Contents

Lis	t of figures	Xiii
Lis	t of plan policy extracts	xv
Lis	t of tables	xvii
Preface and acknowledgements		xix
Credits		xxiii
1	Introduction: origins, methods and structure	1
	Introduction	1
	The design dimension in planning	1
	The origins of the research	4
	Key research questions	5
	The intended scope of the study	5
	Research for the Department of the Environment	6
	Content analysis: strengths and weaknesses	7
	Selecting plans for analysis	8
	Detailed case studies	10
	Further research for the ESRC project	11
	The organization of the book	12
2	The development of design policy in England	15
	Introduction	15
	The development of policy	15
	The origins of design control in town planning schemes	15
	The 1932 Act and 1933 Circular	18
	The 1930s 'battle of the styles'	18
	Design in comprehensive development control	18
	Ministerial advice	20
	The development of conservation legislation	22
	Design guidance and the critique of the standards approach	23

3

Unfettering the development industry: Circular 22/80	26
Design considerations in use in development control	27
The Prince of Wales and Francis Tibbalds: new design codes	28
Ministerial enthusiasm and new design advice, 1990	31
The 'green agenda' and ecological urban design	31
District-wide plans and a plan-led system	32
The pursuit of 'quality' in town and country, 1994-96	33
The key themes in government advice	34
Design is largely a matter of elevations and architectural form	34
Restraint in the operation of control	35
Leaving initiative with the architect and developer	35
Valid considerations in design	35
The development and its context	36
Constructive and professional advice to the applicant	36
The subjectivity of aesthetics	36
A two-tier system of control	37
Publicity, participation and education	37
A flawed orthodoxy and a lack of leadership	37
Critiques of the operation of design control	38
Conclusion	39
Central government advice on design and scrutiny	
of plan policies	44
Introduction	44
Central government advice on design	45
General design matters: PPG 1, Annex A	45
Sustainable development: PPG 12	47
Conservation areas and listed buildings: PPG 15	47
Other sources of design advice	51
Housing design: PPG 3 and PPG 13	51
Industrial and commercial development: PPG 4 and PPG 6	52
Open space and nature conservation: PPG 9 and PPG 17	53
Green belts and countryside: PPG 2 and PPG 7	54
Other functional design considerations: disabled access,	
crime and noise	55
Advertisements and satellite dishes	56
Trees and landscaping	56
Summary: advice on design policies	57
Enhancement proposals	58
The content of development plans and design policy formulation	58
The impact of government advice on plan policy	59
A plan-led system?	60
'Presumptions against' and 'non-land-use' policies	60
The new focus on plan content	61
DoE regional office scrutiny of policy content and force	61
Policies should not be over-prescriptive	62
Policies should not be over-detailed	62
Policies should be flexible	63
Policies should not set mandatory standards	63
Policies should not constitute presumptions against development	63

	Non-land-use policies should be excluded from the plan	63
	Policies should not be confused with guidance	64
	Conservation policies should not seek preservation	
	and enhancement	64
	Policies should not be vague	65
	Policies should not be long-winded and imprecise	65
	Policies should be positively phrased where possible	65
	Policies should be justified	66
	Resolving these criticisms	66
	Conclusion	67
	Recommendations for action	67
4	The fundamentals of design: substantive and procedural theory	
	as a basis for policy	68
	Introduction	68
	Exploring the substance of design	68
	Design as external appearance	68
	Aesthetics and design	69
	Responsive, operational and inferential modes of perception	70
	The townscape tradition	72
	Social concerns and urban design	73
	The public realm	74
	Urban experience and public perceptions	75
	Developing principles of urban design	76
	Ecological urban design and sustainability	79
	Components of urban design	80
	Procedural aspects of design	81
	Design as a process	83
	Creating a climate for good design	84
	The 'public interest' in design	86
	The scale dimension of urban design	87
	The time dimension of urban design	88
	Conclusion	88
	Recommendations for action	89
5	Policy conception, organization, expression and presentation	92
	Introduction	92
	A theoretical basis for policy conception and organization	92
	Central government advice	95
	Policy organization	96
	Overall plan strategy and design objectives	98
	Location of design policies	99
	Policy expression	101
	Key factors in expression	101
	Types of expression	101
	Policy phrasing, conciseness and language	109
	Lower-case text and reasoned justification	111
	Use of maps and illustrations	112
	Conclusion	114
	Recommendations for action	114

6	Appraisal and consultation as a basis for design policy Introduction	116 116
	A theoretical basis for appraisal and consultation	117
	Central government advice on appraisal and consultation	119
	Appraisal in current plans	121
	The key requirements of appraisals	123
	The need for comprehensive methodologies	123
	The importance of being analytical rather than descriptive	129
	The need for participative, collaborative and comprehensible	
	appraisals	131
	The need for appraisals to be resource efficient	133
	Other potential consultation initiatives	136
	Conclusion	138
	Recommendations for action	139
7		141
	Introduction	141
	A theoretical basis for urban design policy	141
	Central government advice on urban design policy	142
	Urban design in current plans	143
	The lack of theory in policy	143
	Design strategies	144
	New settlements and urban villages	147
	Sustainable urban forms	149
	Perceptual elements	151
	Townscape	155
	Views and skyline protection	158
	Urban form	161
	Density	161
	Residential density	163
	Building height	164
	Massing	165
	Scale and building form	166
	Morphology and grain	166
	Daylight and sunlight	167
	Public realm	169
	Mixed use	171
	Crime and safety	173
	Accessibility	174
	Public art	177
	The suburban public realm: layout	177
	Highway layout	178
	Parking	178
	Sustainable layouts	179
	Layouts: the public and private realms	179
	Alternative approaches to writing urban design policies	182
	Policies for particular contexts	182
	Policies for particular development types	188
	Scale differentiation policies	195
	Conclusion	196
	Recommendations for action	197
	Notes	199

Architecture	200
Introduction	200
A theoretical basis for architectural policy	20
The fallacies of architectural judgement	202
The contemporary dilemma of style and façade	203
Central government advice on architecture policy	200
Architectural policy coverage in current plans	206
Architectural policies	208
Architectural skills	209
Encouraging contemporary design	209
Visual appropriateness: relating architecture to the context	213
Visual appropriateness: expressing a building's use	
and importance	214
Visual appropriateness: expressing a building's form	
and structure	215
Scale as a key aspect of architecture	216
Visual interest and richness	216
Architectural style	218
Materials	218
Minority group architectural expression	223
Personalization	223
Architectural responses to the public realm	224
Sustainable architecture	224
Conclusion	226
Recommendations for action	228
	224
Landscape	230
Introduction	230
A theoretical basis for landscape policy	231
Central government advice on landscape policy	232
Landscape policy coverage in current plans	233
Landscape policies	237
Landscape appraisal	240
A strategic greenspace frame for development	245
Open space	246
Landscape frameworks Landscaping	240
Trees	249
The selection of species	249
Hard landscaping	253
Landscape and planning procedures	255
	256
Site appraisals of landscape	256
Landscape details in applications	258
Landscape as a reserved matter	258
Management during construction	258
Landscape implementation and establishment	260
The need for new government guidance Conclusion	260
Recommendations for action	262
Recommendations for action	204

10	Conservation and listed buildings	264
	Introduction	264
	A theoretical basis for conservation policy	264
	Central government advice on conservation	269
	Conservation policies in current plans	272
	Conservation area designation and boundary review	273
	Conservation area character assessments	276
	Assessment methodologies	277
	Enhancement proposals	278
	An overarching conservation policy	280
	Urban design in conservation areas	281
	Architecture policies	284
	Façadism and demolition	287
	Landscape policies	287
	Development minutiae	290
	Special design process considerations in conservation areas	292
	Listed buildings policies	293
	Conclusion	296
	Recommendations for action	297
11	Design process and procedure policies: implementation	***
	and monitoring	299
	Introduction	299
	A theoretical basis for process policies	299
	Central government advice	301
	Process policies in current plans	302
	Design and planning procedures	303
	Seeking design advice	304
	Site appraisal	306
	Design briefing	307
	Phasing	307
	Application presentation	309
	Implementation	310
	A corporate approach to enhancement	311
	Monitoring	311
	Conclusion	314
	Recommendations for action	315
12	Supplementary design guidance and development plans	316
	Introduction	316
	A theoretical basis for supplementary guidance	316
	Central government advice	317
	Design guidance in contemporary plans	321
	Types of design guidance found in plans	322
	The relation of guidance to policy	325
	Conclusion	331
	Recommendations for action	331
13	The effectiveness of design policies	333
	Introduction	333

A preliminary study of effectiveness	334
Consumers' views of plan effectiveness	334
A low awareness level of policy content	335
Policies are clear and easy to understand	336
Development interests prefer very general policies but amenity	
interests seek strong and specific policies	336
Consumers find the policies broadly acceptable	336
Most consumers positively endorse the policies	337
The new policies will not change current control practice	337
New design policies will not achieve better design	338
The nature of the development process, the lack of design skills	
and poor public taste are the chief barriers to better design	338
Supplementary design guidance should be included	
with the plan	338
Planners' perspectives on effectiveness	339
Effective policies are those that win appeals	339
Effectiveness can be achieved by using policies to educate	007
controllers	339
Effectiveness can be achieved through ensuring the consistent	507
application of clear policies	340
Effectiveness can be achieved by increasing architectural	540
patronage and the exercise of architectural skills	340
Policies will not be effective in raising overall design quality	340
	340
without public investment and proactive intervention	340
Good policies still require skilled staff and time to ensure	241
effective implementation	341
Conservation policies remain the most effective design control	
policies	341
Planners concurred with the observation that public awareness	
of plan content was very low	341
Planners believe that policies need to be strongly expressed,	
tailored to the locality and quite specific, to be capable of	
being effectively implemented	342
Assessing planners' perceptions	342
Assessing the evidence of appeals	343
Assessing effectiveness in terms of design outcomes	343
Conclusion	344
Conclusions	346
Introduction	346
The 'policy-writing jamboree'	347
Setting priorities for policy improvement and development	348
Tailoring the recommendations to the locality	348
Utilizing control experience in policy-writing	349
The substantive recommendations	349
A process view of design	350
The fundamental importance of context, broadly conceived	350
Integrate built and natural environmental concerns, and	220
emphasize sustainability	351
	A

14

Appraisal of area character should underpin design policies	
and solutions	351
Design has a strategic and spatial dimension	352
Design policies must provide a framework for supplementary	
design guidance	352
A comprehensive urban design policy will be the cornerstone	
of design policy	353
Policies should pay special attention to the prevention of	
overdevelopment	353
Architectural policies should encourage the exercise of	
architectural skills and the development of contemporary	
designs that none the less respect their context	353
Landscape rather than landscaping is seen as a critical design	
issue at all scales of design thinking, and as a key consideration	
in sustainable development	354
Conservation policies should place more emphasis upon	
architectural policies and opportunities for new development,	
while the setting of listed buildings should be emphasized	
in policy	354
The implementation aspects of policy always need to be	
carefully considered, and policies can be written to facilitate this	355
Design policies need to be effectively monitored to assess and	
improve their effectiveness, and to ensure political and public	
support for design control	355
New central government advice	350
Design	350
Impediments to improved design control	360
The development process and design quality	360
Public taste and visual literacy	36
The design skills of planners	362
The commitment of councillors to design quality	36
Public sector leadership in design quality	363
Refuting the criticisms of design control	36
Bibliography	36
General	36
Central government advice	386
Circulars	386
Planning Policy Guidance Notes	38
Legislation	38
Appendix A: List of plans content analysed	388
Appendix B: Design advice in PPG 1, February 1997	39
Design	39
Annex A: handling of design issues	39
Index	395