

but these relate more to the description of typical forms already existing, than to target patterns intended for network design application. When we look for any detailed guidance on specification of pattern, we do not find any explicit prescription.¹⁴

For example, in the UK, the general reference work *Transport in the Urban Environment* says little explicitly on the matter of network pattern. In the USA, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' 'Green Book' has no guidance on street pattern. In its opening chapter, indicative street layouts are shown, for the purposes of demonstrating the role of typical street types, but, throughout the rest of this comprehensive and authoritative volume, there is no suggestion of what a desirable or optimal street pattern should be.¹⁵

The UK design guide for residential roads and footpaths, *Design Bulletin 32*, alludes to a variety of kinds of layout, including 'hierarchical layouts' and 'network configurations', but it is not possible to infer exactly what is meant by these, as there are no accompanying diagrammatic examples. Therefore, although this kind of layout guidance has been accused of giving rise to 'a plethora of standardised housing layouts', in DB32 itself there is virtually no explicit guidance on overall street pattern. In other words, any 'monotonous' effect is surely the result of lack of imagination on the parts of the designers (of whatever profession). This hints that the highway engineering rules *per se* do not necessarily preclude good design, nor inevitably create 'bad urbanism'.¹⁶

In the USA and elsewhere, the New Urbanist movement and associated neo-traditional approaches have brought much creative effort to bear on the issue of street pattern. The principle of having interconnected streets is central to traditional neighbourhood design (TND).¹⁷ However, even the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Traditional Neighborhood Development Street Design Guidelines* have no explicit guidance on the overall form of street pattern – other than the general suggestion that 'TND streets are interconnected'.¹⁸

The elusive issue

Despite criticism of engineering standards in general, we look in vain for the actual traffic or highway engineering specification indicating what overall form street pattern should take. This is curious, since it implies that there is – if anything – a lack of guidance on the highways approach to pattern, rather than a straitjacket of authoritarian prescription.

In practice, highway and traffic engineering tends to deal with component parts rather than wholes. That is, they deal with the design of links,