city-planning decisions are translated into urban design decisions that are then translated into building and landscape designs. The flow of decision-making should go the other way as well.

Important decisions at the detailed level have ramifications for larger-scale decisions. Thus the whole process of city planning can be seen as moving from the precinct level to the city level, and then to the regional level. As decisions and their effects are so interwoven at each scale, it is possible to see urban design as a sub-specialization within planning, where planning meets architecture and landscape architecture. On the other hand it is possible to see urban design as the mediator between planning and architecture and neither one nor the other, although it encompasses both. Perhaps planning is a sub-area of urban design! In this view once decisions are made at the precinct level the problems of interrelationships amongst precincts can be addressed.

The design of linkages is particularly part of the overall planning and physical development strategy of a city. It is the armature on which the whole fabric of a city hangs. It is the shaping force of new town design; it feeds into urban design at the precinct level. Thus urban design is part of and contributes to city planning. City planning itself is seldom urban design, although in the design of places such as Brasília, city planning and urban design are indistinguishable. Perhaps the same can be said of Runcorn.

There are two types of products of city-planning work that can be urban design: master plans and precincts plans. Precinct plans can be divided into large number of types; city centre designs and neighbourhood designs in particular. There are other examples of precinct plans as well; for example, industrial precincts and urban renewal districts. To be urban design all need to deal with the three-dimensional qualities of the city and with the processes required to meet specific objectives in accordance with the vision of the future that they represent.