
Farrell Review of Architecture and the Built Environment

Call for Evidence Questions

NOTE: You can use this form to draft and save your answers to the Call for Evidence questions as you go along. When you are finished, you can then copy and paste each answer into the relevant answer box on the online form and submit your response.

The online form can be found at www.farrellreview.co.uk "Submit your views"

Introduction

This Call for Evidence is to inform the independent Farrell Review of Architecture and the Built Environment, which relates to England.

As announced at its launch on 25 March, the purpose of the review is to inform the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's approach to its role within government of promoting high standards of design in the built environment. This is so that DCMS can continue to influence and shape policy across government, not least because the public sector is a major client/funder of buildings.

The expert panel headed by Sir Terry Farrell welcomes submissions from any interested parties on the following themes within the scope of this review. Included are some suggested questions to help guide your responses. Please ensure these stay within the four themes as outlined below.

Notes:

- You do not need to respond to all the questions.
- Short and concise responses are requested per question; if they are longer than 1000 words they should include a headline summary.
- The online submission form cannot be saved as you go; you must complete it in one sitting.
- Downloadable PDF and Word versions of the questions are available at www.farrellreview.co.uk
- We suggest you draft your responses in Word and then copy and paste answers into relevant question boxes on the online form.
- Please make clear reference to any existing research or publications relating to your response, and the parts or page numbers within it that are relevant.
- You will be requested to fill out some information about yourself or your organisation at the start of the survey.
- All submissions will be acknowledged.
- All submissions are for the use of this review alone.

- The Review will not publish all responses; however, some responses may be quoted in print or online. By responding to the Call for Evidence you consent to us using your evidence.

Living Streets response to the independent Farrell Review of Architecture and the Built Environment

We are the national charity that stands up for pedestrians. With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk. We work with professionals and politicians to make sure every community can enjoy vibrant streets and public spaces.

We started life in 1929 as the Pedestrians Association and have been the national voice for pedestrians throughout our history. In the early years, our campaigning led to the introduction of the driving test, pedestrian crossings and 30 mph speed limits. Since then our ambition has grown. Today we influence decision makers nationally and locally, run successful projects to encourage people to walk and provide specialist consultancy services to help reduce congestion and carbon emissions, improve public health, and make sure every community can enjoy vibrant streets and public spaces.

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1. Understanding the role for Government in promoting design quality in architecture and the built environment

The review will look at lessons that can be learnt nationally and internationally about the role for Government in promoting and achieving design quality. The role of built environment bodies and other organisations that promote the appreciation and better understanding of design quality in the built environment will also be considered.

1.1 Britain has some of the best architects and designers in the world but that does not automatically mean that standards of architectural design in England are as good as they could be. Why is this?

N/A

1.2 How can the "everyday" quality of our housing, public spaces and buildings be significantly improved?

It is important that housing, public spaces and buildings are viewed in the context of place which can be used for multiple purposes by the communities they serve. Therefore, it is vital that policy makers, planners, developers and architects consider how places can best serve people as places to live, as well as visit to work and shop. Places are about the communities

in which we live: where we socialise, access civic infrastructure, enjoy heritage and participate in the world not just buildings and infrastructure.

Walking is the obvious way to experience places. People like to get together, socialise and be part of a community. This is why physical improvements to the public realm matter. Too many places are currently treated as corridors for cars rather than places for people. Pedestrians have insufficient space, despite often making up the majority of the 'traffic' on the street, and are put off by poor air quality and the speed and density of motor traffic. Street management – including litter collection, street cleaning, maintenance and road works, managing temporary clutter such as A-boards and more – is often uncoordinated and impedes pedestrians.

This suggests that a focus on local schemes to improve the walking environment is the way forward. Taking this a step further, Living Streets' Step Out in London (SOL) project promoted a range of activities to complement and publicise public realm schemes, by encouraging people to spend more time (and money) walking in their local town centre. We worked with local people to use this better environment as a catalyst for making other things happen in the area – activities that get people out and about enjoying their streets. For example, in Chippenham Gardens in Kilburn, Brent, we supported local residents and shopkeepers to work together to set up street parties, and outdoor Zumba and Tai Chi in a shopping precinct known as much for dealing and drinking as doing the weekly shop. The turnaround in fortunes has been noticeable, with more people shopping and spending time.

In Herne Hill, we worked with the Herne Hill Forum to support the creation of a new market in the semi-pedestrianised space that is now the heart of the community. There has been a fantastic transformation! Not only do people flock to visit on a Sunday for the market, but they just enjoy spending more time in the area.

“The original scheme was an improvement but the area was still dead”, said one local resident. “What has really made a difference is the different activities. The piano was brilliant and putting tables and chairs outside is great – much easier with the buggy and you feel safer too.”

The Herne Hill Shop Local loyalty card scheme has ensured that benefits are not only felt by market traders, but long suffering shopkeepers, with 57% of residents surveyed saying they spent more in the market, and 35% more in shops and an average £16 more per week. A third of shopkeepers also agreed that people were spending more time and money, with others remaining neutral. But this certainly bucks the national trend and demonstrates what a rallying impact this work can have. Indeed, almost half of stalls had employed local people to work there.

Surveys carried out after the SOL project activities found that on average almost 90% of people felt that the investment in their streets was worth the money spent. People reported walking more (47%), shopping more (52%), feeling safer and more part of a community (both 58%). Almost three quarters felt the street was more like a 'living street'. Community engagement in the design phase and subsequently promoting the physical changes is essential.

The same principle - that improving places (physical improvements and social activities) for pedestrians delivers economic, social, health and environmental dividends – applies to the bigger streets as well as the smaller ones. Oxford Street, the nation's biggest and busiest high street was closed to motorised traffic one Saturday last November for the eighth year for VIP (Very Important Pedestrian) Day. Sales on the day were up by £50m suggesting that

a safer, more pleasant shopping environment encourages people to spend more. Of the people we polled on the day, 90% said they wanted Oxford Street to have reductions in traffic.

As can be seen it is not just about constructing well designed buildings, housing and public realm it also about how they are brought to life. Therefore, Living Streets believes the “everyday” quality of places can be improved by ensuring they are places where people want to live, work and play. In order to achieve this it is vital that meaningful early engagement with communities takes place prior to development. This can assist local authorities and developers in making cost effective decisions regarding investment in the public realm at an early stage instead of expensive retrofits after a project is completed.

One potential mechanism for undertaking this is Living Streets Community Street Audits - where small groups of local residents, traders, councillors and council officers, including vulnerable street users, are involved to assess a route on foot and identify problems and potential improvements. Improvement activity varies widely between projects according to the key needs identified by communities, and tend to fall into three main categories: community-led improvements such as litter picking, clean ups and planting; more in-depth improvements such as resurfacing or lighting improvements led by the local authority, and awareness-raising activities such as led walks, the design of maps and street parties.

An example of where this had significant cost benefits was Living Streets’ Fitter for Walking programme which involved approximately 150 communities, across 12 local authority areas and 5 regions of England, selected based on low reported levels of physical activity and high levels of obesity. Working with the community group, the local authority and other local stakeholders, Living Streets helped identify barriers to walking in the area and potential improvements. The programme as a whole underwent a comprehensive independent evaluation in 2011ⁱ which revealed a benefit cost ratio for decreased mortality as a result of more people walking of up to 46:1.

1.3 Would having a formal architecture policy (as some European countries do) help to achieve improved outcomes? What might be the potential aims of such a policy? What might the benefits be and how they could be measured?

N/A

1.4 What can local and national bodies do to promote design quality? What policy infrastructure would assist them in this important task?

We recommend that this review liaises closely with Lord Taylor’s Review of Planning Policy Guidance which was completed for DCLG earlier this year with the aim of simplifying and better explaining planning guidance to a wider audience, we agree that planning advice should all be in one place. In our submission we called on DCLG to work with professional bodies to encourage or sponsor best practice awards. This should be expanded beyond DCLG to include other government departments such as the Department for Transport – for example to support active travel modes such as walking. We also welcomed the recommendation that *Manual for Streets* is retained for the time being but reviewed. However, we suggested that this guidance needs to be linked with *Manual for Streets 2*

which is not covered by the Taylor Review in order to create one new set of best practice guidance. *Manual for Streets* is key to designing better streets which meets the needs of users, are well connected and help to strengthen communities they serve. It promotes a place-led approach to working between planning, transport and highways which must not be lost. In particular, it highlights the importance of a transport hierarchy which prioritises pedestrians. *Manual for Streets* (and *Manual for Streets 2*) were developed by a wide group of stakeholders including Department for Transport, other government departments, third sector organisations such as Living Streets and local authorities.

We would also suggest that this review also makes the link with the emerging Active Travel (Wales) Bill design guidance which is being led by Phil Jones ahead of the Bill becoming law.

1.5 What other recommendations would you like to make relating to this particular theme?

This review must make the links with the National Planning Policy Guidanceⁱⁱ (NPPF). A Core Planning principle of NPPF is to “*always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings*” (Para 17). The NPPF goes on to note that for larger scale residential developments in particular, planning policies should promote a mix of uses in order to provide opportunities to undertake day-to-day activities including work on site. Where practical, particularly within large-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties (Para 38).

The NPPF specifically refers to the Government attaching “*great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people*” (Para 56) and goes on further “*It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes*” (Para 57).

Finally, it is important to recognise the impact of good design on other policy areas such as public health. The NPPF notes that “*69. The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities.....Planning policies and decisions, in turn, should aim to achieve places which promote:*

- *opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages which bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity;*
- *safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.”*

It is also important to recognise the importance of broader policy changes required in order to ensure well designed places are brought to life. For example, reducing vehicle speeds on streets, through 20mph limits is the single biggest measure to transforming streets into safe, people-centred streets, rather than simply corridors for traffic. In fact, reducing the speed of traffic to 20 mph in urban areas has many health, economic, environmental, and social benefitsⁱⁱⁱ. Furthermore this safer environment helps to reduce the likelihood of accidents as well as perceived danger thereby increasing the number of people making active travel choices. Moreover, evidence has shown that where 20 mph limits have been introduced there has been a decrease in the number of KSIs including amongst cyclists and pedestrians^{iv}. Furthermore, it is important new development ensure options for walking are considered at the design stage with access to public transport in order to reduce motor vehicle usage.

2. The economic benefits of architecture and design, and maximising the UK's growth potential

The review will consider the contribution of architecture to the UK's economy, how the economic value of good built environment design can be demonstrated, and how it can be maximised in the future.

2.1 In what ways does architecture and built environment design contribute to the UK economy?

Increasing the number of people walking through the design of walkable neighbourhoods and high quality public realm can deliver significant economic benefits to the UK economy through improved mental and physical health, increased footfall and rentable values in town centres and reduced congestion through reduced journeys by motor vehicles. However, it is important to note the increased privatisation of public spaces where new developments are built on areas with previously unrestricted access and then impose restrictions on freedom of movement and expression by pedestrians.

Living Streets' *Making the Case*^v report highlights a study in Bristol which found that retailers on a local high street overestimated the proportion of shoppers arriving by car by almost double at 41%, compared with the actual proportion of 22%. In fact, over half of the shoppers had arrived there by foot, and greater proportions had arrived by bus and cycle than estimated by retailers. Pedestrians also tended to visit more shops than those arriving by car. Similarly, Transport for London's Town Centres Survey 2003-4 found that people walking to a town centre spent an average of £91 per week in the area, as compared to £64 for car drivers or passengers, while bus users spent just £1 less per week than those arriving by car. Living Streets' own experience in carrying out community street audits and surveying shoppers on Sydenham High Street, South East London^{vi} discovered very similar results.

2.2 It is claimed that high standards of architectural and built environment design add economic value. Can this be demonstrated and, if so, how?

High quality public realm and designing walkable places can add significant economic value both locally and nationally as evidenced below for mental and physical health and local economic impact.

Physical activity

The cost implications of poor health related to low levels of exercise have been found to be substantial. Cardiovascular disease alone was estimated to cost the UK economy £29 billion in 2004 in care costs and lost productivity^{vii}, whilst the cost to the NHS of elevated body mass index (BMI) was estimated at £7 billion in 2001, with a predicted increase to £27 billion by 2015^{viii}. Mental health problems have been estimated to cost the UK economy £106 billion in 2009/2010 in care costs, lost productivity and reductions in quality of life^{ix}. Given these figures, increasing regular walking in the population through investments in walking environments could contribute to considerable cost savings. A recent *Lancet* study revealed that increased levels of walking and cycling has the potential to save the National Health Service over £17 billion pounds, over the course of 20 years, through reductions in the prevalence of type 2 diabetes, dementia, ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and cancer because of increased physical activity with further costs would be averted after 20 years^x.

Walking can have a number of positive health outcomes. Walking reduces the risk of all-cause mortality by up to 20% and cardiovascular disease by up to 30%^{xi} (meaning that regular walkers are likely to live longer than non-walkers). Walking reduces the risk of high blood pressure^{xix,xixiv}, stroke, and high cholesterol^{xv}. Walking expends energy and therefore can help energy balance and body composition^{7,xvi} (potentially reducing obesity). Walking can also improve mental health and well-being, by having a positive impact on self-esteem, physical self-worth¹¹, stress, mood and mindset^{xvii}. Studies have shown, for example, that in older women walking can reduce anxiety^{xviii} and depressive symptoms^{xix}. For this group, walking has been found to be as effective as other forms of physical activity in achieving reductions in anxiety and depression¹⁴, with several short sessions per week being more effective than one long session¹⁵, suggesting that walking around the local neighbourhood may provide an important source of physical activity. Children can also gain health benefits from walking. Regular walking of around 20 minutes per day can increase their physical^{xx} and mental^{xxi} performance. Children who travel by walking use twice as many calories as those who travel by car^{xxii} and, over the course of a week, use about the same amount of calories as those used during PE lessons in school¹².

Wider economic benefits

A literature review of the economic benefits of walking by the University of the West of England and Cavill Associates^{xxiii} revealed that investment in high quality walking environments increases in economic value and economic activity in the local area. Previous research has revealed such increases reflected by the sale price of residential property^{xxiv,xxv} and the rental price of retail premises^{25,26,27}. The impacts on economic activity of walking investments have been examined using property sale and rental prices as an indicator. A number of studies have used the Pedestrian Environment Review System (PERS) developed by Transport Research Laboratory^{xxvi,xxvii,xxviii} to examine the economic impact of enhancement of the public realm. This system has been used in combination with the sale price of flats, the rental price of Retail Zone A property (i.e. the most valuable retail premises), a stated preference analysis with willingness to pay for improvements to the public realm and an analysis of stakeholders from the retail sector.

These studies revealed:

- The sale price of flats in London were significantly greater in areas with higher quality pedestrian environments²⁴ (all other factors being considered);
- Twelve public realm improvement schemes in London were associated with an above average growth in the sale price of nearby flats of between 0.9% and 28% per annum (average of 7%)²⁴;
- Public realm improvement schemes that had an emphasis on pedestrian priority were associated with a 12% growth in the sale price of flats, those with an emphasis on decluttering or materials and fixtures a growth of 7% and 3% respectively²⁴.

In London, Wanstead High Street achieved an average 98 per cent increase in pedestrian numbers following an intervention to increase walking for short trips by enhancing walking routes to the two stations, the bus terminus, school, library and High Street^{xxxix}.

A study in Bristol found that retailers on a local high street overestimated the proportion of shoppers arriving by car by almost double at 41% compared with the actual proportion of 22%. In fact, over half of the shoppers had arrived there by foot, and greater proportions had arrived by bus and cycle than those estimated by retailers. The retailers also underestimated how far pedestrians had travelled to get to the high street; over 60% lived within 1 mile, possibly explaining the greater proportion that walked, and pedestrians generally visited more shops than those arriving by car^{xxx}. Whilst Transport for London research revealed 44% of shoppers arrive on foot in London town centres^{xxxi}.

A review of a planned improvement project for Croydon was carried out using TfL's toolkit 'Valuing the Urban Realm 2012' which provides monetary values for proposed improvements to public space. The VUR calculation for the value of increase in public wellbeing arising as a result of the improvement to the streetscape is £11.4m. This results in an expected benefit : cost ratio of 1.36:1. The VUR calculation of the financial impacts on individual business and property owners (e.g. likely private property value uplift from urban realm improvements or shop rental values increase) occurring as a result of the proposed improvements to the urban realm is £89.2m^{xxxii}.

2.3 What is the commercial value of our historic built environment for the UK brand and for local economies and tourism?

N/A

2.4 How do we ensure the culture of architectural and built environment design excellence is part of a perceived national brand identity that can be exported and how can our expertise (such as place-making and sustainability) be offered to a rapidly urbanising world?

N/A

2.5 To enhance market leadership in built environment design how can we ensure that the UK is leading and responding to innovations in technology, sustainability and communications in an era of rapid globalisation?

N/A

2.6 What other recommendations would you like to make relating to this particular theme?

That the importance of investing in good quality public realm to increase walking levels can deliver significant economic benefits for town centres and the UK economy.

3. Cultural heritage and the built environment

The review will look at how to encourage good new architecture whilst retaining the best of the past, and the value of our historic built environment as a cultural asset and in successful place-making.

3.1 How does architecture and the built environment contribute to our society and its identity and how should we evaluate this?

N/A

3.2 Do we value heritage, whether historic or recent, evenly throughout the country?

N/A

3.3 How do we make sure that new architecture understands and responds to its cultural and historic context?

N/A

3.4 Are there characteristics in older buildings and places that are valued which are lacking in new buildings and places? What should the design of new places learn from the best of the past?

N/A

3.5 What is the role for new technologies in conservation to enable older buildings to meet modern needs and to be adapted with less impact on their historic features?

N/A

3.6 What other recommendations would you like to make relating to this particular theme?

N/A

4. Promoting education, outreach and skills

The review will consider the potential contributions of built environment education to a broad and balanced education both as a cultural subject in its own right and as a way of teaching other subjects. Public outreach and skilling-up will also be considered.

4.1 What is the potential contribution of built environment education at primary and secondary school level, both as a cultural subject in its own right and as a way of teaching STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) and other subjects?

Living Streets has operated the national Walk to School (WtS) campaign since 1995 and aims to encourage all parents and young people to make walking to school part of their daily routine, emphasising the benefits to physical and mental health and wellbeing, the social aspect and the potential to address congestion, improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. Over 1.9m children and nearly 6,800 schools nationally take part in Living Streets Walk to School activities each year making it the UK's largest walk to school scheme.

In 2012, Living Streets, in partnership with Durham County Council, secured funding through the Government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to roll out the outreach project in 11 local authority areas. The project is rightly ambitious with targets to convert 4.2 million school journeys from car to walking and a further 2.8 million to Park and Stride, saving an estimated 3.59 thousand tonnes of CO₂. In the first year alone we have launched Walk Once a Week (WoW) in 210 primary schools, reaching over 50,000 more children. By the end of the project in 2015 we will have collectively engaged over 1,000 schools (854 primary and 182 secondary). Early results have revealed walking rates at participating primary schools increasing from 53% to 68%.

Our experience over the last year has revealed that infrastructure and design barriers which children encounter on the walk to school, or which prevent parents from letting their children walk can lead to reduced numbers of children walking to school. Speeding traffic scares over a third (36%) of children and young people about walking to school, whilst over one in five children and young people are concerned about the lack of safe crossing points on their journey. Busy roads, fast moving traffic and poor walking infrastructure are common barriers cited by parents.

As part of our LSTF project we have worked with 42 secondary schools and invested £70,000 in capital improvements to help remove environmental barriers to walking, which has leveraged in further match funding.

4.2 What is the role of architecture and the built environment in enabling a better public understanding of issues related to sustainability and the environment?

N/A

4.3 How can high standards of design be achieved and promoted through neighbourhood plans?

N/A

4.4 How can we better ensure that awareness and support of high standards of design are shared among all the professions concerned with architecture, the built environment, and quality places?

N/A

4.5 How can we ensure fair representation (gender, ethnicity, class, etc) and better preparation for those wishing to enter into higher education and the built environment professions?

N/A

4.6 What other recommendations would you like to make relating to this particular theme?

N/A

Please **submit your responses via the online form** that can be found at: www.farrellreview.co.uk . We regret that emailed attachments of this document will not be considered as evidence.

Please respond by **5pm, Friday 19th July 2013** (six weeks from the opening of the call). Replies after that time may not be taken into consideration.

ⁱ Adams *et al*, 2011

http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Evaluations/FFW_Economic_Evaluation_Final_Feb_2012.pdf

ⁱⁱhttps://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://go20.org/why-go-20/>

^{iv} The introduction of 20 mph zones was associated with a 41.9% reduction in road casualties. Injuries to pedestrians were reduced by a little under a third. There was a smaller reduction in casualties among cyclists of 16.9%. Source: <http://www.bmj.com/content/339/bmj.b4469>

^v <http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/makingthecase>

^{vi} http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/index.php/download_file/-/view/889/

^{vii} Luengo-Fernández, R., Leal, J., Gray, A., Petersen, S., Rayner, M. 2006. Cost of cardiovascular diseases in the United Kingdom. *Heart* 2006;92:1384–1389.

^{viii} McPherson, K., Marsh, T., Brown, M. 2007. *Tackling Obesities: Future Choices - Modelling Future Trends in Obesity and the Impact on Health*. 2nd Edition. Government Office for Science, London.

^{ix} Centre for Mental Health. 2010. *The economic and social cost of mental health problems in 2009/10*. The Centre for Mental Health, available at http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/pdfs/Economic_and_social_costs_2010.pdf.

^x The Lancet, Volume 379, Issue 9832, Pages 2198 - 2205, 9 June 2012

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(12\)60766-1/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(12)60766-1/fulltext)

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