The Role of Reading in a Dynamic Knowledge Economy 1980 – 2050

Prof John Worthington MBE
Founder, DEGW
Collaborative Urbanist

Former Commissioner, ITC
Honorary Academician, AoU

www.academyofurbanism.org.uk
Personal Perspective: A Career in Three Parts

Learning… the Formative Years
1952 – 1970

1938: Born, India
1952 – 56: School, Norwich
1957 – 59: National Service, Germany
1959 – 64: Study, AA, Europe
1965 – 69: Study, Work & Travel USA & Canada
1969 – 71: Work, Teaching & Homemaking

Practicing… Academia, Learning, Doing
1970 – 2003

1970 – 1982: DEGW, rethinking research, design and delivery
1982 - 1992: Growing an international business from understanding the workplace
1992 - 2003: Academic interlude, consolidating concepts, external thought leadership

Giving Back … Corporate to Civil Society
2003 onwards

2003 - 2015: Consulting, Community, Academia, Learning and Practice
2015 - 17: Period of Collaboration and consolidation

DEGW
Influences and Inspirations

Unitarian church
Centraal Beheer Apeldoorn
The thick wall pattern
Change is both Seismic and incremental Transitional and transformational
Layered decisions – what is fixed and what is adaptable?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Shell</th>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Scenery</th>
<th>Settings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESTABLISHED</td>
<td>50-75 years</td>
<td>10-15 years</td>
<td>5-7 years</td>
<td>Day to day</td>
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<tr>
<td>MATURE</td>
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<tr>
<td>YOUTHFUL</td>
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<tr>
<td>INFANT</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Premises Ladder - Source: DEGW Hackney & Islington Redundant Building Studies 1977

“A thriving local economy allows for a mix of functions, tenure and accommodation types”

DEGW / Frank Duffy Dissertation, 1974
Planning for Changing Organisations and Spatial Settings

Orbit 2 Multiclient study, DEGW 1985
Understanding Demand and Supply

The Corporate Board

Project Sponsor

Demand

- Minimise Cost (efficiency)
- Increase Productivity (effectiveness)
- Reflect Continuous Business Change
- Keep option open to last responsible moment

Supply

- Deliver at Cost on Time
- Establish Separate Project-Clear Beginning and End
- Freeze requirement at earliest possible moment

Intangibles

Processes

Tangibles

Products

Design Brief Management

USER TEAM

BUILDING TEAM

Meaningful And Elegant Allocation of Resources
Recognising Value Reflects Values

**Effectiveness**
- Motivation and productivity
- Concentration capacity
- Accommodate change
- Support interaction

**Efficiency**
- Drive down costs
- Space use intensification

Create greatest value by innovating spatially and organisationally
Diversity: Open dialogue

Intensity: Compact

Connectivity: Assessable

Ambiguity: Overlapping Private and Public Realm

Dynamic: Continuous Change

Open: Opportunities for Chance Encounters

Urbanism Capturing Value by... Making places people want to come and stay
Re-thinking the Public Domain: Blurring of Ownership and Functions

Public
Owned by the community

Semi Public
Free to enter

Semi Private
Invited

Hopkins Architects – The Forum, Norwich
Four Themes that Shaped our Approach

Intensification
Achieving more with less

Diversity
Political, social, cultural, spatial

Connectivity
Virtual and physical

Paradox
Living in a world of **both...and**

Measurement the critical driver – Quantitative and Qualitative
The Eighties: Emergence of the Post Industrial Producer Services Economy

- IBM Desktop and Cabling
- Car based lifestyles
- Declining central city
- New and expanded towns
  - Basingstoke and Hook
  - Bracknell – HP, Dell, Fujitsu, Siemens, Cable & Wireless
Reading 1983: Place of Connection within the High Tech Diamond

Inmos Factory Building, Newport Wales 1982
Richard Rogers & Partners

Renault Distribution Centre, Swindon
Norman Fosters & Partners

DEGW report South Wales and the Knowledge-based industries, Welsh Development Agency 1982

High Technology Diamond
Stockley Park Heathrow: The Emergence of the Business Park 1983

- Creation of packaged software
- Film video
- Printing/publishing
- Database creation
- News agency
- On-line data service broadcasting
- Non-interactive cable services
- Creation of custom software
- Manufacture and supply of IT equipment
- Interactive cable services
- Telecommunications
- Post
- Manufacture and supply of television sets
Chiswick Park Gunnersbury: Return to Urban Values 1989
The Nineties: New Ways of Working in the Networked City

DEGW Offices, Kings Cross 1995
Rethinking Assets: Changing perceptions of property

**SYMBOLIC**
- ‘Fixed’
- Long lease
- Corporate brand
- High quality
- Representational
- Outsourced FM
- 30%

**ADAPTABLE**
- ‘Flexi’
- Short lease
- Provider brand
- Flexible
- Support
- Outsourced FM
- 40%

**SERVICED**
- ‘On demand’
- Licensed
- Service brand
- Ready to use
- Support & amenity
- Service company
- 30%

“Company assets increasing know-how not building”
Redefining Space: Urban domain blurring of ownership and functions

**PUBLIC**
- Overlapping Functions
- Organic
- Heterogeneous - Diverse
- Dominant culture - character

**SEMI PUBLIC**
- “Functionalised”
- Branded
- Homogenous
- Themed

**PRIVILEGED**
- Discrete
- Marketed
- Selective
- Controlled

Source: Quai D’Orsay - Paris

Source: Easy.com
Millennium Digital Economy: Personal Connectivity Distributed Lifestyles

COPENHAGEN  half million population Single focus
ORESUND  3.5 million population multi-centred across political boundaries

Cities of Imagination
Cities of Convenience
Cities of Place

THE ACADEMY OF URBANISM
Paradox of Centrality and Dispersal. “New paradigm of high density land use but low density city”

- World class city with global connections
- 6.5 million + 6 million hinterland
- “Mainport” – Gateway to Europe
- 4 established nodes
- “Inner City” airport
- 12 communities 100,000+
- 1000 person + per sq km

Source: ???
The Cambridge Milton Keynes Oxford Corridor

Reading: a Place of Connection

- Interface North South East West
- Connects Crossrail and Thameslink
- Meeting of Waterways

Source: David Lock Associates

Readings location on two waterways
Milton Keynes “New Town” Fastest Growing City in the UK 2000 – 2010

The Master Plan 1971 – Clear Ambitions

Comprehensible and Navigable

Unconstrained car usage

Distributed patterns of movement

Choice of transport: public/private

Mixed Use – Choice of Centres

Clarity of Priority between Car (the grid) and Pedestrian (local roads)
Building a Million Homes: The Rural Urban continuum

- Greenways, Waterways, Road + Rail
- Plan for active travel
- Learn from MK past and present

SOURCE: Velocity Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor

Source: Ordnance Survey map
# The Collaborative Role of Civil Society

The Academy of Urbanism Universities initiative Cities which learn and improve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNITIES of...</th>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Living</th>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Urban Alliance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The University of Manchester</td>
<td>people and place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>mosi</td>
<td>The BigLife Company</td>
<td>cube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MUSEUM OF SCIENCE &amp; INDUSTRY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual</td>
<td>school of everything</td>
<td>Harringay online</td>
<td>HUB London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harringay</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Minimum 3 year programme to establish an attitude of mind
- Owned by the community, initiated by Academicians
- Continuous improvement through understanding

Long term programme committed to learning & feedback
Creative Dublin Alliance 2008…Region-wide open and inclusive

A network led by the Dublin City Manager, with members drawn from the most senior level in Local Government, Industry, Education, State Agencies and Not-for-Profit Sector

Crossing boundaries outside the established system
The Fourth Industrial Revolution: Impact of Artificial Intelligence

Robotics for mass production

Artificial intelligence: responding to big data widens our opportunity for innovation

Walking minutes
The screen promotes walking as the best means of exploring the immediate surroundings. A circle representing a comfortable walking distance of five minutes (400 meters) is centered on the YAH.

Heads up orientation
Unlike traditional maps which are north-facing, the Urbanflow map is orientated "heads up" by default to reflect the actual real orientation of the screen in relation to its environment. Places ahead of the user are above the YAH.
Changing Balance of Life: Change Aspirations and Expectations

Changing Expectation *Increased Desire for Quality of Life and Authenticity*

Quality of Life more than Consumer Products
Redefining Work: New Roles New Institutions

Basic income for all...caring and sharing

Future skills
1. Creativity and Intuition
   Lateral thinking
   Leaps of imagination
2. Bespoke design and manufacturing
   Value of provenance
3. Social skills
   Empathy and relationship Building

Andy Haldane, Bank of England Chief Economist, Speech Guild Society University of Oxford 2018
Changing Modes of Environmentally Friendly Movement

Commercial Streets: Important for life in the local areas of the city

Links: Connect commercial streets, residential areas, green areas, facilities, schools and institutions

Squares: Opportunities for activity, play, pause, rest and meeting places

Promenades: Pedestrians have priority
Harwell Campus Didcot - Learning Innovation and Dwelling

- Grand Avenue + Plaza
- Green Lane
- Campus / Development Grid
- Parks + Gardens
- Big science
Newbourne Suffolk: Producing and dwelling

Land settlement association 1934
26 settlements
5 Acres per family

Cooperative market gardens

Space to grow and change
sheds and huts
### Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living</th>
<th>Connecting</th>
<th>Servicing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>organic</td>
<td>Many passages</td>
<td>versatile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accessible</td>
<td>new main entrance</td>
<td>semi-public business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obliging</td>
<td>all kinds of traffic</td>
<td>city hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small scale housing</td>
<td>low rise</td>
<td>affordable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low rise</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affordable housing</td>
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</table>

### Themes

- **DEGW**: Development Briefing

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**City of Utrecht - Framework Strategy Stationsgebied 2003 (DEGW involved)**

*Source: Capital Web*
Shaping the Future City Region

Think at the scale of the Polycentric City Region

Simpler Buildings
Flexible and easily reconfigured
Greater environmental performance
Leased with branded management

More Complex Cities
Multi-modal access
Highly serviced and managed
Collaborative governance

Mixable Use, Sustainable design and processes, owning to sharing

*Distributed working becomes a reality, perhaps even an imperative*
Reading 2050 Place of Connection and Exchange

Rotterdam Centraal Station
Embrace Upside Down Thinking - Plan for Systemic Change

Round the Equator

Over the Pole
University of Reading DEGW ‘Living Archive’

Dr Frank Duffy, Work in the City, Black Dog Publishing The Edge Futures 2008

Living Archive: www.reading.ac.uk/architecture/degw-archive.aspx
THANK YOU

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