



Homes
England

Design Quality Assessment at Homes England place making for local delivery

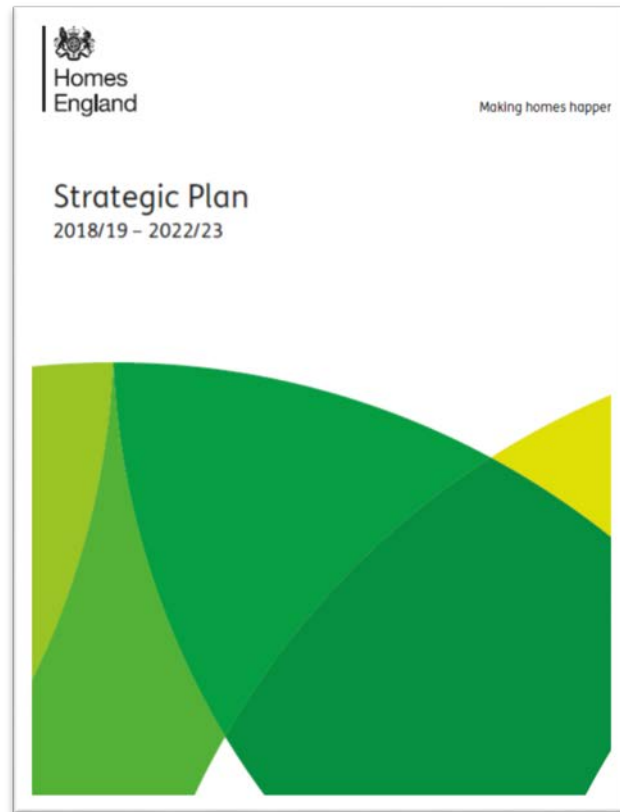
Dan Roberts Planning, Enabling & Development team

East Midlands Councils CPD, 7 February 2019

Our Strategic Plan

Homes England was launched in January 2018 to play a major role in fixing the housing market.

At Budget 2018, we published our five-year Strategic Plan explaining the steps we'll take, in partnership with the sector, to do this.



“The new Homes England is all about making homes happen – and our new five-year plan sets out our ambitious new approach. We are committing to boosting housing supply, productivity, innovation, quality, skills and modern methods of construction to help make a more diverse and resilient market.”

Nick Walkley
Chief Executive, Homes England

Our mission and objectives

Our mission is to intervene in the market to ensure more homes are built in areas of greatest need, to improve affordability.

We will make this sustainable by creating a more resilient and diverse housing market.

Our objectives



We'll unlock public and private land where the market will not, to get more homes built where they are needed.



We'll ensure a range of investment products are available to support housebuilding and infrastructure, including more affordable housing and homes for rent, where the market is not acting.



We'll improve construction productivity.



We'll create a more resilient and competitive market by supporting smaller builders and new entrants, and promoting better design and higher quality homes.



We'll offer expert support for priority locations, helping to create and deliver more ambitious plans to get more homes built.



We'll effectively deliver home ownership products, providing an industry standard service to consumers.

Delivering Quality

#MakingHomesHappen

Our aim

to become a respected master developer



- by leading and collaborating from concept through to legacy
- by creating place and value

role of master developer

- take on 'up front' responsibility:
site acquisition, de-risking of site
- infrastructure spending
- secure planning framework, to provide
planning certainty:
master planning, o/l planning consent
- design development
- deliver schemes
- ensure scheme quality



The Rise, Scotswood: RTPI Planning for Excellence Award July 2015
"Excellence in Planning to Deliver Housing"

introducing design quality assessment at Homes England

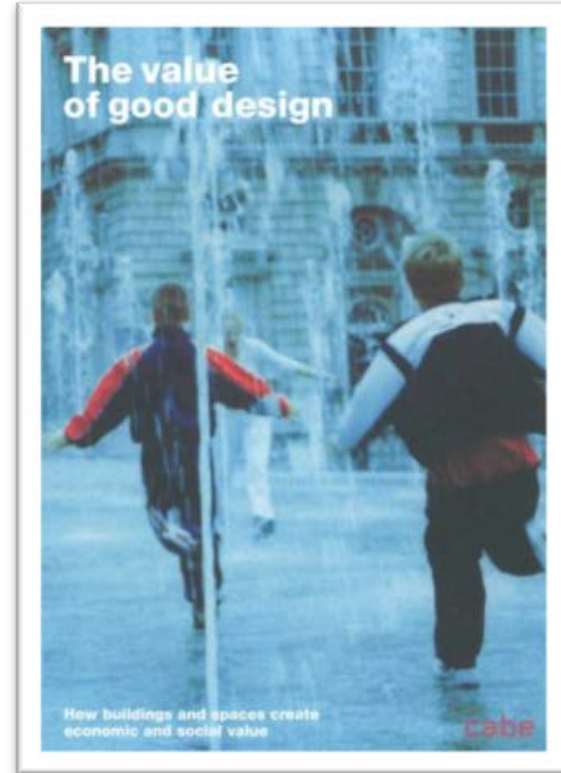
- why?
- what?
- how?
- when?

- some lessons learnt & conclusions drawn



benefits of place making and design quality

- community engagement
- potential uplift in value
- physical and mental well-being
- reduction in social costs
- alignment with MHCLG



design quality: the changing context and policy basis

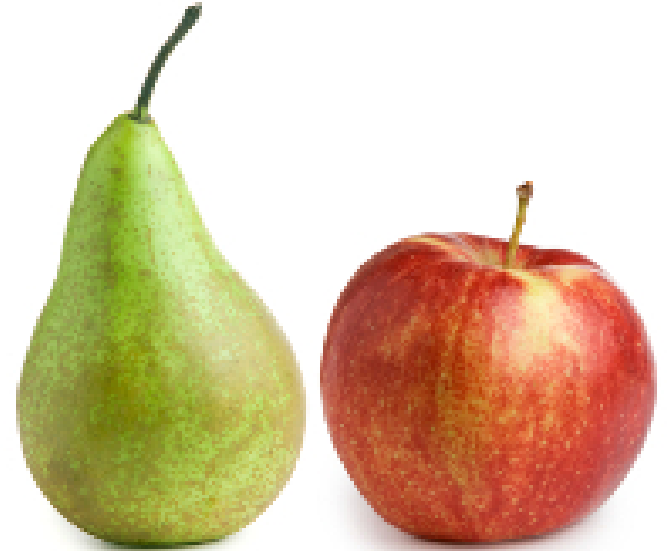
- revised NPPF & Housing White Paper
- Garden Communities programme
- Planning Delivery Fund
- MHCLG – recruitment of new team
- MHCLG’s Design Quality Steering Group
- Design Conferences – Apr.18, Feb.19



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Homes England, inherited position

- no design standards
- reliance on LPAs' local plan policies
- 70:30 ratio favours quantitative assessment
- inconsistency across programmes and teams
- lacks clarity for development partners
- risk of non-policy compliance



consequences of the lack of assessment

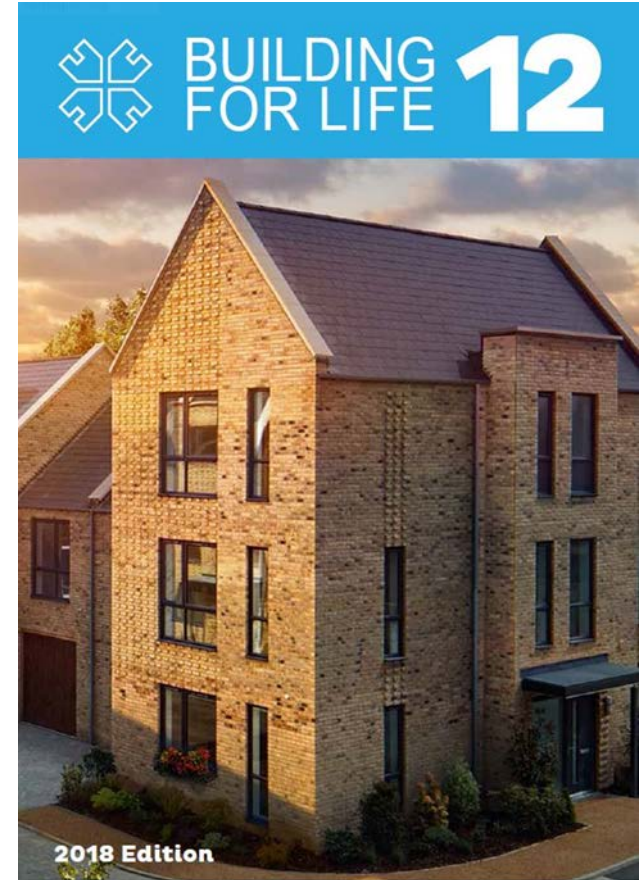
- confusion, side-lining of consideration
- some low quality schemes
- can lead to planning delays and objections
- not aligned with the Ministry and LPAs
- lack of leadership role
- incorrect outputs due to policy changes
but also some notable outcomes...
eg. Manor Kingsway, Northstowe design code

therefore, the decision to introduce an
assessment of design quality at Homes England



proposed assessment

- assessment using Homes England Land Programmes as a first phase
- then to Affordable Housing Programme and Investment
- wider role of design influence
- based on the Building for Life 12 criteria, plus other 'tools' available
- pursued throughout the 'whole life' of a project, including beyond construction
- tailored to agency processes (Gateways)



the 'toolkit' of methods and techniques

- Building for Life 12
- Building with Nature
- Design Review
- Design Codes
- Manual for Streets
- Secured by Design
- guidance, eg. Qualityreviewer &
• Urban Design Compendium
- + best practice examples

(MHCLG work on tools and processes)



requirement of submission

- scale of development (>50 homes)
- bidders' self assessment of 12 criteria
- particular emphasis on criterion 5; 'locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character' (9+1 questions)
- 1 x A4 sheet per question



evaluation

- developers required to demonstrate quality in terms of BfL12
 - self assessments will be scrutinised !
 - pass/ fail element:
 - need to attain a minimum number of greens
 - evaluation of responses to 10 questions:
 - will account for 10% of overall score
- + ability for developers to apply for external accreditations



Secured by Design



next steps

- rolling training programme
- proposed adoption during Spring 2019;
pilot projects underway
- Agency's own DQ guidance



some lessons learnt

- use of existing, accepted tools and methods
- (eg. BfL12, design review)
- consider the 'whole life' of a project
- identify when it is best to use the most appropriate tools
- ability to adapt to local context and circumstances
- specific and/ or mandatory requirements (eg. via simple development brief)



some general conclusions

- gain support/ commitment across and throughout the organisation
- consider using external trainers/ advice; credibility
- provide a transparent and consistent approach
- keep it simple – usability, practicalities
- be realistic regarding the pace and extent of implementation and achievement – phasing



design quality is back on the agenda at Homes England

we are aiming to create better places, everywhere

thank you