responsibility towards some aspect of development, and actors who have *interest or influence* in the process. Although somewhat simplistic in its categorization the powergram graphically illustrates that the power is concentrated in the left hand side of the matrix. These actors can initiate and control development in a very direct way, whilst those on the right hand side have to rely on argumentation, alliance and participation to have any influence in the process.

Although the matrix does expose a huge potential to disadvantage the user group in the process of development, it also reveals the close congruence of interest between urban designers and everyday users which each must exploit to increase their influence in the decision making and design process. Urban designers need to stress the political significance of this congruence of interest with user groups in the local development process, and must take a proactive role in gaining financial and political support for participatory exercises from local and central government and developers themselves. The ability to make convincing evaluations of how particular objectives will confer benefits for identified groups via the design process is essential if urban designers are to be effective in their alliance with everyday users.

However, there is a lamentable lack of good practice upon which to develop methods and techniques for enabling a genuinely exploratory and interactive debate between actors. One of the methods which, in a very concentrated way, tries to even out the imbalance illustrated in the 'powergram' is the design *charrette*, which, in a highly orchestrated forum, is designed for the open evaluation of design proposals.

Conclusion

In the context of this paper a key point to emerge is the role of the urban designer as an enabler of user involvement. The urban designer needs to be aware of the political, social and economic forces impacting on the situation, and be able to engage in the debate whilst having sufficient knowledge of the form implications of those forces such that he or she can lead a design team and produce, under great pressure, as many design outcomes as are deemed necessary to achieve consensus. This imposes an enormous responsibility on the role of the urban designer particularly in the current climate where interest groups which do not have great political power are slowly but measurably demanding far greater input into the design process, wishing to scrutinize what is proposed by those with the power, and desiring to have someone to help them communicate their own responses via design alternatives. Enquiry by design is vital, and the design *charrette* provides a practical demonstration of the combination of knowledge and skills which urban designers must possess in order to be effective in the contribution which they can make to both the process and product of urban development.

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