Creating quality streets: the Manual for Streets

Tim Pharoah

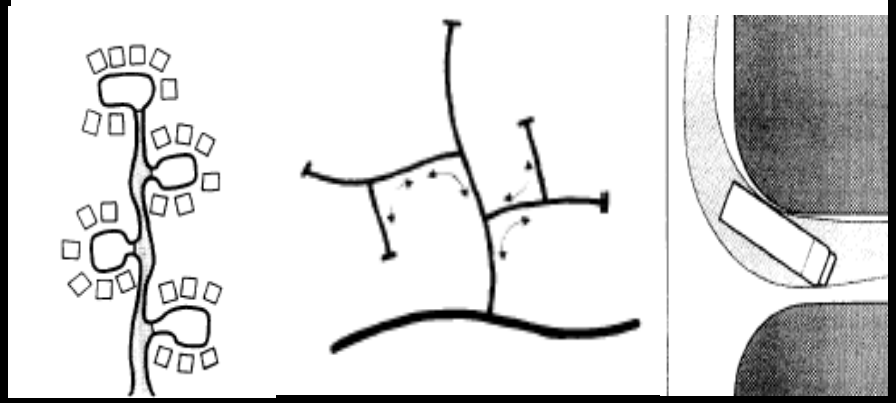
Consultant to Tribal Group

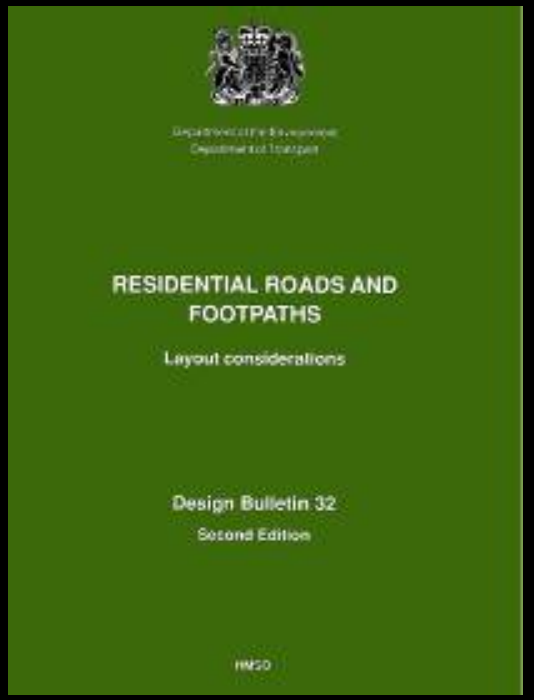
“The Manual for Streets could be the most influential document on urban design in 50 years”

MfS: status and application

- Replaces DB32 and Places, Streets & Movement
- Applies in England & Wales
- Residential and “lightly-trafficked” streets, but…
- Principles applicable elsewhere e.g. High Streets, lanes
- Guidance, not policy or a standard

	Around	Around	Up to around
No. dwellings served	50-300	25-50	25
Carriageway width (m)	5.5	4.8	4.1





What is a street?

- *A street is a highway that has important public realm functions beyond the movement of traffic*

- *Street functions:*
  - ***Place***
  - ***Movement***
  - ***Access***
  - ***Parking***
  - ***Drainage and Utilities***

MfS: some key messages

- Risk: drivers are responsible for their own safety

Gorringe v. Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council (2004)

LORD HOFFMANN:

People must accept responsibility for their own actions and take the necessary care to avoid injuring themselves or others.

The users of the highway were expected to look after themselves.

Drivers of vehicles must **take the highway network as they find it**.

MfS: some key messages

- Risk: drivers are responsible for their own safety
- Sense of place: streets for all, not just traffic

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- Design: far too generic
- Process: far too ghettoised
- Guidance: far too rigidly applied

MfS: some key recommendations

- Quality Audit not just Safety Audit

MfS: some key recommendations

- Quality Audit - are design objectives met? (not just Safety Audit)
- Masterplan-led approach for large schemes

MfS: some key recommendations

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- Max. 20 mph design speed
- Changed assumptions on stopping site distance and visibility requirements

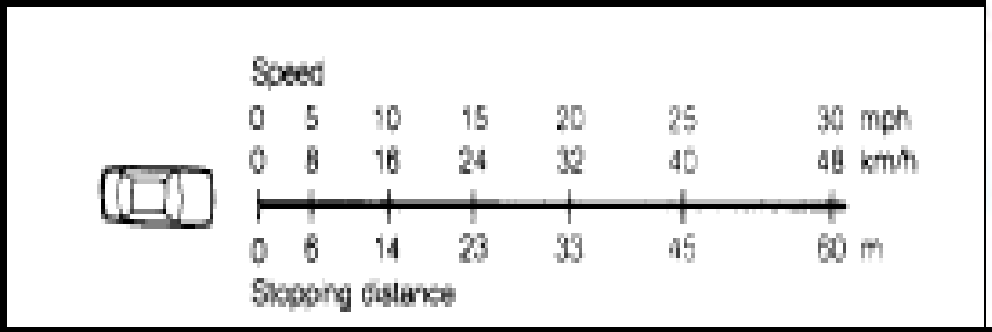

Table 7.1 Derived SSDs for streets (figures rounded).

Speed	Kilometres per hour	16	20	24	25	30	32	40	45	48	50	60
	Miles per hour	10	12	15	16	19	20	25	28	30	31	37
SSD (metres)		9	12	15	16	20	22	31	36	40	43	56
SSD adjusted for bonnet length. See 7.6.4		11	14	17	18	23	25	33	39	43	45	59
	Additional features will be needed to achieve low speeds											

MfS: some key recommendations

- Quality Audit to replace Safety Audit
- Masterplan-led approach for large schemes
- Development Teams for a collaborative approach
- Max. 20 mph design speed
- Relaxed assumptions on stopping site distance and visibility requirements
- Minimum of “highway” design features (Streets not Highways)

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- Hierarchy: pedestrians first, cars last

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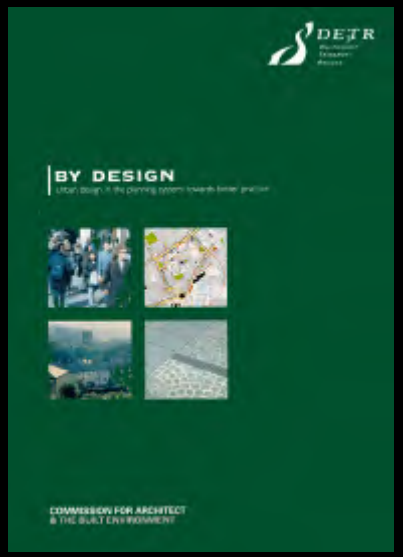
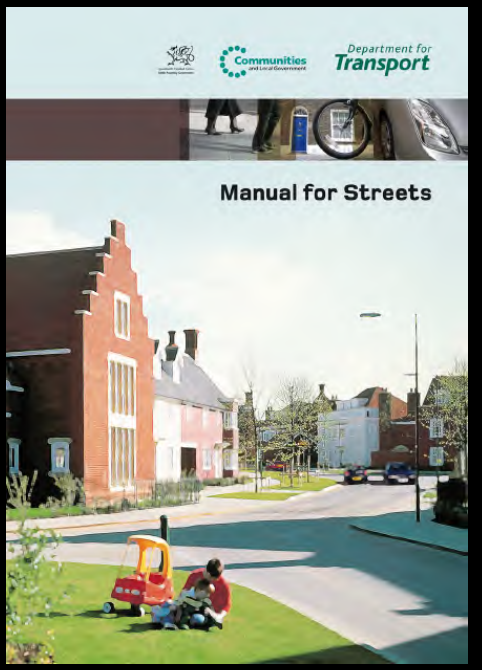
- Hierarchy: pedestrians first, cars last
- Revisions to local guidance

"… the most influential document
on urban design in 50 years"?

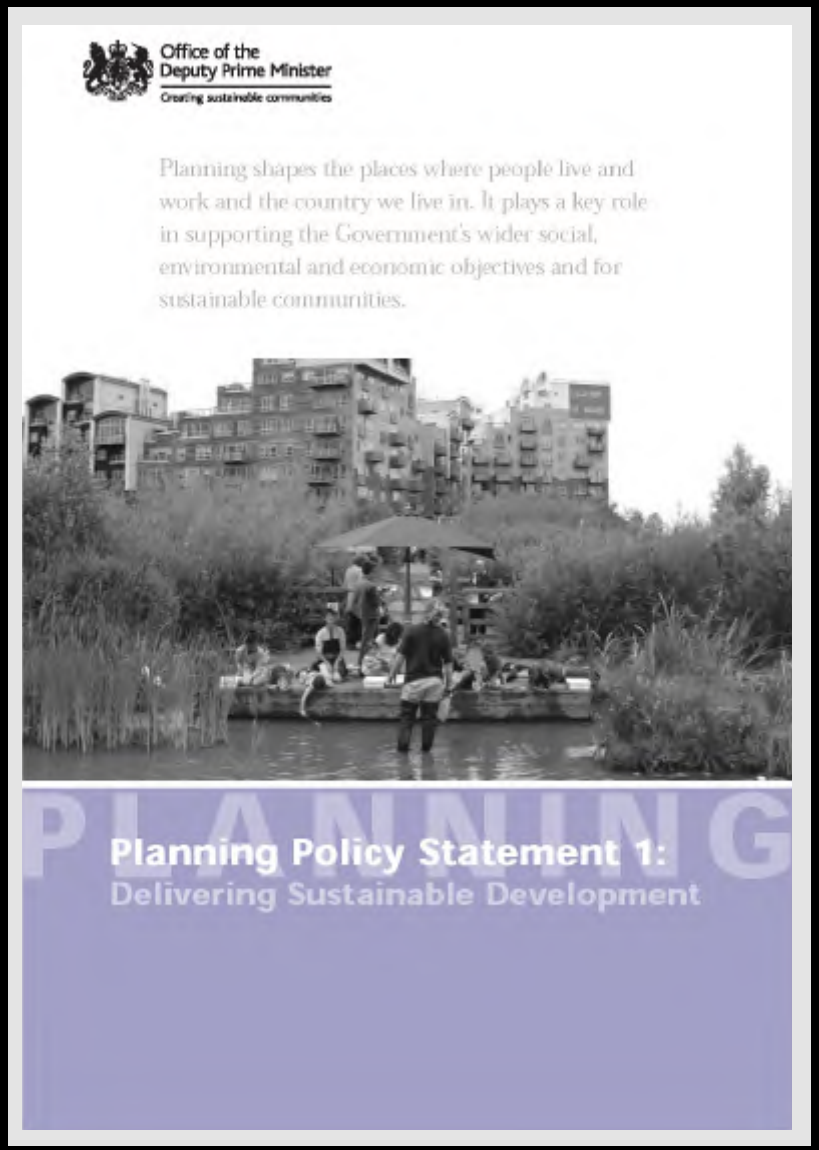
RTPI award 2008

Design guidance





A new dawn for design?



"Good design is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning"

Sharing responsibility

Friday, November 18, 2005 — Journal

Poor housebuilding 'fuels brain drain'

By Gary Bennett

(0191) 201-6290

POOR housebuilding is fuelling a brain-drain from the North-East and severely hampering its economic competitiveness, it was claimed yesterday.

A survey of almost 100 recent developments found just six to be good or very good and almost one in three – 31% – were poor.

TOP AND BOTTOM: Gateshead Southern homes, left, are highly praised, Villa Real Road, Consett, right, are slated

News

New housing audit of the North says more than 90% of new homes still suffer from poor to average design

Housing is grim up north, says Cabe

PLANNING

Homes fail design quality inspection

Strategy sets timetable for infrastructure

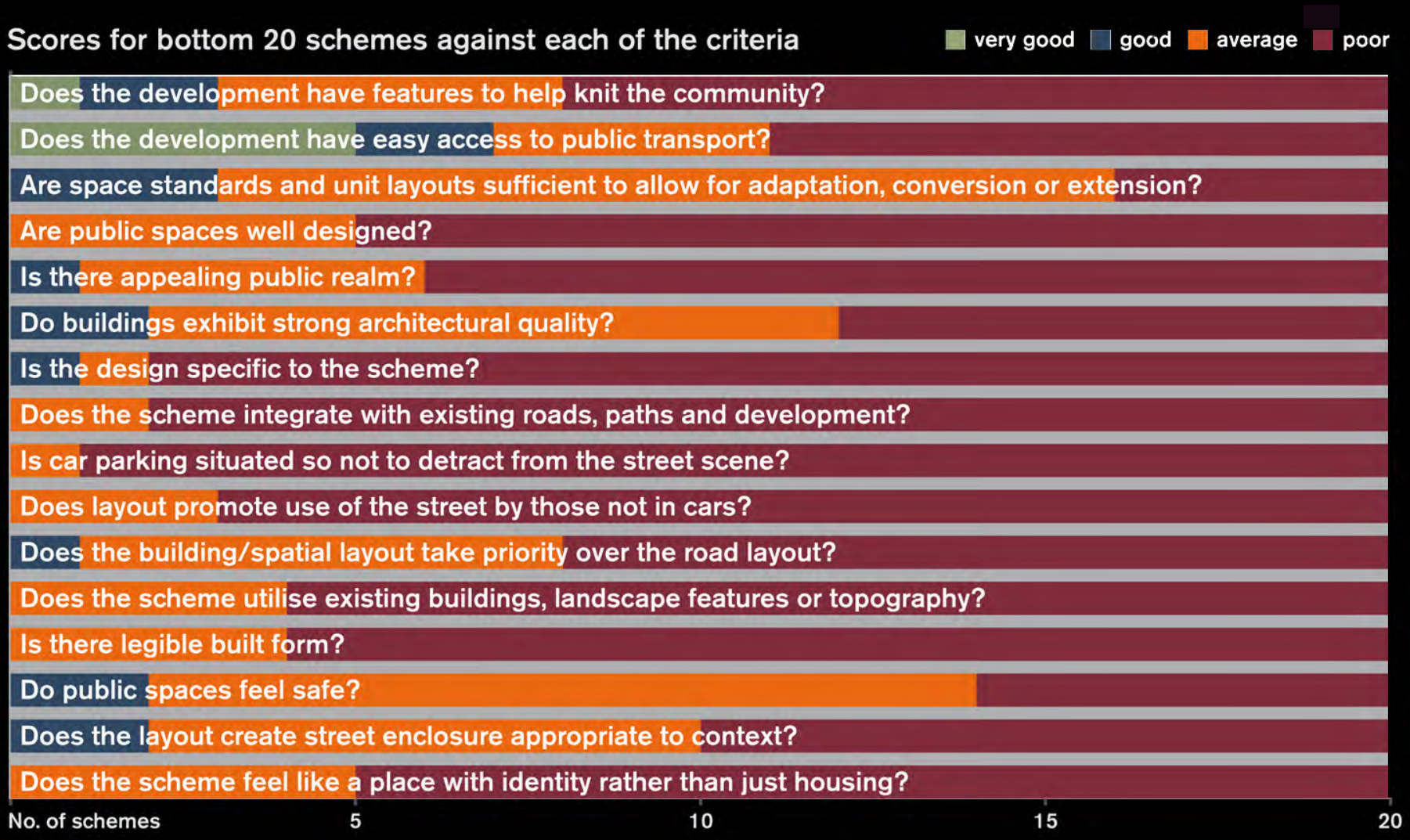
Business zone sanctioned in London Bridge

Contents

design contest

Nottingham reveals city centre outline

What's gone wrong?



What's gone wrong?

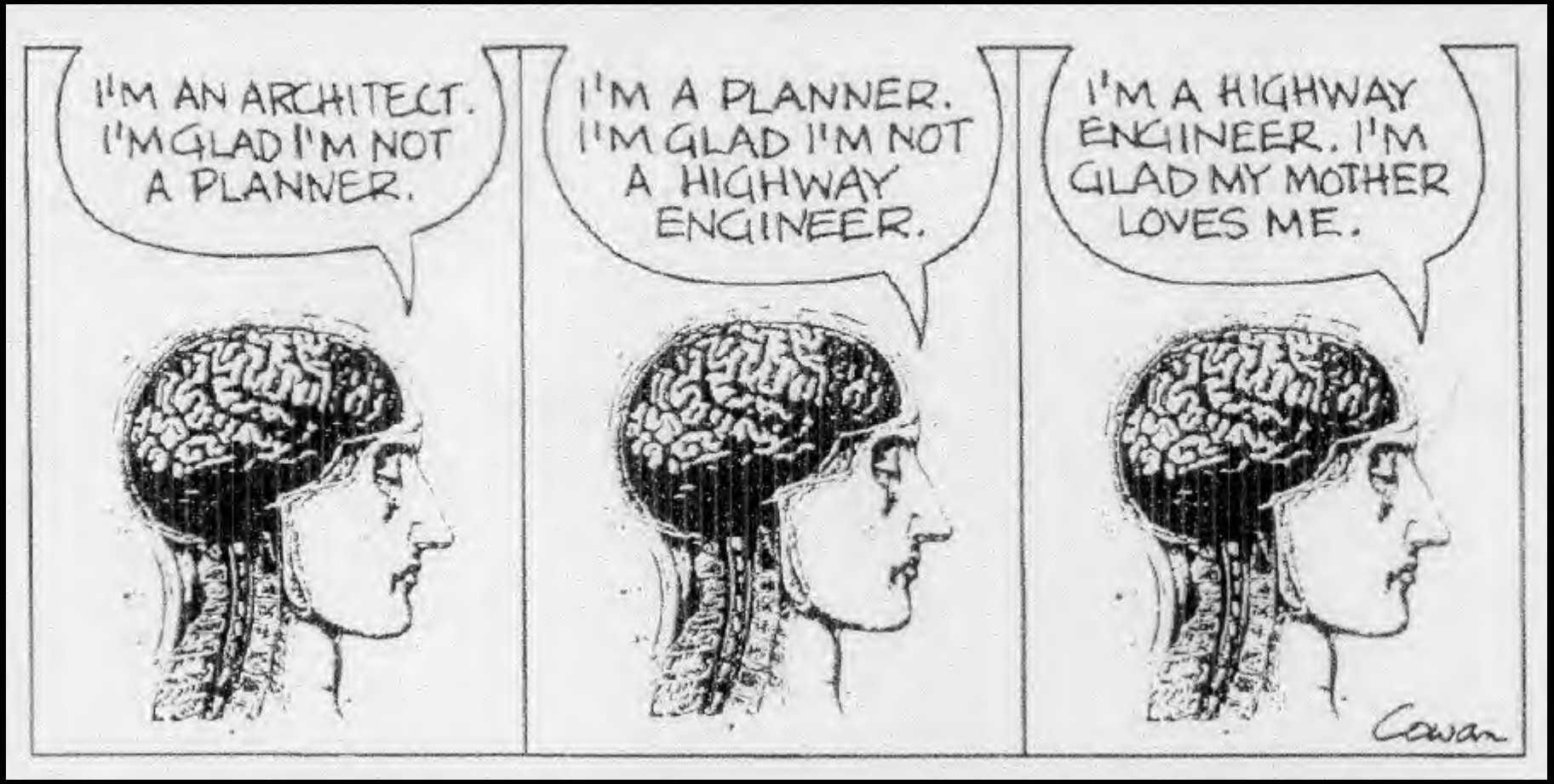
1. Car parking detracting from the street scene

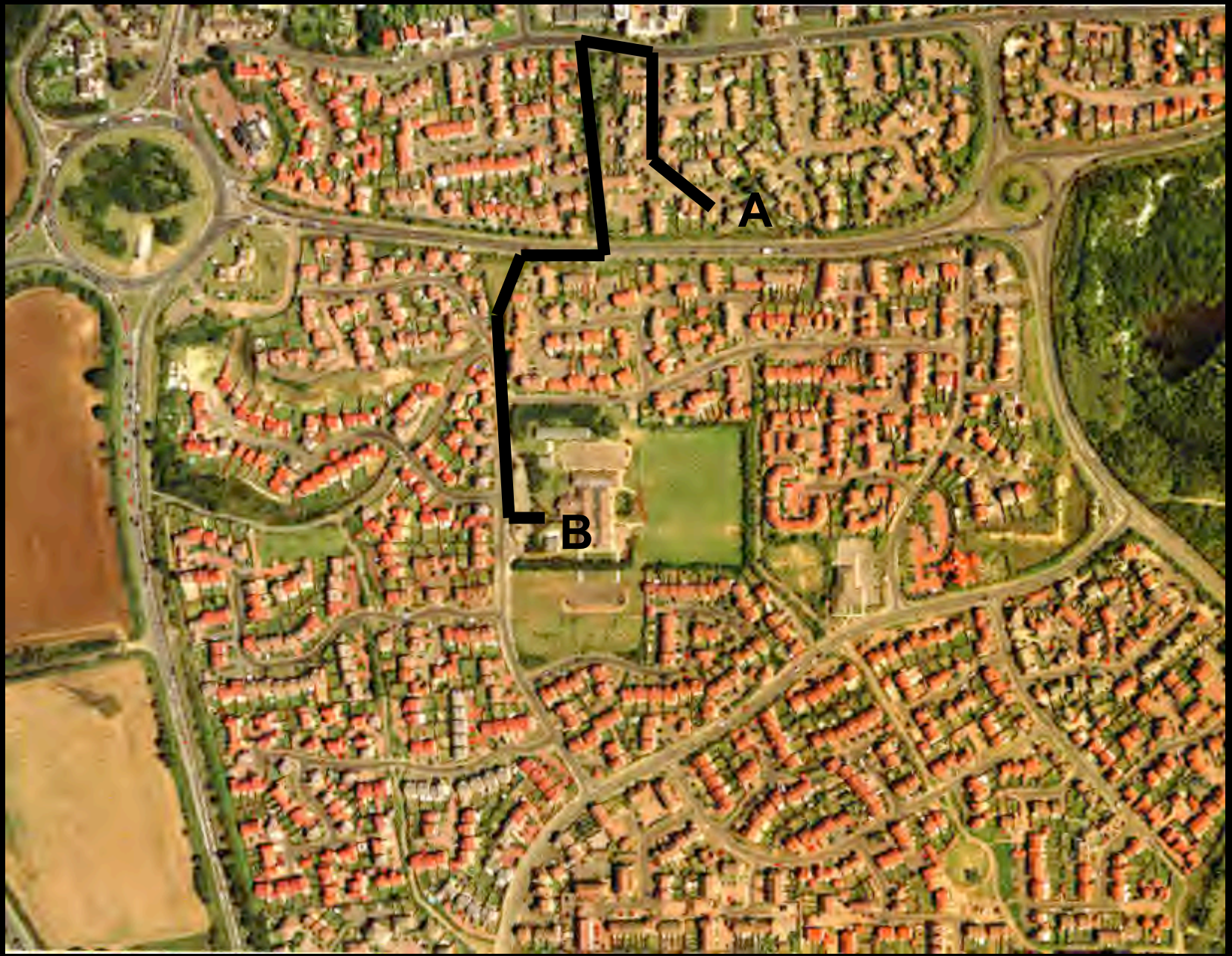
2. Lack of integration with existing roads, paths and development

2. Design not being specific to the scheme

4. Not promoting the use of the street by those not in cars

A blame game?


I'M AN ARCHITECT. I'M GLAD I'M NOT A PLANNER.
I'M A PLANNER. I'M GLAD I'M NOT A HIGHWAY ENGINEER.
I'M A HIGHWAY ENGINEER. I'M GLAD MY MOTHER LOVES ME.
Cowan


A
B

A
B

Quality design

Incoherent

Bad Design

- Typical cul-de-sac layout.
  - impermeable
  - no connection with surroundings
- Pedestrian routes unattractive and not overlooked
- Bus difficult
- Orientation difficult

Coherent

Good Design

- Well defined and connected layout
- Integrated with surrounding streets
- Both pedestrian and car links are legible
- Public transport easier to provide
- Easy to orientate

Quality design

Bad use of space

Bad Design

- Unpleasant, bland
- Poor definition of fronts and backs and public and private space
- Lack of continuous frontage
- Poor surveillance because of rear fence
- Lack of permeability
- No sense of place or identity
- No landscape attention
- Unsightly materials

Good use of space

Good Design

- Well defined public space
- Good continuous frontage, no rear garden fences on street
- Well overlooked car parking area
- Trees and hard landscape make attractive
- A clear identity
- Landscape intrinsic part of space

Quality design

Car dominated environment

Bad Design

- Poorly designed public realm
- Poor definition of public and private space
- Weak frontage
- No attention to landscape
- Unpleasant pedestrian environment
- Inefficient parking space

Pedestrian friendly environment

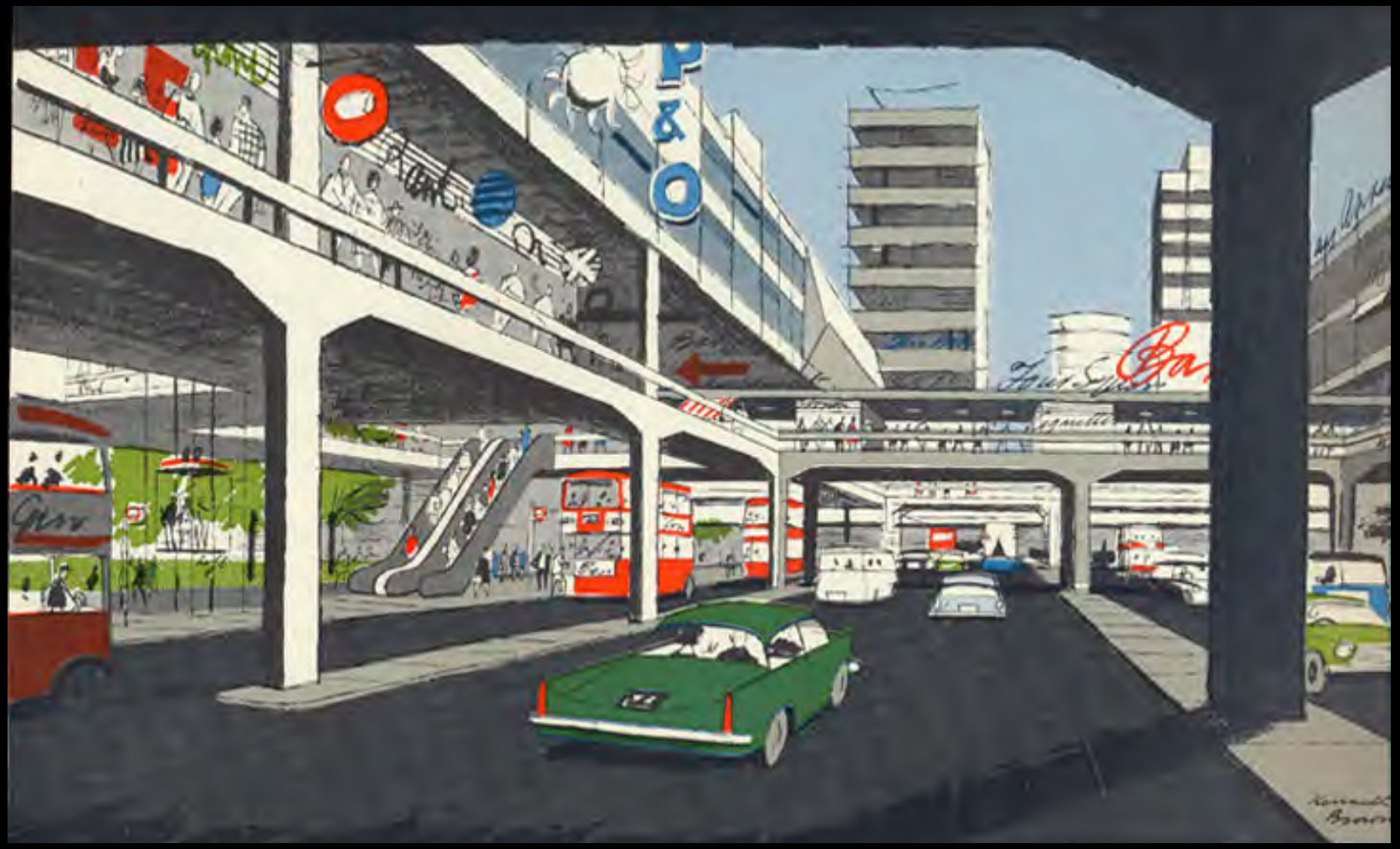
Good Design

- Strong street frontage
- Clear definition of private and public space
- Landscape creates pleasant pedestrian environment
- Parking is flexible and does not dominate

Quality street design checklist

Quality street design checklist

The primacy of the street: integration, not segregation of users



Quality street design checklist

The primacy of the street

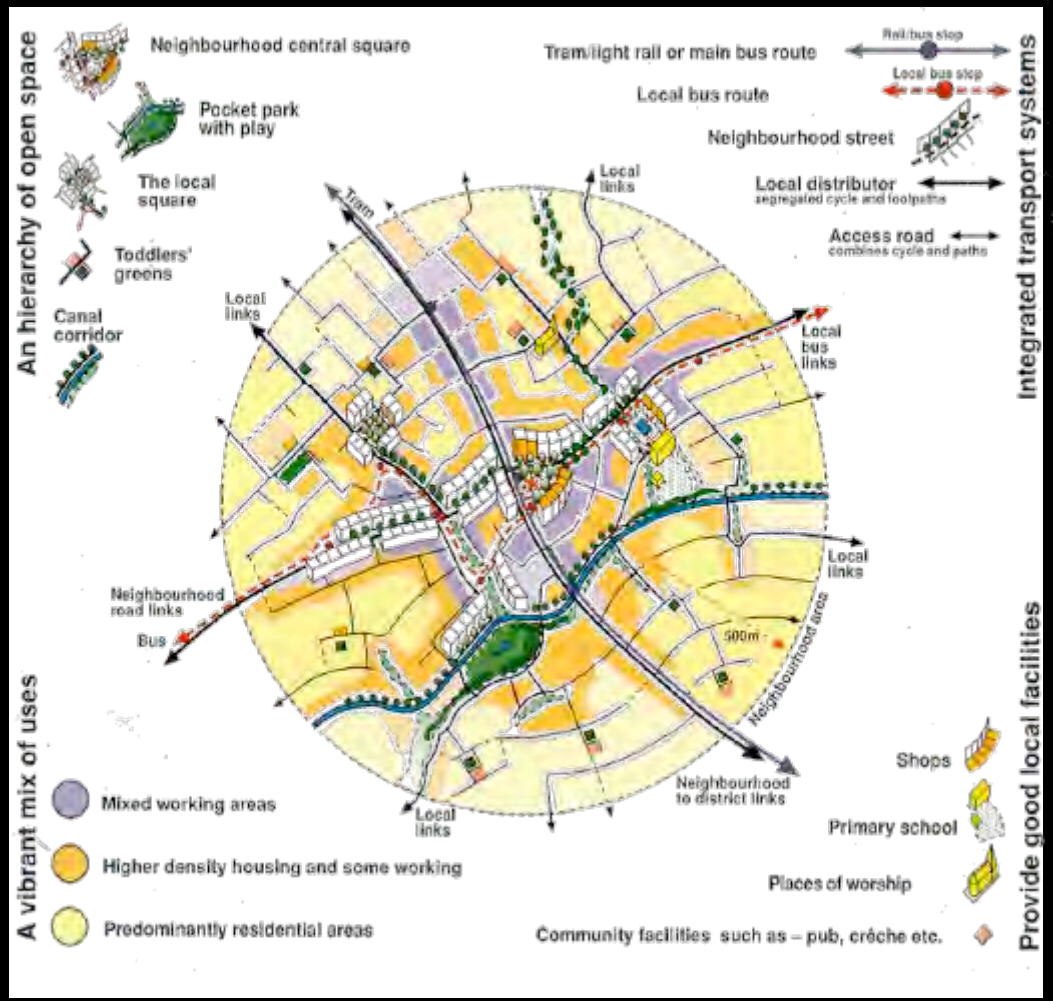
Connected networks

Quality street design checklist

The primacy of the street

Connected networks

The walkable neighbourhood



Quality street design checklist

The primacy of the street
Connected networks
The walkable neighbourhood
Streets as social spaces

Franz Otto Novotny, Northmoor Urban Art Project

Quality street design checklist

The primacy of the street

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Streets as social spaces

Local distinctiveness

Quality street design checklist

The primacy of the street
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Quality materials and planting

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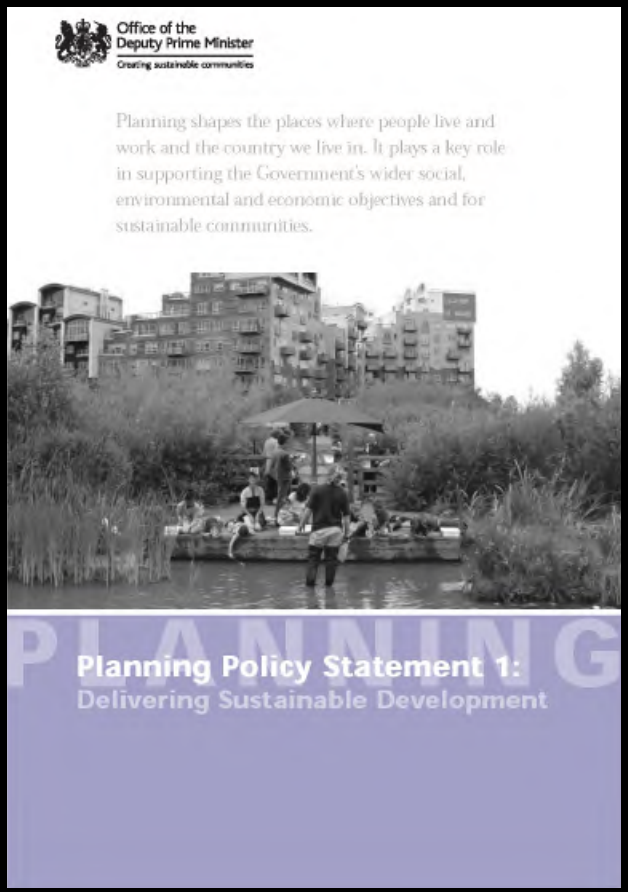
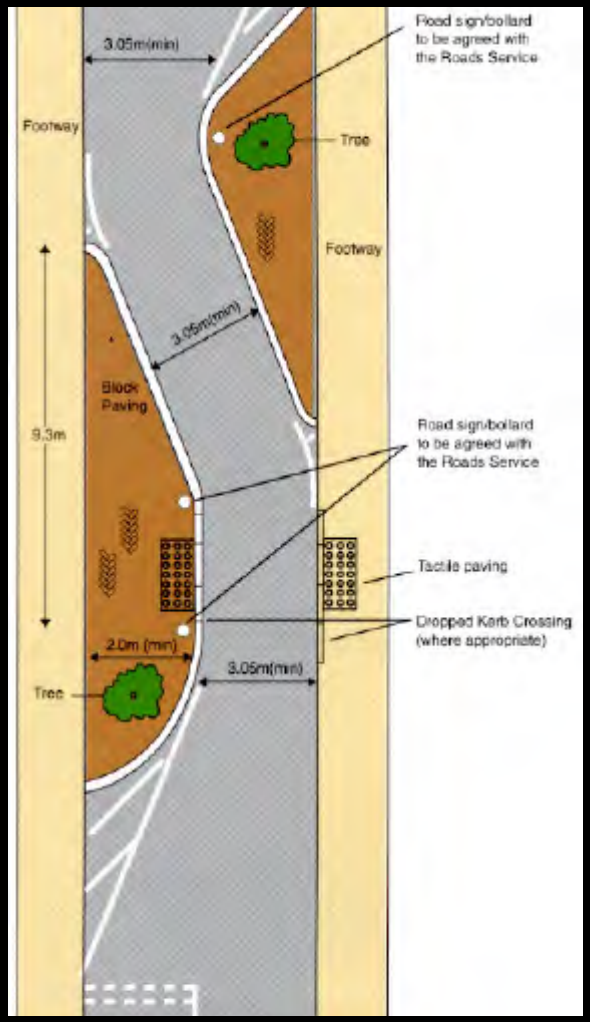
Quality materials and planting
Standing the test of time

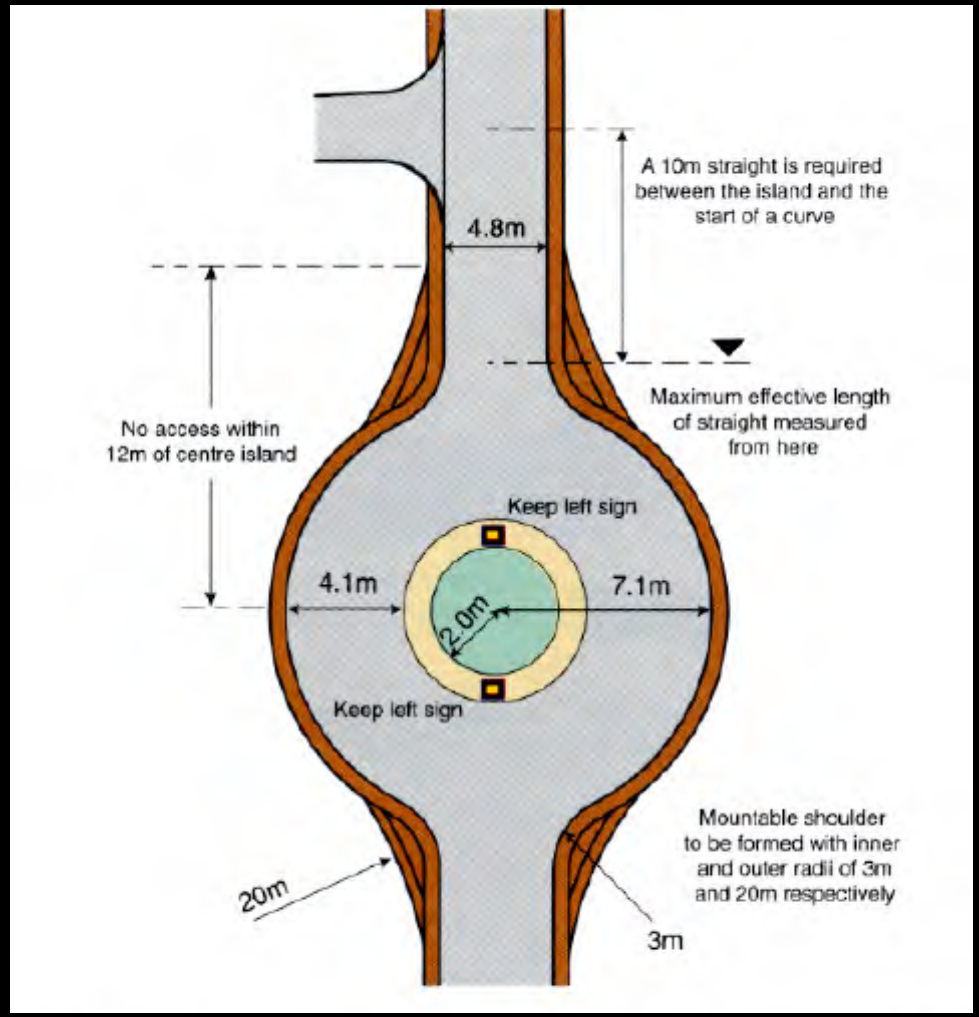
From policy to delivery



Design as highway, not as street or place



Typical layout of a chicane. In some cases a cycle by-pass will be needed

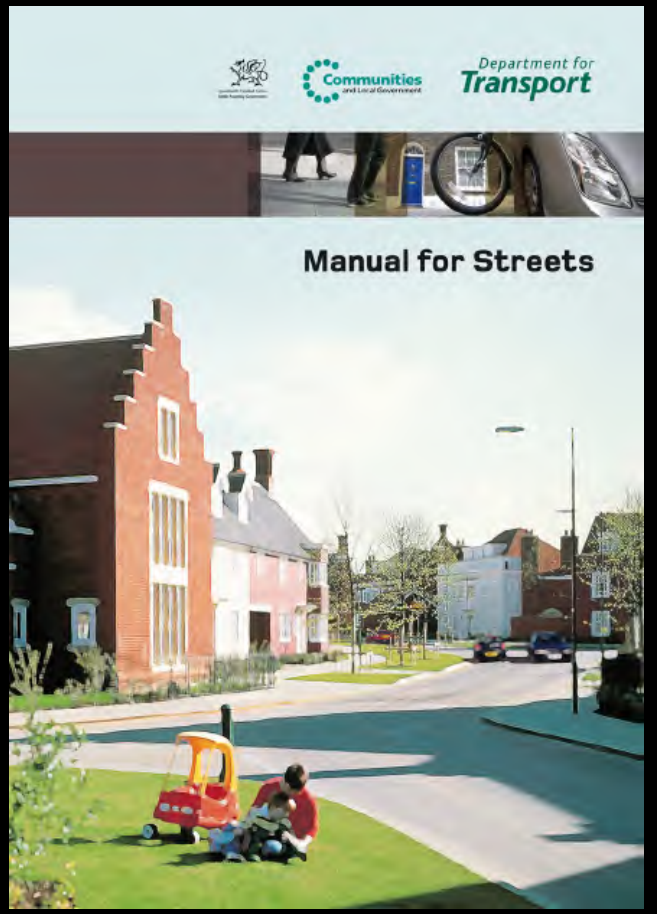


Typical layout of a speed control island. Carriageway narrowing to 4.8m will generally be required at the entrance to the island.

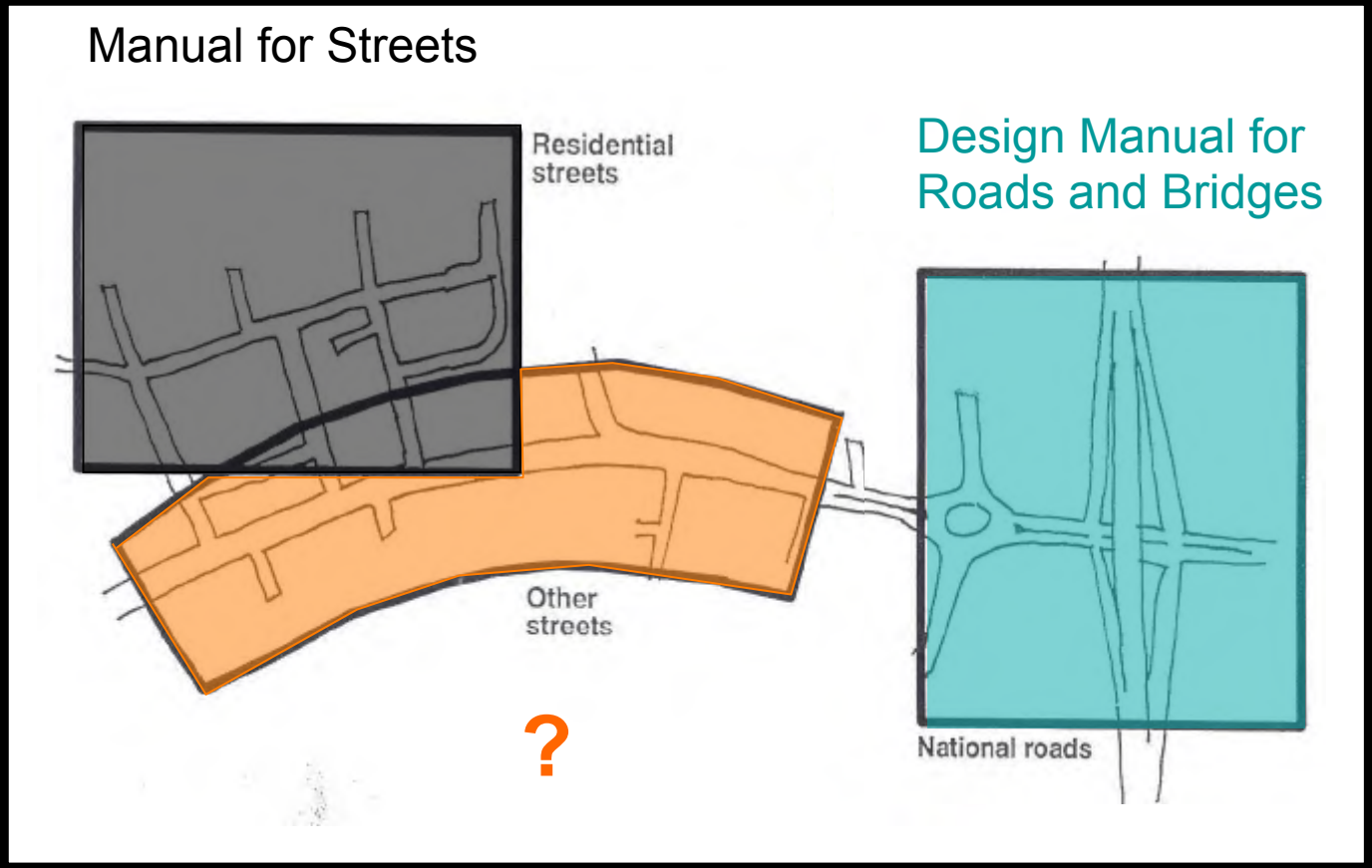
You get what you ask for!

Impact of MfS 2 years on

- Is making a difference, but not everywhere
- Better awareness of the issues
- 400 people through CABE training courses
- Local guidelines are being rewritten
- Opportunities not yet fully grasped….
- ….Culture change not yet happened

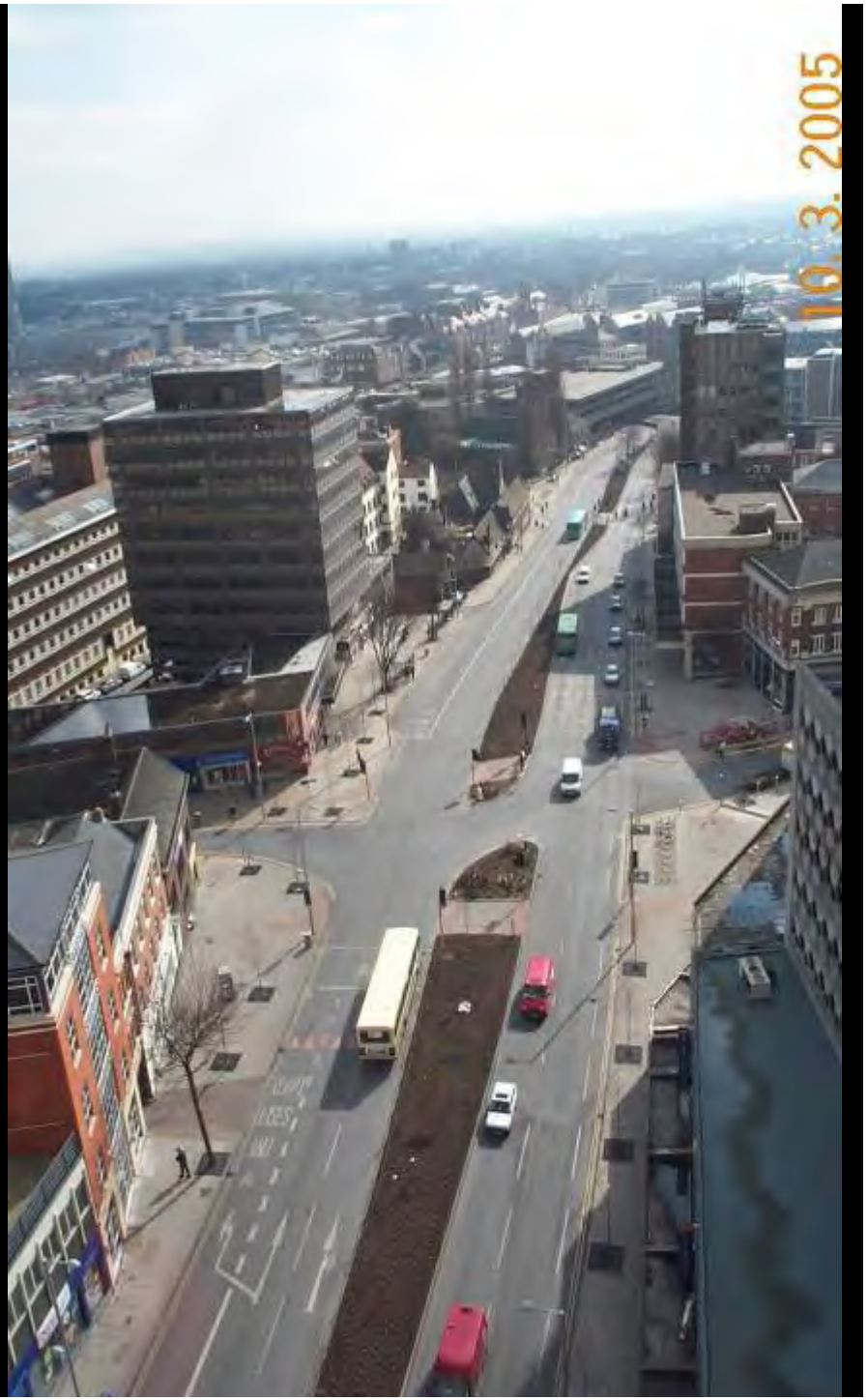


Wider application



Urban streets

Civilising urban streets



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