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SUSTAINABLE SETTLEMENTS

PRODUCED AS PART OF THE
LOCAL AGENDA 21
INITIATIVE, THE GUIDE'S
AIM IS TO CONVERT THE
RHETORIC OF SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT INTO
PRACTICAL ACTION

A Guide for Planners, Designers and Developers

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Published by: University of West of England and Local Government Management Board 1995.

Available from UWE at £29.

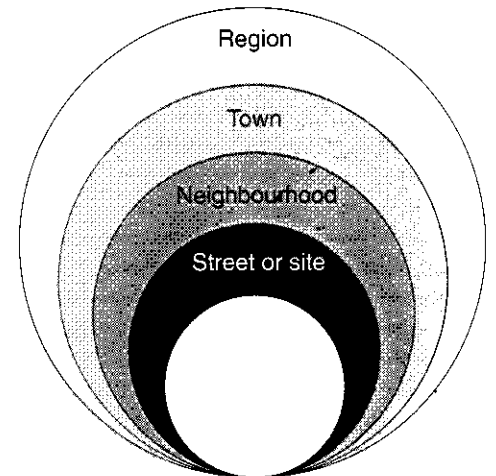
This publication has been prompted by the realisation that current trends and policies do not serve Britain's long term interest. It is argued that natural ecological systems should form the basis for creating a living and working environment, ie, sustainable settlements.

The guide's scope is far reaching – from the city region to individual buildings. Sustainability is covered in four sections: firstly, basic principles; secondly, a checklist for development proposals; thirdly, planning guidance for land use and movement strategies; and lastly, design guidance covering sites and buildings.

Sustainable principles include an increase in local self-sufficiency to reduce environmental effects: a meeting of human needs (social, economic and aesthetic) and buildings which are able to accommodate a range of different activities. Important principles are identified and should be used to guide planning and design, namely transportation, buildings, atmosphere, biodiversity and natural resources. Each is explained, key issues identified and strategies recommended.

A summary checklist follows, outlining criteria which are able to be used to assess development projects and the extent they respond to sustainable principles. This section covers a range of issues including locational choice (site selection), site appraisal, movement patterns, site layout and individual buildings. A corresponding checklist enables the reader to refer to related topics within the document. The land use section incorporates, mixed use development, housing types, access to facilities and open space network. The movement section explores transportation options, energy planning and ways to optimise energy use in individual schemes.

The latter sections mainly deal with housing,



Nesting spheres of influence – object: to reduce impact of inner spheres on outer spheres.

which I believe will be useful for those assessing or designing intensive housing. Various housing types are discussed and it will be interesting to see whether they are considered relevant to New Zealand, as is its overall relevance to New Zealand's context.

The guide attempts to identify and assimilate many complex issues, each relating to sustainable development. It is a comprehensive piece of work (250 pages) and it is felt that a summary of salient points would greatly assist its use as a checklist. In my view, the guide is a useful publication, paving the way towards sustainable development. A range of options is presented and the reader is assured that a change in emphasis is achievable. This requires a collaborative approach, involving cooperation between economic, environmental and community interests.

I believe the guide provides the necessary link between the physical environment, planning policies and development options. The guide raises a number of pertinent issues and will be an invaluable reference, enabling sustainable settlements to be taken seriously.

Extracts and diagrams reprinted courtesy of the authors.



The guide can help with:

PLAN-MAKING

- devising/evaluating locational strategies
- planning the broad spatial arrangement of mixed use development areas
- planning movement networks and transport strategy
- working out environmental capacities
- the environmental appraisal of development plans

WRITING DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS

- appraisal of the site and its location
- devising spatial planning guidelines
- stipulating detailed design criteria

MAKING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- comparing alternative sites
- specifying the mix of uses and linkages
- appraising the site
- designing the layout of a residential/mixed use area
- designing the buildings, forms and materials

EVALUATING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- assessing the appropriateness of the site
- assessing the proposed uses and design
- negotiating environmental design criteria

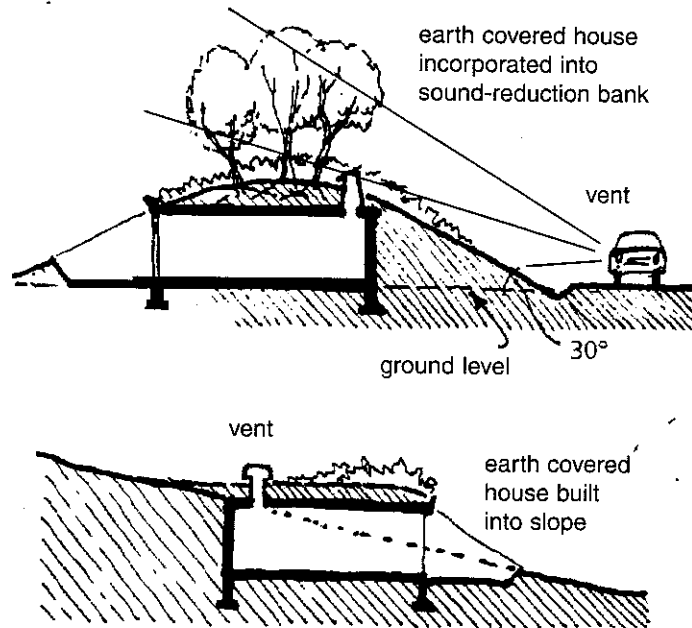
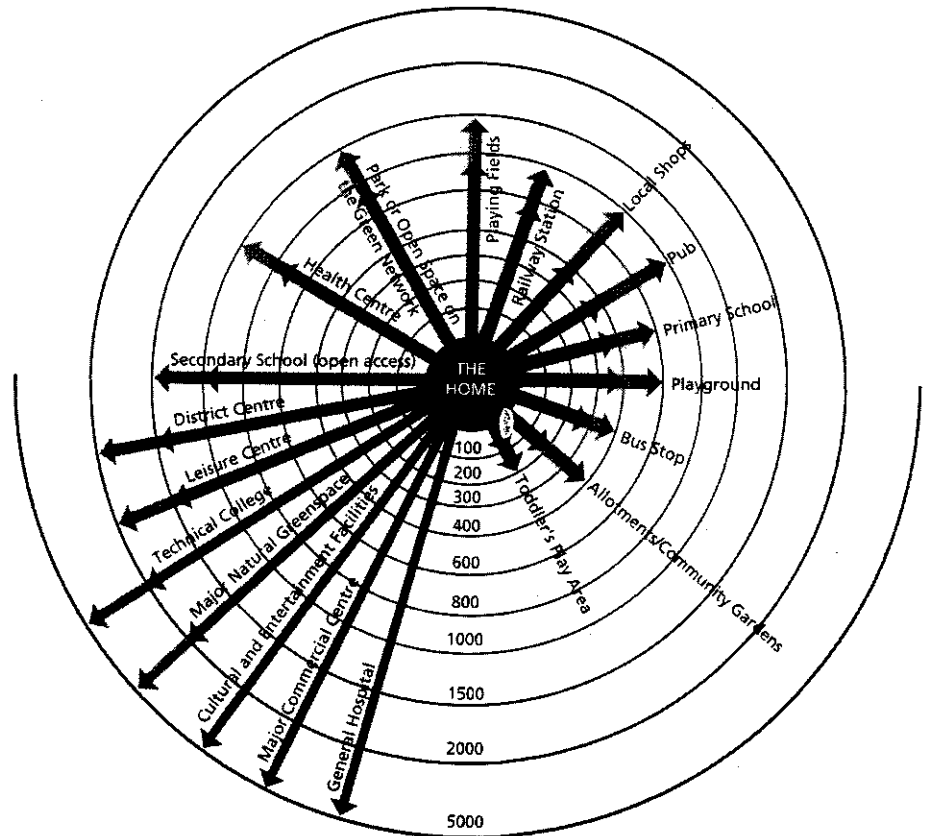


Illustration of earth-covered housing.



Local facilities in urban areas. This diagram illustrates some possible standards.