

land. The public may assume that the planning authority will be able to achieve its main design criteria and all the facilities required to make the development work. However, those in charge of the city council's finance have a duty to make as much money for the local authority as possible, which may mean that one department ends up in very difficult negotiations with several other departments. The department responsible for planning and urban design will be seeking to obtain the best possible design and benefits for the local community and to be consistent with the approach taken with private landowners. This problem is becoming more apparent as local authority budgets are less able to respond to the full range of local community wishes.

### **DESIGN BRIEF CONTENT**

Once basic planning requirements are established, planning negotiations enter a different level. A design concept should already have been established for the site, and the local authority should be developing and detailing the concept with the relevant parties. All new development is expected to provide variety and choice for people. 'A comprehensive urban design policy, spelling out the full range of design considerations that are important in a locality is important as the cornerstone of all design policies.'<sup>9</sup> The design brief should consider the following main subject areas: means of access by road and by other modes of transport; the relationship of the pedestrian, cyclist and the car; safety in the public realm; quality of design in street and public square including notes on achieving vitality and permeability; the identity and legibility of place; features of sustainable development; and open space and landscape strategy.

Until quite recently great emphasis has been placed on designing for the car. Highway engineers concerned to minimize road accidents have influenced site layout considerably, by their insistence

on separating the movement of cars from that of people. As a result, it is not permitted for houses to front main highways because the drives to those houses would create too many potential accident spots, given the speed for which the highways are designed.

In certain authorities such as Leicester there are proposals to slow traffic throughout the road system. Preference is now being given to other modes of transport and the dominance of the car is being reduced in the design of urban areas. For example, Leicester City Council is trying to ensure that all new development is within 200 m of a public transport route, in response to Design Bulletin 32. In addition 20 mph traffic zones are being introduced in residential layouts. The process of negotiating new residential road standards with highway engineers however, is relatively new, and many highway engineers remain to be convinced of this new orthodoxy.

In the public domain it is essential to consider how a development can be made as safe as possible by ensuring that public places are overlooked and that users feel comfortable using the streets by any mode of transport. The police have, until recently, concentrated on the home as a defended place so that housing has often turned its back on public places, so making people feel that they are unwelcome unless they actually live in the neighbourhood. Defining private and public spaces in design terms is essential in order to reduce the perceived fear of crime. This is possible by improving the quality of public spaces and by encouraging more people to use the streets, thus increasing natural surveillance. This should also be effective in creating a more vibrant atmosphere on city streets. Access considerations in urban areas need to emphasize the value of permeability and easy movement for the elderly, women, children and the disabled. Public Art policies also play a valuable role in creating a vibrant city and have their place in the design brief.

The Urban Design movement has been much influenced by the work of both Cullen and Lynch