improve streetscape and public spaces
>Achieve better urban planning policies for locality and region
>Are socially and environmentally sustainable
>Offer occupants the greatest comfort possible
>Are in adequate supply to satisfy increasing demand and changing social and demographic profiles of the community.
SEPP 65 —
Design Quality of Residential Flat Development

Department of Planning
Residential Flat Design Code

Tools for improving the design of residential flat buildings
Delivering Better Design

A consistent policy across the state.

Guiding developers, architects, authorities, planners and residents with the Residential Flat Code.

Providing a basis to evaluate the merit of proposed design solutions.

Providing a basis for subsequent planning policy documents and design processes.

Establishing Design Review Panels to advise consent authorities on development applications, policies and initiatives.
Monitoring Better Design

Improving Flat Design assessment of impact of SEPP 65.
Strategies developed for improving the quality of design:

- Select architects by design-based procedures;
- Pay appropriate fees to architects;
- Use design reviews;
- Establish an emerging architects panel;
- Research best-practice examples;
- Foreground life-time costing;
- Champion design across agencies;
- Draft a policy for architecture.