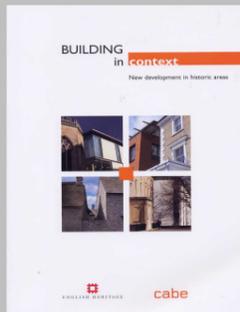


## BUILDING IN CONTEXT TOOLKIT

New development in historic areas



### About the TOOLKIT

The Building in Context toolkit has been developed by EH, CABE and the Kent Architecture Centre. It grew out of the publication 'Building in Context' published by EH and CABE in 2001. The purpose of the publication was to stimulate a high standard of design when development takes place in historically sensitive contexts. The founding principle is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and character appraisal of context. Building in Context TOOLKIT training aims to help those making decisions to reach effective and balanced design decisions.

It is proven to be useful in communicating issues of development in complex situations; helping convey the depth of expertise required in adopting a holistic approach to site development and reduced 'silo mentality'. Through the analysis of a case study, wider design issues than 'how it looks' are explored.

Each workshop consists of a presentation looking at the key issues covered in Building in Context, followed by local and regional case studies, a practical, hands-on drawing activity, and an opportunity to discuss the complex issues associated with successfully incorporating contemporary design in sensitive locations.

The Building in Context Toolkit Programme aims to:

- Enable wider understanding of the principles of developing appropriate contemporary design in historic areas to a range of professional and community groups
- Enable those involved in making decisions affecting historic areas in their attainment of a more effective, balanced and efficient service resulting in improvement of those decisions affecting the quality of the historic environment for future generations.
- Promote sustainable new and re-used development that doesn't sacrifice what future generations will value for the sake of short-term and often illusory gains so that we use already developed areas in the most efficient way, while making them more attractive places in which to live and work and conserving our cultural heritage

## Evaluating Good Design

### 26th November 2008, arc & Fruit Market district, Hull



The workshop was held at the arc building Hull, as an opportunity for those who had previously participated in a Building in Context workshop, and for new participants from Hull, East Riding and HMR Gateway Pathfinder teams.

The objectives for the day were to develop skills in how to evaluate good design, using tools such as DQI, Building for Life and Building in Context. We also highlighted the Design Review Panel as a resource for evaluating design in a historic context.

The session was intended to provide an overview of heritage context considerations alongside the application of some 'universal' design principles.

### About the Speakers

#### **Helen Farrar, CABE Regional Representative in Yorkshire & Humber**

Helen is a strategic advisor in regeneration and design, and a CABE Regional Representative for Yorkshire and Humberside. Helen is a chartered landscape architect and regeneration professional, with skills in design advice and training, community engagement, and strategic regeneration. She has worked in the Yorkshire and Humber region for 20 years including a key role as founding Urban Renaissance Manager at Yorkshire Forward. She has a wide network of contacts across the region, particularly in the public, voluntary and academic sectors. She contributes to landscape education at Leeds Metropolitan University; is a former Trustee of 'arc' – the Humber Centre of Excellence in the Built Environment; and is a member of the CABE Space advisory panel.

#### **David Blake, is a Health Sector Manager for the BRE, and regional facilitator for the DQI.**

#### **Gillian Dyson, Head of Learning, arc**

Gillian Dyson has a background in visual arts and education, studying at the Slade School, University College London, and continues to exhibit her live and media artwork. Gillian was previously Project Coordinator for Hull Time Based Arts, Senior Lecturer with Hull School of Art & Design, and Freelance Facilitator with Public Arts Wakefield.



### Group Feedback & Thoughts

**Q: How have you 'Championed Design' since being on the programme with arc?**

Course has renewed my enthusiasm to encourage good design and as a planning officer not accept poor design.

Yes, in discussions with partners about physical renewal project.

Raising questions at planning committee, plus in informal conversation with ERYC officers from almost any other department where relevant.

Try all the time in dealing with planning applications and pre-application advice  
Provided advice on pre-application proposal.

Through the DC consultation process  
When appraising planning applications  
Commented at pre-planning application meeting on N. Howden housing development  
- referred to working on public art scheme in Beverley to arc  
-Championing need for 'shared space' approach to scheme in Howden

**Q: What useful thing did you find out today that you didn't already know?**

Heritage – CABE information, various toolkits to assess design quality  
More knowledge about DQI.  
I didn't know about the building in context toolkit.  
Specific CABE publications about users surveys.  
How the design review panel operates.  
Use of figure grounds.  
Different approaches.  
Historical uses of Humber Street.  
Interesting to see other points of view.  
Assessment tools - DQI.

**Q: What would you like to see as a 'Master Class' subject for the future?**

Different means of regeneration – Coastal towns/ market towns  
Rural areas  
Tall buildings in the local context



Participants had already been taken through a case study on the Fruit Market regeneration district by Richard Scott from the Igloo Developer's design team. This session followed up on the use of figured ground as a site assessment tool, and considerations for contemporary redevelopment in a historic context.

We took a walking tour of Humber Street to make a live assessment of the buildings and streetscape, and to consider how a developer could be briefed into the key concerns of the site.

The group then fed back and concluded how they would approach design considerations for a heritage context, and discussed the merits and issues arising from the regeneration process.

### About the Architect

**Richard Scott, Director, Surface Architects**  
Born in Hull, Richard studied at SCI-Arc in LA, and The Bartlett with Peter Cook, gaining distinction in Diploma.

His work has been exhibited in LA, New York & London. With Andrew Zago he built a studio for Aerospace Engineering at Cornell University in 1994. Richard then worked for Will Alsop, whilst lecturing at The Bartlett, AA, RCA, Cornell & Sci-Arc.

In 1999 Richard founded Surface, now a leading young practice, coming 3rd in the Young Architect of the Year Award in 2004, & 2005. Recent projects have received critical acclaim, with RIBA Award winning 'Lock-keeper's Graduate Centre in London, short-listed for the Stephen Lawrence Award 2006.

Surface Architects are leading the design team for the preferred developer of the Fruit Market regeneration programme - Igloo. Igloo's design team includes Bauman Lyons, Sarah Wigglesworth, & Hodson Architects from Grimsby.

**Building in Context: Appraising a proposal**

...It is possible to arrive at opinions about design quality that are based on objective criteria. There are many ways of doing this, but any such process is likely to include asking the following questions. They encompass both the quality of the building itself and its quality as a contribution to the urban design of the neighbourhood in which it is situated:

**The site**

- How does the proposed building relate to the site?
- Is there a positive and imaginative response to any problems and constraints?
- Have the physical aspects of the site been considered, such as any changes in level within or beyond it?
- Are access arrangements convenient and existing routes respected?
- Can the amount of accommodation required be fitted on the site in an elegant way?

**Wider setting**

- How does the proposal relate to its wider setting?
- Are the street pattern and grain of the surroundings respected?
- Are there changes in height between the existing and new development and if so how are they managed?
- Will the result enhance or damage the quality of the townscape? Density
- How is the density of the proposal related to that of existing and neighbouring uses?
- If there are differences, are they acceptable?

**Impact on close views**

- Has the impact of the building in close views been assessed?
- Is it either weak or overpowering?
- Does it respect the scale and rhythm of its neighbours?

**Materials**

- What materials are used?
- How do they relate to those of the surrounding buildings?
- Is the quality as high?
- Are there interesting comparisons or contrasts in the use of materials?
- How will the colours work together?

**Architecture suitable to its use**

- Is the architecture of the building suitable for the uses it contains?
- Is it trying to be too grand or pretending to be more modest than it really is?

**Composition**

- How does the architecture present itself to the viewer? Is there a strong composition in the pattern of solid to opening in the façade? Does the detailing of the materials show signs of careful thought or originality in the way the building is put together?

**Public realm**

- What contribution, if any, does the proposal make to the public realm? If new open space is created, is it clear that it will provide a positive benefit and have a genuine use?

**Vistas and views**

- In the wider setting, has the impact of the building in views and vistas been considered?
- Does it make a positive or negative impact?
- Does it form a harmonious group or composition with existing buildings or features in the landscape?
- Does it distract the eye from the focus of the view and if so does it provide something better to look at?

*From Building in Context, pg 37*

# To Design and Historic Environment champions:

## Organising Your Building in Context TOOLKIT training event

We hope you enjoyed this event that showcased for Design and Historic Environment Champions the Building in Context TOOLKIT and a leading designer.

The TOOLKIT is a travelling training package that is available to authorities across England that can be tailored to meet specific local requirements. As Champion for your authority you may wish to organise one in your own workplace.

For more information on holding a BiC TOOLKIT training event please contact Rebecca Simpson, CABE tel. 020 7070 6800, Nigel Barker, English Heritage, tel. 01483 252000 or Gillian Dyson, arc tel. 01482 327675

The Table below shows how the BiC Toolkit team can put together an event tailored for your particular requirements:

## The Building in Context TOOLKIT

