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want to live here?

Shaping attitudes to urban living and housing options in Newcastle Gateshead

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Contents

Executive Summary

The aim of this research is to fill a qualitative gap in the evidence base supporting the Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal programme in Newcastle and Gateshead and the case for providing and encouraging the appropriate residential development within the core of the Tyneside conurbation to retain and attract people to live in these areas.

The methodology is informed by the underlying urban policy at national and regional level and the principles of sustainable development. This is summarised as three broad and overlapping challenges of promoting high quality brownfield development at sustainable densities.

A literature review of qualitative evidence on urban housing appropriate to these challenges provides the framework for primary data collection. This review indicates an impressive breadth of existing qualitative evidence derived from both generic studies and a review of specific schemes. Existing research suggests that good design is proven to have measurable economic benefits in development and regeneration, through a mix of improved fit with user requirements and preferences, greater opportunities for higher density and mixing of uses, and the resulting increase in the sustainability of local facilities. This work provides the archetypical framework for understanding areas within the conurbation and housing typologies that may be suitable for regeneration of the housing market within the inner urban area identified by Newcastle Gateshead Pathfinder.

A series of focus groups were held with a geographic and demographic cross-section of existing residents of Newcastle and Gateshead; including families; with an 'open' approach to recording their views and perceptions on areas within the conurbation and attitudes towards different urban housing types. This was complemented by self-completion questionnaire(s) to provide a sub-regional comparison between Tyneside and other 'core cities'. The focus group exercise was subdivided into two distinct sections. The first investigated urban living in city centres, inner cities; where there was a close association with housing tenure and council housing estates; and suburban locations. The second investigated different housing sectors and products that included; speculative new housing developments; conversion of redundant institutional and commercial buildings; refurbishment of existing urban terraces; Tyneside flats and inter-war 'garden' suburbs; tower blocks and high rise properties; and sustainable housing and self-build.

A cross section of the views expressed within the focus groups has been recorded and analysed under similar themes of urban areas and urban housing.

In some ways the key findings from this primary research fits with existing work on low demand areas. The citizen workshop participants clearly saw long-term deep-rooted stigmatisation at the root of problematic areas. They also recognised the innate conservatism that people like themselves had in terms of where they choose to live. They recognised the attractions of inexpensive newly built suburban housing, even if they were sometimes dubious about its inherent quality. There were, however departure points from similar work outlined in the comparative literature review. While other research on low demand housing has stressed the poor quality of existing housing stock, on Tyneside people felt that generally in the pathfinder

area this was not the case. Some participants were in favour of demolition, but not because of the quality, rather because it was the only way they felt the stigmatisation could be removed. Other participants favoured retention and perhaps some modernisation with new build on vacant sites only. Opinion was divided, but the quality and associated potential of much of the existing housing stock was not in question.

The other departure was the specific importance that was placed on sorting out education provision in the areas. No matter how attractive housing developments might be there was a strongly prevalent feeling, particularly from those with children, that unless residents had access to demonstrably good schools, families would not repopulate certain inner urban areas.

People recognised there was an inherent conservatism in the way they choose places to live; however there was also a willingness expressed to embrace change. This was particularly seen as an inter-generational issue with younger generations of house buyers more interested in issues like sustainability, new ways of living and contemporary design. There was also criticism, however, that city centre developments only target the young (and wealthy) and this was not a model to be replicated elsewhere. There were conflicting messages expressed though the work and naturally there was no consensus agreement but what seemed to be emerging was that perhaps the future of these areas lay in redeveloping them as inner 'urban' suburbs in particular learning from the positive attributes from similar areas such as Summerhill and Heaton. This means providing housing for a variety of residents, making tenure inconspicuous and making sure that local facilities, such as schooling, are of an acceptable standard.

Introduction

"When I travel around Britain I see a country full of nowhere places. …. We are to build new houses … we must offer something better than what is currently on offer. I do not believe that people in Britain have much choice in their housing." (Jonathan Glancy)[1]

The basis of Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal is a robust evidential base for making programme decisions. Independent scrutiny of the programme from the Housing Inspectorate has an explicit interest in the role of qualitative 'soft' data in the diagnosis of the current market position. There is a specific emphasis on using this evidence to identify 'key drivers' that are leading to the current market and to show "… which of the drivers can be influenced in the long and short term by intervention"[2]. The importance of qualitative information or 'drivers' for informing strategic interventions in the housing market has been established as one of the aspects of any assessment, explicitly including understanding "housing aspirations of local people", "… the perceptions of an area as a place to live" and "… urban design, energy use and transport implications"[3].

This research report is designed to identify and fill some of the current gaps in the 'soft' data as it relates to the Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal area within Newcastle and Gateshead. It indicates the nature of some of the qualitative 'drivers' behind location and housing choices by undertaking an overview of existing qualitative research and literature and then through a series of citizen workshops. It suggests which of these 'drivers' can be influenced through better quality urban housing design or through changing perceptions.

The aim of this research is to inform work that will strengthen the case for developing the core of the urban conurbation in Tyne and Wear and begin to identify the range of sustainable housing 'products' that will both retain and attract people into the Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal area.

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[1] Quoted at 'The new agenda for British housing: Creating new communities?' Conference April 8 2003 – Church House Conference Centre, London.
[2] From a presentation by Irwin, Roy (2003) *Housing Market Renewal Independent Scrutiny Proposals* (Housing Inspectorate).
[3] p107-108 in DTZ Pieda (2004) *Housing Market Assessment Manual* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, London).

The policy challenges

The aims of the Pathfinder programme have to be understood in a broader urban policy context, including the developing evidence and ideas that underlie this context. Throughout the plethora of planning and design policy, best practice guidance and recommendations to local planning authorities, there are a number of 'big ideas' that have the greatest impact on the urban design and housing development. These ideas are not isolated design principles, but observable trends within governmental approaches to spatial planning[4] and urban design. These big ideas or trends all relate to and emerge from sustainable development principles and can be presented as three overlapping challenges to shaping attitudes to living within the Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal area. These challenges provide the context and the justification for the urban renaissance and suggest the nature of the future urban communities and housing 'products' to be tested as part of this research.

The brownfield challenge

The first of these policy themes is the locational emphasis on the reuse of brownfield sites. The current PPG3[5] sets out the government's intent to prioritise accessible brownfield housing sites and clearly establishes the link between design quality and the reuse of previously developed sites, particularly within accessible inner urban locations. This national guidance and the principles underlying it have recently been reinforced by the publication of Newcastle interim housing policy and guidance[6].

This policy emphasis on brownfield regeneration is supported by a body of evidence to suggest that the 'compact city' has the potential to be one of the most sustainable urban forms, especially in reducing energy consumption and the need to travel. This has influenced strategic urban policy[7] and new approaches to residential development. Examples of emerging policy are those based on the Dutch ABC[8] approach, the north American Transit Orientated Development[9] and RICS Transport Development Areas. These all make direct links between transportation, accessibility and urban densities. The UK is seeing locally defined examples of this approach where links are being made between density, location and physical attributes and indirect links are being investigated between housing densities, employment provision and investment decisions[10].

Academic research in this area has focussed on specific links between residential/urban densities and transportation energy use[11], at the strategic scale[12], building energy use[13] and the provision of community infrastructure[14]. In parallel, practice orientated research has identified[15] and partially quantified[16] the links between urban densities and economic factors such as marketability, land ownership and institutional procedures/restrictions. These factors combine into a convincing case for a European wide trend

[4] There are also many quasi-governmental approaches that can also be considered 'material', most noticeably the urbanism principles set out in chapter 2 of the Urban Task Force report.
[5] Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *Planning Policy Guidance Note No.3: Housing* (DETR, London).
[6] Newcastle City Council (April 2004) *Planning Newcastle: Local Development Framework – Interim guidance and policy on housing issues* (Newcastle City Council, Newcastle upon Tyne).
[7] Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) Our Towns and Cities: the future – Delivering an urban renaissance (DETR, London).
[8] Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and the Environment (1994) *Report on the progress of the Dutch ABC policy* (Dutch Government, The Hague).
[9] For example see; Kunstler, J.H. (1996) *Home from Nowhere: Remaking Our Everyday World for the Twenty-first Century* (Simon and Schuster, New York); and Gordon, P and Richardson, H.W "Are compact cities a desirable planning goal?". *Journal of the American Planning Association* 63(1) pp 95-106.
[10] Rudlin, David (1997) 'The model sustainable urban neighbourhood'. *SUN (Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood) Dial* Spring/Summer (4) pp 1-5.
[11] Newman, PWG and Kenworthy, JR (1989) 'Gasoline consumption and cities: A comparison of US cities with a global survey'. *American Planning Association Journal* 55 pp 24-37.
[12] Breheny, Michael (1996) 'Densities in the sustainable city'. Conference paper presented to the second meeting of *The Sustainable Cities Network*, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, February 7.
[13] Owens, Susan (1986) *Energy, Planning and Urban Form* (Pion, London).
[14] Barton, Hugh., Davies, Geoff and Guise, Richard (1995) *Sustainable Settlements: A guide for planners, designers and developers* (University of the West of England and the Local Government Management Board, Luton).
[15] Llewelyn-Davies (1996) *The Re-use of Brownfield Land for Housing* (The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, London).
[16] Urban Initiatives and Chesterton (1995) *Hertfordshire Dwelling Provision through Planned Regeneration* (Hertfordshire County Council, Hertford).

against suburban settlement patterns and a rejuvenation of collective urban living. The overriding theme throughout the academic research and planning practice has been to encourage the efficient use of the land resource by the intensification[17] and mixing[18] of urban uses on suitable brownfield locations. Internationally, the limited published market research[19] has shown a strong attraction of tradition urban neighbourhoods; particularly their external character and communal spaces. Nationally, market research[20] relating to brownfield development has demonstrated that much of the construction industry has responded positively to the overlapping and reinforcing changes in planning policy and market forces, many seeing fresh market opportunities in brownfield development.

Yet, in respect of national policy this positive view of the opportunities for brownfield development is balanced by a repetitive criticism of the current PPG3, that "in emphasising the need to focus housing provision where there is a supply of previously used land, it relegates the question of whether [this] land … is where people want to live."[21] But this can be seen as an unjust criticism as PPG3 itself states that in allocating and releasing land for development, "… it is essential that the operation of the development process is not prejudiced by unreal expectations of the developability of particular sites nor by planning authorities seeking to prioritise development sites in an arbitrary manner."[22].

There is a clear tension between realistic sites suitable for housing development; based largely on the actual and perceived marketability of housing within such areas; and the regeneration aspirations of public bodies. The brownfield challenge is for the housing market to test the attractiveness of a range of accessible brownfield locations for residential development and to find a way that makes these locations both aspirational and realistic.

The density challenge

There is polarisation between approaches to urban renaissance and the competing models of low-risk suburban development and perceived market difficulties in following a more urban 'high-density' form of development. One view is that "urban areas must not be turned into counterfeit suburbs in a bid to coax back the middle classes. … this is what housing developers, unwilling to take risks, have been doing for years by building suburban-style homes in the most urban of locations. … Suggesting that people might live in urban areas in apartments rather than houses, in mixed-use blocks – and even at higher densities still – has the power to provoke outrage".[23] Indeed, the National House Building Council[24] recognises the misplaced 'knee-jerk reaction' from the general public as the main potential barrier to higher density housing. Independent research[25] has confirmed this view and related the consumer reaction to density with existing circumstances and income levels. In part this social attitude is self-reinforcing, where people who are or have lived in terraced properties or flats at the more urban densities are those who have the least resistance to higher density housing solutions.

[17] An attitudinal survey of public responses to urban intensification found that while the form and level of development had little impact on residential satisfaction, the increased levels of activity such as commuter parking, increased impact on local services etc. For more details see; Jenks, M (2000) ' The acceptability of urban intensification' in; Williams, K., Burton., E. and Jenks, M (Eds.) *Achieving Sustainable Urban Form* (E&FN Spon, London); and Jenks, Mike and Gerhardt, Waltraud (2000) 'Urban intensification: the potential of decision support for assessing brownfield sites'. *Urban Design International* 5 pp 233-243.
[18] Tait, Malcom., Biddulph, Mike and Franklin, Bridget (2001) 'Urban Villages – a mixed up development idea'. *Urban Environment Today* 7 June p12.
[19] Two examples that related to public acceptance of traditional urban densities are; Constantine, J (1994) "Market research: Survey of homebuyers shows interest in traditional neighborhood development". *Land Development* Winter pp 5-7; and Schleimer, J (1995) "Case study: Are neo-traditional communities succeeding in the marketplace?". *Lusk Review* Fall pp 76-82.
[20] Examples are provided in an overview of the perspective of developers in; Lucas, Karen.; Marsh, Chris and Jones, Peter (2000) *Implementing Sustainable Property Development* (Landor, London).
[21] P10 in House Builders Federation (June 2000) *Places for People: Comments for the Proposed Urban White Paper* (House Builders Federation, London).
[22] para. 34 in Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *Planning Policy Guidance Note No.3:Housing* (Stationary Office, London).
[23] Rudlin, David (2000) 'The need is urban neighbourhoods, not counterfeit suburbs'. *Environment Today* 10 February.
[24] Chief Executive, Imtiaz Farooki quoted in; (2001) 'Denser Living'. *Urban Environment Today* 11 October pp12-13.
[25] Cooper, James; Ryley, Tim and Smyth, Austin (2001) 'The interaction between consumer response and urban design: empirical results from Belfast'. *Environment and Planning A* 33 pp1265-1278.

This key issue of residential densities and the intensification of uses in accessible locations is the second challenge of government policy at the national level. The issue of design quality and raising densities is critically linked in advice, as is recognition of the 'sensitivity'[26] of the policy approach.

Many of the reactions to issues of density are articulated in the context of family housing provision[27] and the need to avoid many of the socially deterministic housing solutions of the past; in part due to the truism that professional architectural, planning and urban design views on density and quality can differ greatly from housing consumers[28]. Yet, in response to this position, there are policy approaches that suggest we actively learn from the past and how many of our more successful higher residential density environments were developed[29]. A constant theme within the recorded academic and practitioner debate is the limit imposed on policy-promoted models of higher density urban living by social attitudes in England[30], even if intensification and raising densities can be seen as a more environmentally sustainable form of urban development[31]. A clear example of this is recent research[32] in the understanding of privacy and tolerance to noise within higher density developments that has shown how "… new anxieties have replaced old one".

What can be taken as a consensus from both polarised positions is that 'one size does not fit all' in terms of housing provision and we cannot make crude assumptions that there are common values and aspirations within each demographic or social grouping. At a policy and practical level, there has to greater sophistication on our understanding of householder values and to be prepared to accept that there are certain interventions in the housing market that will alter many apparently fixed views on hosing aspirations and the range of urban living. These changes can be through creative marketing and advertising strategies and through the role of design in differentiating a certain 'housing product' and that many of these potential changes are counter-intuitive and to some degree unpredictable.

It becomes clear that we have to recognise the need for a paradigm shift in social attitudes to urban living at higher residential densities; both exploring ideas and initiatives for intervention in urban lifestyle attitudes and by acceptance that such socio-economic issues are locality specific and consumer attitudes (at least to residential environments and housing types) appear to be more flexible, in favour of the urban policy-maker when the property market is operating within areas of regional growth and rising demand[33]. All this policy bias should be understood in spite of any enthusiasm from house-builders[34] to embrace higher density urban living as an element of sustainability.

There is also a density challenge for the statutory planning system and it's role in the preparation of urban capacity studies that are promotional and aspirational. A number of cities and counties have undertaken 'urban capacity studies' to establish the potential capacity of urban areas to accommodate more housing. A review of a sample of such studies for the UK Round Table on Sustainable Development concluded that they used different approaches; most sought to establish capacity based on existing planning policies and standards (some of which may be out of date in terms of current thinking or policy); and most sought to set limits to capacity. The review proposed that the methods used for such studies should be

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[26] See p3 in; Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, English Heritage ; and Planning Officers Society (2003) *Moving Towards Excellence in Urban Design and Conservation* (CABE, London).
[27] For example see, San Martin, Clare (2003) 'Implications for design, management and security'. *Planning for London* 45 pp21-22.
[28] Crookston, M.., Clarke, P and Averley, J (1996) 'The compact city and the quality of life' pp134-142 in Jenks, M., Burton, B. and Williams, K (Eds.) *The Compact City: A Sustainable Urban Form?* (E&FN Spon, London).
[29] This is evident in; Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions and CABE (2001) *Better Places to Live: By Design – A companion guide to PPG3* (DTLR, London); which has specific illustrations of Jesmond area in Newcastle and more recently; Greater London Authority (2003) *Housing for a Compact City* (Greater London Authority, London) which refers to Stoke Newington and its terraced housing as being "… one of the most adaptable and enduring housing types in England …" (p87).
[30] This repeating theme can be see in examples of views and applied research such as; Jenks, Mike *et al* (1996) *The compact city: a sustainable urban form?* (E&FN Spon, London). Barnes, Philip., Spry, Matthew (1998) 'Singular solutions'. *Planning* 1280 p19.
[31] Williams, Katie (1999) 'Urban intensification policies in England: problems and contradictions'. *Land Use Policy* 16(3) pp 167-178.
[32] Mulholland Research and Consulting (2003) *Perceptions of Privacy and Density* (Design for Homes, London). This can be viewed at www.designforhomes.org.
[33] For example see; Knight, Christopher (1996) 'Economic and Social Issues' pp 114-121 in Jenks, Mike., Burton, Elizabeth and Williams, Katie (Eds.) *The Compact City: A Sustainable Urban Form?* (E & FN Spon, London); and Urban Initiatives and Chesterton (1995) *Hertfordshire Dwelling Provision Through Planned Regeneration* (Hertfordshire County Council).

standardised and that studies should test alternative assumptions about density, car parking provision and road layouts, to explore whether a more flexible and creative approach would enable more housing to be accommodated within urban areas in a way which maintains urban quality and personal privacy[35]. The Government agrees and is encouraging RPCs, when preparing assessments of urban capacity in their region, to explore the implications of adopting alternative planning policies and standards."[36]

The implications are clear. The density challenge is for the planning system to become more pro-active in identifying suitable sites and challenging many of the underlying policy standards and assumptions that seek to unduly restrict and limit development.

The quality challenge

Density and compactness alone will not ensure sustainable urban form and they have to become policy tools in conjunction with other mechanisms. A qualitative shift in the expected standards of new development is needed to complement the approaches to density and compactness to ensure the attractiveness and resilience of urban areas as places to live and work. The growing importance of subjective factors relating to both the design and on-going management of urban areas is one of the key policy trends arising from the local implications of sustainable urban form.

This third key theme within the current PPG3 and subsequent policy and best practice documentation is the aspiration and need for a 'step-change' in the quality for new housing and residential environments. This is an explicit extension of governmental aspirations for quality[37] to be extended to new housing development, irrespective of being high density, inner city or green-field suburbia. This is an increasingly repetitive element within all areas of urban policy; the need to promote quality by becoming more locality specific, through the flexible use of policy (and accompanying development standards) and through the consideration of principles or criteria rather than rigid standards[38]. Indeed, a recent review of the implementation of PPG3 across the country found that there were strong links between density and design policies, and that "… some housebuilders focused more on high density than good design, and paid insufficient attention to local character and context"[39], there were policy barriers to achieving high quality at urban densities, most noticeably in the two areas of insufficient design staff resources working on the proposals and a level of inflexibility on highway and spacing standards by the planning / highway authority.

As part of this increasing flexibility, there is the need to be more sophisticated to any approach to housing capacity based on location characteristics and the wider benefits for promoting sustainable urban living. This means not simply applying formulae to setting priorities for new housing capacity based on brownfield development, but on the most appropriate and sustainable locations[40]. The idea of urban policy that espouses any simplistic link of households to numbers, ignoring the qualitative aspects of residential choice (getting the right type of housing in the right locations) and the connection with the regional economic conditions has to be challenged[41].

[34] Fulford, Charles (1996) 'The Compact City and the Market: The Case of Residential Development' pp 122-133 in Jenks, Mike., Burton, Elizabeth and Williams, Katie (Eds.) *The Compact City: A Sustainable Urban Form?* (E & FN Spon, London).
[35] Winkley, Rob (2003) 'Developing a design for life'. *Planning* 3 October p8.
[36] P20 in; Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (1998) *Planning for the Communities of the Future* Cm 3885 (Stationary Office, London).
[37] para. 3 in Department of the Environment (1997) *Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: General Policy and Principles* (Stationery Office, London).
[38] For example; DTLR and CABE (2001) *Better Places to Live: A companion guide to PPG3* (HMSO, London); and DETR and CABE (2000) By Design: Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice (HMSO, London).
[39] p34 in; Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (2003) *Delivering Planning Policy for Housing: PPG3 Implementation Study* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, London).
[40] North East Assembly (2002) *Regional Planning Guidance for the North East RPG1 Issues Report* (North East Assembly, Newcastle upon Tyne).
[41] Niven, Rosie (2001) 'Housing on the rise'. *Planning* 11 May p11.

The statutory planning system is seen as a central and pro-active element to the delivery of these objectives. "Local planning authorities should develop a *shared vision* with their local communities *of the types of residential environments* they wish to see in their area and articulate this through their development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance."[42] Local planning authorities are encouraged to establish a range of 'place-making' policies. The approach to 'place-making' implies a more creative and flexible approach to creating urban neighbourhoods that are human scale and have the environmental qualities that current and future residents aspire to[43]. In part, we have to be responsive to the characteristics of different locations (such as topography, industrial heritage, social history) and communities. This can best achieve this by providing variety at a local level, avoiding overtly prescriptive standards and tailoring our actions to the views and aspirations of individual neighbourhoods.

This quality challenge has been reinforced by up to date governmental guidance. "… effective regeneration of rundown areas demands the highest quality design, not the mediocre. The historic environment and its assets can often provide a focus and a theme for action."[44] This has been largely accepted by the development industry, which is already adapting their processes to new standards of design and density accepting that "… a purely housing-led urban renaissance … is not possible"[45], and that more comprehensive activities are needed to support any step-change in housing quality.

This overview of the challenges of urban sustainability are by nature, a reductionist approach to many of the overlapping and confusing challenges within housing market research. If there are any specific lessons it has to be that while there is a national policy context to work within, generic policy solutions are not sufficient to deal with the complexity of renewal and regeneration at a local level.

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[42] para. 55 in Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *Planning Policy Guidance Note No.3: Housing (Stationary Office, London)*.
[43] This is supported by national government policy and guidance such as; DTLR and CABE (2001) *Better Places to Live: A companion guide to PPG3* (HMSO, London); DETR and CABE (2000) *By Design: Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice* (HMSO, London).
[44] p3 in; Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, English Heritage and Planning Officers Society (2003*) Moving Towards Excellence in Urban Design and Conservation* (CABE, London). This sets out principles that will be consistent with the content of the forthcoming Planning and Compensation Bill.
[45] p4 in; House Builders Federation (June 2000) *Places for People: Comments for the Proposed Urban White Paper* (House Builders Federation, London).

Literature Review

This section reviews recent research and marketing publications in the overlapping thematic areas of population migration (specifically those studies that sought to understand the causes behind the forces of counter-urbanisation and those with a sub-regional dimension relating to the north-east); images of areas, estates, neighbourhoods; housing preferences and choices; and private sector development decisions. This exercise has been undertaken with the aim of identifying specific qualitative 'gaps' in the existing evidence base on housing preferences and choices. It also aims where possible to analyse existing and up-to-date data sources on the housing preferences to give a fresh perspective on understanding the operations of the local housing market in Newcastle and Gateshead, particularly within the identified Pathfinder area.

National and regional

At the strategic level, existing research addresses concerns relating to the real and perceived benefits of investing in design quality, as well as several significant demographic studies that had some investigation into the causes for household movement away from urban areas. For example; governmental commissioned research and endorsed evidence[46] has demonstrated that good urban design has measurable economic benefits in higher capital returns and placing developments above local competition at little extra cost; making marginal proposals viable and other schemes more profitable. There is a better fit with user requirements and in the management of environments and facilities (reduced running cost). There are better opportunities for achieving more mixed uses and areas, together with higher densities (both residential and commercial) – and accordingly, the wider regeneration benefits of more sustainable local facilities. Qualitatively, good urban design can address wider cognitive issues of image, identity, stigma, prestige and civic pride[47]. This can build confidence and open up wider regeneration and development opportunities[48]. Other studies have shown how investment in inner-city brownfield locations are consistently more profitable that superficially more prosperous places[49] and how long-term investment within major regeneration areas also out-performs the property market as a whole[50]. Much of this qualitative understanding has yet to be widely acknowledged in the housing market.

The financial benefits and links with design have been explored more thoroughly in a number of high profile 'New Urbanism' developments in North America. One study[51] found a statistically significant price difference or 'premium' on new developments when they were based on the principles of 'New Urbanism' – ranging from +4% to +25% for similarly sized family homes. This American experience can be anecdotally matched against the UK approach to urban villages and the financial benefits of design quality both for individual properties and the wider physical setting[52].

The Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal Programme; as an element of wider regeneration programmes; is the civic response to the well documented, albeit quantitatively, 'counter-urbanisation cascade' and migratory patterns nationally (specifically the north south drift closely influenced by national

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[46] For example see; RICS and DoE (1996) *Quality of Urban Design: A study on the involvement of private property decision-makers in urban design* (RICS and DoE, London).
[47] Vandell, K and Lane, J (1989) 'The economies of architecture and urban design: some preliminary findings' *Journal of the American Real Estate and Urban Economics Association* 17(2) pp 235-260.
[48] Parfect, M and Power, G (1997) *Planning for Urban Quality: Urban Design in Towns and Cities* (Routledge, London) and Worpole, Ken (1999) The value of Architecture – Design, economy and the architectural imagination (RIBA, London).
[49] Morley Fund Management (2003) *Commercial Property Returns in Deprived Areas* (English Partnerships, London).
[50] Office of the Deputy Prime Minster, RICS Foundation and Economic and Social Research Council (2003) *Benchmarking Urban Regeneration* (ODPM, London).
[51] Eppli, Mark J and Tu, Charles C (1999) *Valuing the New Urbanism: The Impact of the New Urbanism on Prices of Single-Family Homes* (Urban Land Institute, Washington).

economic trends and having a disproportionate effect on the larger northern cities), regionally, where population projections for the North East Region is one of only two regions, alongside Merseyside, likely to contract over the next twenty years and locally, where most movement was caused by internal migration within the city's boundaries[53]. Qualitative assumptions are often made in connection to demographic studies addressing urban population movement and loss. Champion and Atkins demonstrated that nationally "… at all levels and in almost all cases the net result of population exchanges between types of places is a shift down the [urban to rural] hierarchy"[54]. Yet, their analysis of the 'counterurbanisation cascade' indicated that most migration is actually over short distances stepping down the hierarchy, rather than large changes in domestic circumstances. While they did not set out to identify the causes of this migration pattern in this study, they did raise the need for more work to clarify what is actually happening and why, given that the actual boundaries to urban areas are often artificial and that the census coverage (the survey was based upon an analysis of 1991 census data) is typically poorer within the larger cities and metropolitan areas. Yet even within their analysis, there were exceptions to this pattern in younger age groups (16-19 and 20-24 year olds), students, unemployed and certain ethnic groups (Black, Chinese). The causes cited for this pattern of movement, form the core basis for the city's regeneration challenges – increasing competitiveness, improving indigenous skills / graduate retention, quality of life factors (safety and security included), education provision and housing affordability (including the realisation of hidden equity within properties) and choice.

Understanding these population movements for areas and for particular residential locations within cities is clearly connected to the living preferences, and potentially the attractions of destination locations as an expression of the preferences and tastes of families[55]. Yet this and similar research[56] does make it clear that this pattern of demographic movement away form our core cities is not inevitable, as urban living is attractive to many, and suggests that perhaps the greatest challenge is to change the misplaced perceptions of both town and country. There is some evidence to suggest that this may already be underway in the changing perceptions of Newcastle and Gateshead and the suggested "… brain gain form the South East [to Newcastle] as a growing number of professionals and creative people are attracted by the cultural buzz"[57].

Within Newcastle, there is growing recognition of the success of Quayside and city centre regeneration activities; particularly the work of the Grainger Town Partnership[58]; has had an effect upon the attraction of the city and these key areas for new investment from outside of the city and for new residential communities. Although a few noticeable names, including Lord Rogers[59], have reiterated the problems of a growing disparity between certain urban communities within quite small areas within the city, and "… despite some evidence of migration 'back to the city' (specifically the city centre and adjacent inner city areas), it is likely that a net migration shift from inner area to suburban within the main conurbations and larger cities continues"[60]. This remains the challenge, to address such demographic and social forces. There may be a

[52] Garrett, Alexander (2003) 'The Prince's charming village". *The Observer* 5 October p19.
[53] King, Dave (*Ed.*) (2001) *Changing Households, Changing Housing Markets* (Anglia Polytechnic University and Council of Mortgage Lenders, London).
[54] p26 in Champion, Tony and Artkins, David (1996) *The Counterurbanisation Cascade: an analysis of the 1991 Census Special Migration Statistics for Great Britain* (Department of Geography Seminar Paper No.66, University of Newcastle upon Tyne).
[55] Allinson, John (1998) *City growth and decline: migration as a measure of urban quality: Working Paper 46* (Faculty of the Built Environment, University of the West of England Bristol). Although this also identifies many further research questions regarding the qualitative reasons why people migrate and the respective 'push' and 'pull' factors on city, suburb and market town.
[56] Champion, Tony *et al* (1998) *Urban Exodus: a report for the CPRE* (Department of Geography, University of Newcastle upon Tyne).
[57] Anne Minton quoted in Doward, Jamie and Reilly, Tom (2003) 'Loft dwellers Toon in, turn on to North'. *The Observer* 23 December. Anne Minton (2003) *Northern Soul: Culture, Creativity and Quality of Place in Newcastle and Gateshead* (RICS, London).
[58] Robinson, Fred., Dowdy, Harvey., Downie, Mary Lou., Fisher, Peter and Greenhalgh, Paul (2001) *Investing in Heritage: The Renaissance of Newcastle's Grainger Town* (Grainger Town Project, Newcastle).
[59] Quoted in Hetherington, Peter (2002) "Rogers laments failing vision". *Guardian* January 26 p11.
[60] p55 in Champion, Tony (2001) 'Impacts of migration on population change' pp 53-70 in King, Dave (*Ed.*) *Changing Households, Changing Housing Markets* (Anglia Polytechnic University and Council of Mortgage Lenders, London).

possible expansion role; qualitatively (form, density massing etc) and in perception, of the city centre as a lifestyle living environment in assisting repopulating the edge-of-city centre locations that are unique to Newcastle and other Core Cities of England.

The market attraction of inner city locations in this context is linked to the level of green field releases[61], a point that was acknowledged by the government's own urban task force. "… we do not accept the argument of certain northern planning authorities that the way to overcome low demand for housing in their area is to build on the surrounding greenfields, rather than tackling the regeneration of their urban heartlands. The release of such land will simply exacerbate their long term problems."[62]

Commentators have referred to the 'hour-glass figure' that characterises the demographics and income levels of the city. In this context it places the challenges of gentrification and education central to existing regeneration programmes. "Put simply, no middle class parents will be *pioneers* in putting their children into what are not the schools of the residualized poor."[63]

Newcastle has a specific regional role as a core city[64] with an emphasis within it's housing markets in response to this, most obviously in the role of the regional city centre but also in the broader diversity of communities and housing types that can be provided within the city. There has to be recognition of the unique role of regional cities or capitals with the spatial importance of local networks[65] and the specific experience of the North East as a modernising region with it's own spatial networks and the "… community of shared interests in the local media and political and developmental institutions who have an interest in the projection of a vibrant regional economy"[66].

The Pathfinder area in the city has also been the subject of many demographic and sociological studies in recent years due to the broad contrasts evident in adjacent communities. One important review of the available demographic information was undertaken in support of the initial 'Going for Growth' regeneration plans within the Newcastle area of Pathfinder[67]. An analysis of this material implied several distinct migratory patterns where households tend to move internally away from the riverside wards and very distinct housing markets in the west and east ends of the city. New-comers to the city, and thus the region as a whole, were concentrated in the city centre and a limited number of edge of city centre locations, such as Jesmond.

Yet, there were also a number of counter-intuitive findings from an analysis of this material. "The movement out of parts of the West End, and overall out of the area together, is the result of large numbers of households trying to find a way of remaining in the local area, often moving nearer family and support, but

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[61] As suggested in the number of thinly veiled references to the Newcastle Great Park (Northern Development Area) and the anonymous references to Elswick, South Benwell and Scotswood (aka. *Bankside* and *Riverview*), "*Bankside* has huge potential. Its housing is not only adequate, it is excellent." ... "The city has plans to extend onto the greenbelt because people do like to move out. But we have a site here that if it were ten miles further along the river would be worth millions. It's south facing, it's sunny and the views are stunning. There's no capital being made of the location." (p48); "Both Manchester and Newcastle have been hard hit by sprawling greenfield building. … The statement within Newcastle's Plan that the city still suffers from housing shortages and too high density contradicts available evidence." (p73); in; Power, Anne and Mumford, Katharine (1999) *The slow death of great cities? Urban abandonment or urban renaissance* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[62] pp217-218 in; Urban Task Force (1999) *Towards an Urban Renaissance* (E&FN Spon, London).
[63] p13 (my emphasis) in; Byrne, David (2000) 'Newcastle's Going for Growth: Governance and Planning in a Postindustrial Metropolis'. *Northern Economic Review* 30 Spring/Summer pp 3-17.
[64] For a market view of the role of core city see; Estate Gazette (2001) 'Focus: Regional Cities'. *Estates Gazette* 11 August pp51-59.
[65] Simmie, James (2001) "Trading Places: Competitive Cities in the Global Economy". Proceedings from *Innovation and Competitive Cities in the Global Economy*, conference at Worcester College, Oxford 28-30 March, pp 121-142.
[66] p30 in Charles, David and Benneworth, Paul (2001) "Situating the North East in the European Space Economy" pp 24-53 in Tomaney, John and Ward, Neil (Eds.) A Region in Transition: North East England at the Millennium (Ashgate, Aldershot).
[67] Newcastle City Council and Newcastle University (2000) *Who moves where and why? A survey of residents' past migration and current intentions* (unpublished). In total, 727 surveys were returned, with a fair even spread over the survey areas. It highlighted four 'migrant types' of key interest and significant movement; movers to Newcastle – households who moved from outside the region or from the surrounding regions are combined into a single group; movers from Newcastle – households moving from Newcastle to the surrounding region; movers within Newcastle – households who changed address within the Newcastle City boundary; and non-movers living in Newcastle – households who have lived at their current residence for more than five years.

then discovering the new arrangements within the local area are still satisfactory. *It is not giving up on the area*; it is continuing to search for some things that would keep them in the area."[68].

A specific approach to market testing for the west end of Newcastle with a number of locally operating developers and regeneration professionals was undertaken as part of the preparatory business planning work for the regeneration of Scotswood[69]. Although in part there were contradictory findings from this exercise, the main overview from this work was that innovative design and a high level of design control was an essential prerequisite for attracting developer interest and achieving any wider public interest in the area as a location to invest. The area had to clearly differentiate in terms of housing and wider location product. However, within this work there was little detail on what was actually meant by quality and innovative design other than to reinforce earlier evidence that actual residential densities were not a major deterrent[70] and that the role of iconic development and culture in addressing a change in image. There was a constant view that changing the identity and image of the area through development would not be possible by the current approaches and products of mass house builders and that 'innovative' developers where required to deliver innovative products and environments.

The consistent message is that the physical and social problems have to be understood within the wider context of urban change and decline, global economic change/restructuring, local government reorganisation, suburban growth and the supply and choice of housing. At this strategic scale there are a number of push and pull factors operating outside the control of any local area, particularly the rise in home ownership and low cost suburbia[71] and assumed anti-urban housing preferences. This complexity has not been reflected in the targeted government urban programmes to date[72] and suggests improved understanding as the starting point for any new radical action.

Area Specific Research

Throughout the published research and marketing literature, a structure for organising the mixed and messy material is apparent. This simplified view is put forward as a structure for analysis of the available material, it has to be understood in part as an abstract of a much more complicated market that treats residential locations on their individual merits, particularly exact location, reputation and timing arrangements. With these caveats understood, a review of area specific research and marketing material can place locations within three fairly distinct markets; (i) city centre locations; (ii) inner city locations that are often directly linked to research on public sector estates; and (iii) speculative new build housing and suburban development.

City centre locations

A generic City Centre lifestyle typically embraces professional and managerial occupations (with associated higher levels of qualifications / graduates) who have central locations as their main residences,

[68] Keenan, Paul; Lowe, Stuart; Spencer, Sheila *(1999)* 'Housing abandonment in inner cities: the politics of low demand for housing'. *Housing Studies* 14(5) pp703-716.
[69] This remains unpublished source material that provided the base evidence for section 7 in the internal report; Price Waterhouse Coopers and Newcastle City Council (July 2003) *Regeneration of Scotswood and West Benwell: Business Case* (Price Waterhouse Coopers and Newcastle City Council). The number of interviewees was limited to nine different developers, ranging from Wimpey and Urban Splash.
[70] In many respects, the issue of residential densities for the west end of the Newcastle, was seen as important in ensuring necessary cost returns and as such the development industry view was in some ways counter-intuitive in that they supported the idea of a masterplan that raised densities to the level in which they supported services and profits.
[71] p73 in; Power, Anne and Mumford, Katharine (1999) *The slow death of great cities? Urban abandonment or urban renaissance* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[72] Power, Anne and Tunstall, Rebecca (1997) *Dangerous disorder: Riots and violent disturbances in thirteen areas of Britain, 1991-92* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).

walk to work, have lower car ownership and tend to be committed to city centre living. Recently these individuals have been described as 'urban pioneers'[73]. Yet, the same work raises 'pioneer' residents' concerns associated with traffic levels, pollution, quality and levels of local services and affordability of housing.

As yet, much of what could be understood as the *urban renaissance* and the emergence of *urban pioneers* in the city centre within the Pathfinder HMR area has hung tightly to targeted regeneration areas such as the Quayside[74] and Grainger Town in Newcastle and there is a challenge and "… a renewed commitment to the inner ring of terraced housing, which surrounds city centres."[75] where demand is falling and there is a danger of increasing disparity between regenerated city centres and a declining inner-ring[76].

A recent review of city centre living in a number of northern English cities; including Newcastle; provided a prospectus on the future of living in city centres in the North. This review stressed the importance of having a statutory backing in the form of Unitary Development Plan and other regeneration documents and policies to provide market confidence. Specifically within Newcastle, the market's view of the Grainger Town Project[77] was of a concept that was surprisingly "… exciting and modern" and with the "… *aesthetic* qualities to give revival a head start"[78]. The other key city centre markets that competes well for the upper end of the residential market are riverside locations and the extended East Quayside[79]. Again, the long-term statutory backing and policy focus, initially from the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation[80] and more recently with the City Council implementing the T&WDC Master Plan for the East Quayside area – a master plan that has a strong urban design emphasis and prescriptive design principals regarding scale and massing of development. In this context, the conservation-led approach to the Quayside has proved to be a useful 'historical' commodity being offered to prospective house purchasers[81]. The indefinable qualities of waterfront living have been explored in some detail nationally and regionally, where there are measurable benefits and attractions "even in cities that are generally suffering from declining demand for housing in their centres, such as Newcastle. [An analysis of the local situation has identified, not just the presence of and proximity to water as an issues but the] … ability of well-designed and distinctive housing to appeal to a group of more affluent people who would otherwise have had to live in the suburbs and commute."[82] The common factor of successful quayside redevelopment is a design-led approach, with high quality design from the outset of any regeneration and redevelopment effectively 'branding' the area as stylish. Such an approach has to recognise the genis loci and makes the most of it's heritage.

A record of the work within Newcastle's city centre shows the transition from the physical potential of underused or redundant properties[83] to the commercial opportunities arising from a growing niche in housing within the north[84]. A profile of recent movers and city centre residents shows that the national demographic trends are largely replicated. Most are single people or young couples without children, most live in flats and

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[73] Urban Task Force (1999) *But would you live there? Shaping attitudes to urban living* (URBED, MORI and the School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol).
[74] Aldous, Tony (1994) 'When the boat comes in'. *Building Design* 1171 pp 12-15.
[75] p40 in Madden, Moss., Popplewell, Vicki and Wray, Ian (2001) *City Centre Living as a Springboard for Regeneration? Some lessons from Liverpool: Working Paper 59* (Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool).
[76] Wong, C and Madden M (2000) *North West Housing Need and Demand Study* (DETR, London).
[77] The work of the Grainger Town Project has been recorded with explicit references to it's commitment to environmental quality and the encouragement of mixed housing. For example see; Grainger Town Partnership (undated) *Grainger Town: Working for a new living* (Grainger Town Partnership, Newcastle); and a complete record of the project in; Grainger Town Partnership (2003) *Been there, done that!* (Grainger Town Partnership, Newcastle).
[78] P7 in; Chesterton (1998) *City Centre Living in the North: A study of residential development within the city centres of northern England* (Chesterton, Leeds).
[79] A critical review of riverside regeneration in both Newcastle and Gateshead in comparison with other UK cities can be found in; Anon (2003) 'Waterside renaissance – an amazing tale'. *Investment Now* 12(6) pp 8-16.
[80] A pictorial and written record of the work of the development corporation can be found in; Tyne and Wear Development Corporation (1996) *Riverside Revival* (Tyne and Wear Development Corporation, Newcastle and Sunderland).
[81] O'Brian, Colm (1997) 'Form, Function and Sign: Signifying the Past in Urban Waterfront Regeneration'. *Journal of Urban Design* 2(2) pp 163- 178.
[82] p13 in; Falk, Nicholas (2003) *Turning the Tide* (URBED, Manchester).
[83] Winskill, C and Greenall, A (1995) *Ideas for living in Grainger Town* (North East Civic Trust, Newcastle).
[84] Robinson, Fred., Dowdy, Harvey., Downie, Mary Lou., Fisher, Peter and Greenhalgh, Paul (2001) *Investing in Heritage: The Renaissance of Newcastle's Grainger Town* (Grainger Town Project, Newcastle).

follow a lifestyle where they do not own a car and they walk to work, and where this convenience is the main attraction of this type of living[85].

An overview of the current potential of the English core city centres in the north of England forecast an "… increased opportunity in upper floor conversions and transformations of ageing commercial properties into prime residential property" and that "… almost without exception, residential dwellings converted from other uses offer an *originality of design* which is very marketable"[86].

A detailed review of demonstration city centre developments in Leeds and Birmingham[87] found a predominance of young single people being attracted to the centre by easy access, convenience, the simplified life-style and the cosmopolitan 'buzz' of the city; although there was also a percentage of families attracted to the city centre and that residents came from an extremely mixed professional background with mixed household incomes. In response to design issues (based upon 80%+ survey of residents) this was an important factor in parallel with location aspects as " … the survey justified the decision to employ architects who used contemporary award-winning designs. It also confirmed the view that the look and feel of buildings, as well as location, matter to people and affect their decision to move in and then stay. Residents are pleased with the design and appearance of both CASPAR developments. They particularly like a number of interesting features, such as artistic external lighting at Leeds and a glass atrium at Birmingham, which give a modern 'artistic' feel."[88] A related review of centre living, specifically regarding 'living over the shop' initiatives[89], saw there was a desirability for people to live within mixed use schemes, being attracted by the mix and vitality. There were measurable benefits in terms of increased security for residents and retail units, if not always the financial imperative to undertake such schemes without public sector support. The commercial limitations to mixed-use residential schemes are often directly design related and due to difficulties over locality, car parking, the lack of a garden, density and conservative housing preferences[90]. Thus, the level of provision of mixed use schemes within or near to city centre locations are limited by consumer preferences and matching developer attitudes more than limitations over capacity.

What is evident from the growth in both city centre and waterfront living is the obvious shift in residential priorities and expectations, where initially the UK looked to North America for big ideas, it is now gaining inspiration for regeneration from European examples. This paradigm shift has generated a new niche market for housing 'pioneers' who are looking for something different in a residential environment. A detailed review of similar UK experiences, useful for an understanding of subjective factors influencing the market, contain a number of warnings about the long-term commercial benefits and lower resale values in areas of over provision of certain stock types, as second generation residents move into this niche market[91].

Inner city areas and council estates

There are a number of informative studies around the housing markets of the inner city, those areas that are generally stigmatised. In most of these studies, the inner city location was explicitly linked to issues

[85] Newcastle City Council (2000) *Living in the city* (Policy and Research Services, Newcastle).
[86] pp10 and 11 in; Chesterton (1998) *City Centre Living in the North: A study of residential development within the city centres of northern England* (Chesterton, Leeds).
[87] Oakes, Caroline and McKee, Eleanor (1997) *The market for a new private rented sector* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York); and Joseph Rowntree Foundation (1997) *City-centre apartments for single people at affordable rents: The requirements and preferences of potential occupiers* (York Publishing Services, York).
[88] p3 in Pam Brown Associates (2001) *Residents' views of CASPAR developments (City-centre Apartments for Single People at Affordable Rents* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York). More details of the design and management of the scheme can be found in; Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2000) *The secrets of Caspar* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[89] Goodchild, Barry (1998) 'Learning the lessons of housing over shops initiatives'. *Journal of Urban Design* 3(1) pp73-92.
[90] Senior, Martyn., Webster, Chris and Blank, Nia (2000) *Residents' preferences for land use mix and development density* (Department of City and Regional Planning, Cardiff University).
[91] For example, the experiences of Glasgow and Manchester recorded in; Rosenburg, Louis and Watkins, Craig (1999) 'Longitudinal monitoring of housing renewal in the urban core: reflections on the experience of Glasgow's merchant city'. *Urban Studies* 36(11) pp 1973-1996.

of property tenure and therefore indirectly to factors as diverse as attitudes to home ownership, social stigma and estate management.

An important national study by Dean and Hastings[92] recorded the current perception and 'stigma' attached to local authority urban housing estates from the perspective of local residents, estate agents and public bodies. It included a specific study in North Tyneside. They explicitly recommend positive image management and marketing as parallel to wider estate regeneration. Complementary work for the Greater London Authority[93] and for other London Boroughs[94] make very similar findings, that many issues concerning inner city areas are not physical and can most appropriately be addresses by different approaches to place and estate marketing, management, including issues of under occupation and addressing social attitudes to the external appearance and design of social housing. This is similarly reinforced by a separate qualitative study from Wales[95] which found that stigma and other responses to social housing was locality specific and dependent upon the individual's awareness and expectations of social housing associations, largely based upon personal experience.

Many of the attitudes to inner city estates are in part a result of poor design but more significantly, they are influenced by broader social structures and processes. Specifically, the location and design of estates continue to create problems due to poor levels of facility provision and access. A key criticism of design is the over-reliance on untested / unconventional design and "… the lack of resident involvement in decisions about their estates, particularly their design"[96]. Interventions that address housing and design alone will never be enough to bring about regeneration[97].

Negative associations remain about the physical appearance and cultural associations with social housing (council housing, estates and neighbourhoods). Generic archetypes and stereotypes do exist for the physical design, layout and appearance of social housing that are "… repetitive, utilitarian, collected … (in) unfavourable location(s)" … "Scale, uniformity and public character interact to make them at best conspicuously separate from normal streets, at worst ugly and oppressive in appearance. This has *not* changed"[98]. The stigma attached to certain areas and/or estates mean they are effectively 'red-lined' by employers, financial or other services. The same negative stereotypes and stigma exist within local authority officers and members. Negative area/estate reputation and "… stigma (are) probably the longest-lasting and most deep-seated problems"[99] of inner city areas and council estates. Indeed, attitudes to home ownership, housing tenure and housing design are closely linked[100] with a clear consensus that people wish to own a property that appears 'owner-occupied'. Innovative design in many areas is associated with social housing sector and as a consequence, design aspirations within development for owner occupation are extremely conservation.

These housing consumer views are matched by a more generic understanding of stigma attached to brownfield development by speculative developers[101]. Specifically there are often excessively high landowner aspirations for what is possible that does not match market potential. Yet, while there are

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[92] Dean, Jo and Hastings, Annette (2000) *Challenging images: Housing estates, stigma and regeneration* (Policy Press, Bristol); and Dean, Jo and Hastings, Annette (2000) 'Shaking off stigma as part of regeneration programmes'. *Urban Environment Today* 19 October p9.

[93] See para. 1.7.3 in; Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2001) *Managing underoccupation: A guide to good practice in social housing* (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, London).

[94] Niner, Pat (2000) *Making estates work (*Southwark Housing Policy and Communications, London).

[95] Opinion Research Services, University of Wales (2001) *Public perceptions of social housing in Wales* (Welsh Federation of Housing Associations, Cardiff).

[96] p36 in; Power, Anne and Tunstall, Rebecca (July 1995) *Swimming against the tide: Polarisation or progress on 20 unpopular council estates, 1980-1995* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).

[97] Ash, Joan (1996) 'Regenerating estates – rebuilding communities'. *Housing Review* 45(6) pp112-113.

[98] p13 and p39 in; Power, Anne and Tunstall, Rebecca (July 1995) *Swimming against the tide: Polarisation or progress on 20 unpopular council estates, 1980-1995* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).

[99] p62 in; Power, Anne and Tunstall, Rebecca (July 1995) *Swimming against the tide: Polarisation or progress on 20 unpopular council estates, 1980-1995* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).

[100] This is evident in an analysis of the national social attitudes survey that demonstrated the casual links between economic status and housing tenure preferences. Doling, J and Ford, J (1996) 'The new home ownership: The impact of labour market developments on attitudes toward owning your own home'. *Environment and Planning A* 28(1) pp 157-172.

[101] Syms, Paul (2001) *Releasing Browfields* (RICS Foundation, London).

concerns over the marketing of complex brownfield sites where there is a negative history, there is no evidence that this actually deterred potential residents when it was made freely available[102].

Thus, any intervention needs to address perceptions and attitudes – related to generic attitudes to urban areas and urban living, to perceptions of Newcastle upon Tyne and the conurbation as a whole and to neighbourhoods and communities (viewed both positively and negatively) within the city.

Locally within the Pathfinder HMR area, Scotswood and the west end of Newcastle have been the subject of several academic studies aiming to identify the causal factors in area decline. The strong message from this work was that the problems of the area are not primarily physical. "Generally, the housing stock ... is attractive, solidly built, well laid out and well maintained. Even semi- abandoned streets are generally made up of such property. ... Overall it is hard to see physical housing design or quality reasons why these neighbourhoods have hit such extreme difficulty."[103]. An analysis of available empirical research found that there is little correlation between violent crime (including rioting) and estate design. "The physical conditions, ethnic make-up and tenure of the areas were no different from some neighbourhoods which have not experienced such problems (rioting)"[104]. This reinforced earlier work from the same academics that also found that … "Crime problems did not appear strongly related to design"[105]. The key causality is key sector unemployment – what could be termed 'violent exclusion' of youth sector.

"Most cities in the survey (the referenced academic study that includes Newcastle) were losing population. … In some cases, there was simply too much housing in the wrong places. *Inner city estates* were in some ways easier to restore than outer estates. They were closer to shops, transport, jobs and other services. But breaking up these estates and blending them into the urban surroundings was always expensive and difficult. *They often continue to stand out as 'council housing' even after exceptional spending to integrate them*"[106]. These areas require radical approaches, with procedural and organisational changes (for example; tenant involvement, localised services, targeted capital spending and special initiatives to target declining areas) to reinforce any physical intervention. The same evidence base did also state the potential strengths of the same inner city area in Newcastle and their pivotal role in urban regeneration following strategic, structural and demographic changes[107].

In addition, there are certain counter-intuitive findings from a review of waterside development in the north-east, where the study "… found it was possible to develop waterside sites for private housing even in locations where social housing is unpopular"[108]. This could possibly be due to stigma historically being attached to riverside locations in response to their former use for heavy industry, particularly with long-term social housing residents.

The academic research into the housing market in the West End of Newcastle is reinforced by several anecdotal sources. Web site discussions forums about the area are similarly dominated by the counter-intuitive observations about "… why so many perfectly good houses and flats are boarded up?" when people who visited the city "… couldn't see anything wrong with them"[109]. The local responses are all themed around the area dominated by a single social strata – namely white working class – and the

[102] Syms, Paul and Knight, Peter (2000) *Building Homes on used land* (RICS Books, Coventry).
[103] p20 in Power, Anne and Mumford, Katharine (1999) *The slow death of great cities? Urban abandonment or urban renaissance* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[104] pix in Power, Anne and Tunstall, Rebecca (1997) Dangerous disorder: Riots and violent disturbances in thirteen areas of Britain, 1991-92 (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[105] p5 in Power, Anne and Tunstall, Rebecca (July 1995) Swimming against the tide: Polarisation or progress on 20 unpopular council estates, 1980-1995 (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[106] p71-72 in; Power, Anne and Tunstall, Rebecca (July 1995) Swimming against the tide: Polarisation or progress on 20 unpopular council estates, 1980-1995 (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[107] Joseph Rowntree Foundation (1999) 'The problem of low housing demand in inner city areas'. *Findings* 519 pp 1-4.
[108] p13 in; Falk, Nicholas (2003) *Turning the Tide* (URBED, Manchester).
[109] This quotation and the immediately following references are extracts from www.forums/upmystreet.com accessed August 2003 and online conversations relating to the postcode area NE1 1SG, namely Elswick, Benwell and Scotswood.

associated anti-social behaviour. The common view from within and outside of the area is that the housing is of good quality and, once social conditions change, "house prices will rocket" and the area will undergo a renaissance. Yet, until then, the reputation of the West End of the city is influencing views of the city as a whole – a city viewed as 'scary' and 'a battle zone' between different social and ethnic groups.

Throughout the recorded views on inner city and local authority estates there is a challenge regarding tenure diversification or gentrification as an acceptable means of stabilising and renewing the housing market.

It is argued that many of these aspirations for tenure and housing mix are contained within the policy context of urban villages or new urbanism and that "… [a] proposal to develop an urban village along these lines in the West End of Newcastle … paradoxically increases the population of an area that has suffered from multiple deprivation, population loss and the collapse of the local property market."[110].

There is an implicit policy ambition in a number of localities including Newcastle[111], to achieve social diversity; principally by intervention in the local hosing market and working with public sector and other social landlords; and avoid homogenous 'income neighbourhoods' or 'income ghettos'. At a local level there are assumptions that removing such concentrations of poverty– a geographical 'underclass' defined by location and income levels[112] but describing the reality of multiple deprivation – through urban / social restructuring will influence the impact of the sub-culture of poverty and help to build more inclusive, diverse and stable communities. Yet the Dutch[113] and Scottish[114] experience shows a somewhat counter-intuitive social response to a deliberate policy at socially mixing housing quality and incomes – where increasing social mobility and choice in housing locations undermines the policy ambitions of social mixing. While there were positive economic impacts resulting from tenure diversification, the long-term stabilisation of community and local housing markets can be dependent upon different groups with, often contradictory social values establishing stable community networks. The collective experiences show that while tenure mix in new developments is possible in part, changing the tenure mix within existing residential estates can be much more problematic.

Yet, this is not always the case and there are recorded cases within strong local housing markets where 'pepper-potting (the random and indistinguishable mixing social housing amongst homes for sale) has resulted in commercially successful mixed tenure schemes[115] in new build areas. This approach has also been applied to existing estates (pepper-potting through the promotion of tenure change, low-cost ownership or selling vacant properties) has also proved successful in changing estate stigma[116].

There are some suggestions that changes in housing tenure may be influenced by more flexible lifestyles, specifically among the young and more transient households, where the rented sector (private and public) may meet housing needs more effectively that owner occupation[117]. Increasing levels of housing choice; specifically linked to areas of low demand in the west end of Newcastle[118]; seem to reinforce the difficulties of building long-term social relationships and cohesive communities – where those households

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[110] p177 in Madanipour, Ali (2001) "How relevant is 'planning by neighbourhoods' today?". *Town Planning Review* 72(2) pp 171-191.
[111] Delargy, Melanie (2003) 'What works? New trends in social housing practice: Introducing mixed incomes into existing rented estates'. *Roof* 28(4) pp 25-28.
[112] Wilson, W.J (1987) The Truly Disadvantaged, the Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy (University of Chicago Press, Chicago).
[113] Ostendorf, Wim., Musterd, Sako and De Vos, Sjoerd (2001) 'Social Mix and the Neighbourhood Effect. Policy Ambitions and Empirical Evidence'. *Housing Studies* 16(3) pp 371-380.
[114] Scottish Homes (2001) Tenure Mix and Neighbourhood Regeneration: Improving the Understanding of the Influence of Owner Occupiers in Mixed Tenure Neighbourhoods (Scottish Homes, Edinburgh).
[115] Explicit examples include the 'Cygnets' development in Hounslow and New Street, St Helens as recorded in; National Housing Federation (2000) *Housing and Local Communities: mixed, sustainable and attractive to live in* (National Housing Federation, London).
[116] Watkinson, Judi *et al.* (2003) *Rebalancing Communities – Introducing Mixed incomes into Existing Rented Housing Estates* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[117] King, Dave (*Ed.*) (2001) *Changing Households, Changing Housing Markets* (Anglia Polytechnic University and Council of Mortgage Lenders, London).
[118] Corbishley, Peter and Richardson, Keith (1999) *Frequent moving: looking for love?* (Joseph Rowntree, York); and Corbishley, Peter and Richardson, Keith (1999b) 'Movers and shakers'. *Housing Today* 15 April.

who have the ability to move often exercise this choice due to changes in personal circumstances (including those gaining employment) or perceived poor housing conditions or area characteristics.

A review of successful suburban environments provides some similar suggestions for creating successful neighbourhoods. A detailed study[119] into Bournville, Birmingham found that high environmental quality and design; specifically mixed tenure housing, high levels of maintenance and internal standards of accommodation; were the key elements of the area as a successful neighbourhood. The continuing success and attraction of a quality mixed-tenure development is the basis of a new development by the Bournville Village Trust, working to a tenure mix where 25% of new properties are affordable[120] and all new properties are constructed to the BRE's 'Ecohomes' standard of excellent. Similar findings emerged from a review of the impact of 'gated communities'[121] where balanced and inclusive communities, including historic examples of the garden city movement, were most evident where social housing was not concentrated into large areas but mixed as elements of affordable housing throughout new developments.

Speculative new housing developments and suburban estates

A critical review of the UK's suburban estates is a relatively recent development in the light of wider concerns over urban sustainability. While "… design literature is full of criticism of the quality of urban design in suburbia, creating a lack of identity"[122], it is rare to see a fundamental questioning of the economic and social stability of the popular approach by speculative developers and how it needs to adapt within a positive planning framework[123]. Yet some of the most recent attitudinal survey work "… found that public attitudes towards the design and construction of homes are at odds with the standard product range of most developers"[124]. A study into the aspirations for future residents for an urban extension in Swindon found that they didn't meet the expectations on several fundamental points – particularly with security and space standards (including external space), in-built flexibility and priority to pedestrians within any estate layout[125].

A significant body of work has recorded the reasons for individual households moving to new suburban estates. There were most significantly on issues of affordability and perceptions of values for money but also included the perceived attractions of the suburbs as a safe place to bring up children. Explicitly these were the positive attractions of being near to the countryside and owning a reliable 'new' property in contrast to the perceived negative features of inner city neighbourhoods and problems that can come with owning an older property[126]. In part, these views are reinforced by a recent survey[127] by the New Homes Marketing Board (although this was self-reinforcing in the selection of a sample of property owners who have already made a choice on housing type and location) of the attitudes of families who own new homes that showed recent movers had a preference for space, safety and privacy. The survey suggests "… 20% were driven away [from their original living environment] by traffic, overcrowding in both street and home, the fear of crime, and the general unsuitability of the area for children"[128]. The perception was that newly built suburban housing is safer, more secluded, managed better, parking facilities and had better

[119] Groves, Nick *et al.* (2003) *Neighbourhoods that Work* (Marston, Birmingham).
[120] Quoted in; Anon (2003) 'Second Bournville Planned for Telford'. *Planning* 12 September p1.
[121] Minton, Anna (2001) *Building Balanced Communities: the US and UK compared* (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, London).
[122] p14 in; Gwilliam, Michael;, Bourne, Caroline;, Swain, Corinne and Prat, Anna (1998) *Sustainable renewal of suburban areas* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York).
[123] For example, see the framework for incremental change in; Llewelyn-Davies (1997) *Exploring the Urban Potential for Housing: Manual and Toolkit* (North West Regional Association, Manchester).
[124] p13 in Andrews, C Lesley., Reardon-Smith, Wendy and Townsend, Mardie (2002) *But will we want to live there? Planning for people and neighbourhoods in 2020* (Women and Housing, Didcot).
[125] The full report on the Swindon study can be found at (www.women2020.com).
[126] This study covered over 600 new-build suburban properties in the Bristol area. Forrest, Ray;, Kennett, Tricia and Leather, Philip (1997) *Homeowners on new estates in the 1990s: New problems on the periphery?* (Policy Press, Bristol).
[127] This research was produced as a report by, Mulholland Research Associates (1996) *Towns or leafier environments? A survey of family home buying choices – summary of main findings* (House Builders Federation, London).

space standards. Recent movers were willing to put up with the inconvenience of longer journeys to work, shops and schools to reap these perceived benefits.

Another detailed study[129] of suburban housing estates found that these residents living on a homogenous development with no distinct design quality exhibited more difficulties in selling and experienced more negative equity than those living on more distinctively designed developments. Complementary views of suburban conservation[130] also suggests there is growing public acceptance of the need for design control and development restrictions and that suburban attitudes to planning control are correspondingly understood and appreciated as a means of controlling suburban aesthetics and design quality. If these findings are common to other parts of the country, it suggests that even in a suburban location, good quality design, including an appreciation of the historic environment and sense of place, does help to differentiate within the local housing market.

Sector Specific Research

The literature relating to the qualitative and attitudinal review of specific housing types or products has a distinct structure that can be characterised by a number of typologies that are potentially relevant and appropriate to the Pathfinder HMR area.

Speculative new built urban development

Recent approaches by volume house builders to meet the challenges of PPG3 and the high design aspirations have in part been supported by an exploratory study carried out by international property consultants[131]. This indicated that builders who had invested in higher quality design in residential schemes could expect to yield a residual value per hectare of up to 15% more than conventionally designed schemes.

In addition to a market overview, there have been a number of nationally significant demonstration housing projects that have; in part; attempted to provide design guidelines for future mass house building. Many of these have also involved a qualitative assessment of the scheme and residents' views.

One key scheme is the Greenwich Millennium Village. The interest in and relevance of the development is due to the high aspirations and environmental benchmarks set out by central government as the scheme acts as an exemplar for the next millennium[132]. Here, contemporary urban living is portrayed as collective, communal and community based. Thus, the emphasis is no longer on private space but about community spaces, buildings and services. The scheme is largely car free (parking in podium garages) and based around communal city squares. Private gardens are provided in parts but are secondary to structural community greenspace. There is mixed tenure within the village's 1,377 dwellings of which 266 are affordable (approximately 20%) and 74 are shared ownership (approximately 5%) and "… you will not recognise the difference in tenure by the look of the buildings."[133]. There is in-built flexibility and adaptability to meet the needs of changing social structures and space demands. Each of the homes is fully networked. Environmental sustainability concerns are incorporated by addressing energy conservation in construction and embodied materials (this includes prefabrication of units and modularization to reduce construction time

[128] P4 in House Builders Federation (1996) *Families Matter* (House Builders Federation, London).
[129] Forrest R., Kennett T. and Leather P (1997) *Home owners on new estates in the 1990s* (Policy Press, Bristol).
[130] Larkham, Peter (1999) 'Tensions in managing the suburbs: conservation versus change'. *Area* 31(4) pp 359-371.
[131] Unpublished report from FPD Savills (2002), referenced in; CABE (2002) *The Value of Good Design: How buildings and spaces create economic and social value* (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment).
[132] Sustain (2000) 'Tracking and Evaluating'. *Sustain Built Environment Matters* 1(3)pp 19-21.

by 2/3 while increasing quality control[134]); energy in use; sustainable sourcing of materials and water conservation and recycling. The anticipated environmental performance of the scheme is impressive – with 80% reduction in energy consumption; 105 of energy from wind and solar sources; 50% reduction in embodied energy; 30% reduction in water demand; recyclable buildings; zero CO_2 emissions.

Another key national exemplar is the 'Homes for the Future' development fronting onto Glasgow Green. This award-winning scheme has been praised for it's "… experiments with dense house types that provide the highest quality of patterns of living in the inner city". Critical judging has described it as "… a unique cluster of innovative developments which has engaged the public imagination and helped to transform an important fringe area of the city. … as a landmark demonstration project it should also help to secure investment for future developments"[135]. The initial brief was for a creative approach to high-density, urban infill housing next to the historic Glasgow Green. This area was historically characterised as a no-go area within the inner-city. The development comprises 300 homes developed for sale and to rent. The scheme was master planned by Page and Park architects and involved the co-ordination of 7 architectural firms and five different developers.

More locally within Tyneside, the Staithes South Bank, Gateshead is a response to the 'enormous identikit housing estates' and homogenous housing design being produced by volume house builders. The approach is to develop an affordable and mixed community through design in the creation of 700 housing units in a 'bluefield' inner-city location. "… across the Tyne, in Gateshead, first-time buyers forced out of the centre are colonising new areas and quickly making their presence felt. Wayne Hemingway's eye-catching designs for 700 new homes in Staithes South Bank are seen as a blueprint for new-build projects that are affordable yet quirky enough to attract buyers who prefer edginess to uniformity."[136] The potential market is those who "… hate what the house builders offer."[137] Wayne Hemingway has "…taken the family as [our] starting point and designed homes for them that can take on all sorts of configurations – they can be open plane or traditionally planned according to taste"[138]. In an extremely provocative, albeit honest way "… Hemingway in partnership with his wife, has taken on designers and developers who produce shit up and down the country and destroy whole neighbourhoods through speculative schemes"[139].

The scheme is in part being marketed on it's innovative approach to the design of contemporary housing types[140] the external and circulation space. This includes the use of communal and community gardens, "People love the community aspect of it. More than anything else, that's surprised Wimpey"[141], and the design of the country's first new-build 'homezone', although the commercial success of the first phase is due in part to the wider context of regeneration along the south side of the river and the iconic nature of many of the new public sector commissions.

In contrast to some of the experiences of high profile demonstration schemes, there are significant barriers to achieving design quality at high densities or within mixed use areas. One such barrier is the impact of neighbour noise and the association that many people have with living at more urban densities. Recent qualitative evidence from Newcastle suggests that this is a common feeling based on experiences of

[133] P13 in Hansen, Lawrence (1999) 'Greenwich Millennium Village: a revolution in volume housing?' *EcoDesign* 7(3) pp 10-13.
[134] Hetherington, Peter (2002) "Return of the prefab to house key workers". *The Guardian*, August 24 p 11.
[135] pp 38 and 39 in Scottish Executive and RTPI (2000) *Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning 2000: Report of the judges* (Scottish Executive, Edinburgh).
[136] Cairns, Dan (2003) 'Glamour in the suburbs'. *Sunday Times Style* June 8 pp 14-15.
[137] Hemingway, Wayne (2002) 'Time for the ultimate home makeover'. *Guardian Society* June 14.
[138] Wayne Hemingway quoted in; Glancey, Jonathan (2003)'Designers move form fashion house to Wimpey homes'. *Guardian Society* March 26.
[139] p19 in, Loew, Sebastian (2004) "A Different Approach". *Urban Design Quarterly* Winter 89 pp 19-20.
[140] Although there has been critical review of the scheme and how the design aspirations are met in reality, Weaver, Matt (2002) 'Wayne's world too bland, charges watchdog'. *Guardian* April 3.
[141] Wayne Hemingway quoted in; Schopen, Fay (2003) "New Frontman for the Style Council". *Regeneration & Renewal* 14 March p 15.

1 in 3 urban households, with particular concerns in areas where there is mixed tenure and a more mobile population[142].

Conversion of redundant institutional and commercial properties

There are now established principles, approaches and precedents to the refurbishment of a range of redundant and undervalued institutional properties in most of England's core cities. Research clearly links the renovation of historic buildings with an improved financial investment into regeneration activities from the private sector, partly in response to the character and feel of an area being retained by investing in the existing built fabric[143]. In support, there are a few important research projects that begin to assess the potential supply and demand for residential conversion of historic properties[144].

One major research project used mixed quantitative and qualitative techniques to assess the level of activity and potential for the conversion of historic properties. The work found that the more suitable properties for conversion and reuse are those that are *fully* rather than *partially* vacant.

The view of the developer involved in this exercise was that a strong policy emphasis that was flexible in operation, indicating both public and political support for reuse and refurbishment together with a sophisticated understanding of the potential difficulties in undertaking any work on historic buildings, was of benefit in bringing forward certain schemes. It was no surprise to find that the location of the property was the principal factor in determining any refurbishment project.

Traditionally, the marketability of property conversions has been based on price and aspirations of young working people without children[145] wishing to live in and around 'lively' city centre locations. As such, conversions are still "predominantly flats or student accommodation"[146] as city centre and peripheral inner areas are still widely regarded as child un-friendly environments, if not the actual type of accommodation itself[147]. But what has been centred on city centres in and around core cities has been evident in other cities[148] and less central locations. Overall this 'sector'[149] has tended to be a niche market for both residents and a limited number of well known developers – failing to attract many of the larger scale developers and to explore the potential for other demographics.

This view of the residential property market is partly replicated with recent conversions in Newcastle and Gateshead with bespoke specialist developers responsible for conversions of historic warehouse and 20th century office blocks into apartments[150]. These recent residential schemes follow closely in time and in format to many of the tested and established principles set by historic property conversions through the regeneration work in Grainger Town; principles of informal and bespoke responses[151] that make the best of original features, seek to and help to re-image the public perception of the Grainger Town area as a desirable residential location for potential residents and commercial developers[152].

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[142] MORI (2003) *Neighbour Noise: Public Opinion Research to Assess its Nature, Extent and Significance* (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, London).
[143] Urban Practitioners (2002) *The Heritage Dividend* (English Heritage, London).
[144] For example see; Diment, Jeremy and Horsey, Ashley (1999) *New homes in existing buildings: a strategy for action to stimulate residential conversion in England* (Empty Homes Agency, London).
[145] Mulhearn, Deborah (1994) 'Loft living in Liverpool from a developer with a difference' *Architect's Journal* 18 August pp13-14.
[146] p35 in, Heath, Tim and Oc, Tanner (2001) 'Sustainability through converting buildings to residential use'. *Urban Design Quarterly* Winter 77 pp 355-36.
[147] The question of internal space standards in historic conversions goes some way to addressing the actual suitability of properties for family living, even without any dedicated external space.
[148] For example, the Manningham Mills, Bradford.
[149] The sector is arguably based upon young professional urban classes being 'given a chice beyond soulless yuppy flats or social housing' in conversions with 'integrity'; Dyckhoff, Tom (1997) 'In with a splash'. *Perspectives* October/November p48.
[150] Williams, Austin (2002) 'North East Regeneration'. *Architects' Journal* 216(13) pp 27-42,44.
[151] Examples provided in; Schopen, Fay and Kochan, Ben (2002) 'Realising reuse (historic buildings)'. *Urban Environment Today* 142(7) pp 9-11; and Margolis, Adrienne (1998) 'Empty offices offer home comforts'. *Urban Environment Today* 39 pp 10-11.
[152] Garrett, Alexander (2003) 'Doom town to boom town'. *Business Voice* 4(4) pp 36-38, 40-41.

Refurbishment of existing terraces, Tyneside flats and inter-war suburbs

There is strong government recognition that terraced housing can be successful and sustainable places to live. Indeed, 25% of the case studies included within 'Better Places to Live'[153] report are 19th and early 20th century terraces. The design potential of the terraced form is also increasingly recognised as a form of higher density housing for the 21st century[154] due to their internal flexibility, urban compactness and community values. Yet a review of this earlier report wrote that, "Jesmond, the middle classes favourite part of Newcastle upon Tyne, is one of the examples of successful terraced housing. This is a vibrant and sought-after area, but two or three miles west a different picture emerges. In Newcastle's west end, Jesmond-style terraces are being demolished because no one wants to live in them. This would have provided a more graphic example of some of the other points the report tries to make. The problems in Newcastle's west end underline the importance of location and the need for houses to have access to transport and employment. They show that good design alone are no guarantee of success"[155].

This imbalance of the housing market in Newcastle has continued with the recent marketing of early Victoria terraces as high value desirable townhouses. Yet similar properties in terms of age, size and quality in different locations are still simplistically viewed as undesirable due to factors of over-provision of certain housing types rather than location and broader socio-economic factors.

Within comparative regions, Pathfinder HMR areas and "… throughout the north of England, there is a declining demand for older terraced dwellings"[156] evidence in the declining house prices relative to other types of dwellings and in part to the growing aspirations and expectations of better standards in internal space, ease of repair and simple property management – the basis for a design response to reinvent the terraced property. Yet these underlying assumptions are not always well founded and can be challenged.

There are a number of recent high profile examples for the creative reuse of back-to-back terraces. Most noticeably are the plans for the internal gutting and refurbishment of up to 400 homes in the Langworthy area of Salford[157]. The design approach is for a contemporary, open-plan layout with a major rationalisation of outbuildings and external spaces[158]. There are suggested benefits for tenure and racially mixed community living, encouraged through the humanising street level interactions[159]. Other practical examples of refurbishment and reinvention of terraces[160] in streets and more comprehensive blocks provide a suggestive approach to testing some of the market assumptions that are currently resulting in the demolition of a large number of terraced properties within the Pathfinder HMR area.

In each of the design and developer-led approaches, the common rationale is that the character and quality of the Victorian and Edwardian terraces were the basis of desirable properties that "… would be highly sought after' in places like Didsbury and London"[161]. Although, it is still considered a pioneering venture the parallels with the changes in fortune in city centre living are stark – each being stigmatised and

[153] Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions and CABE (2001) *Better Places to Live: By Design – A companion guide to PPG3* (DTLR, London).
[154] For example see; Clarke, Patrick (2001) 'Reinventing terraced housing'. *Planning in London* 36 pp 39-42; and Birkbeck, David (2000) The once and future king (terraced homes)'. *Housing Today* 209 pp16-17.
[155] Weaver, Matt (2001) 'Housing design guide fails to bridge gaps'. *Guardian* October 2.
[156] Leather, Philip; Lee, Peter; Ferrari, Ed (2003) *Changing housing markets in Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire* (Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Birmingham).
[157] As referred to in; Anon (2003) 'Something for everyone'. *Guardian* October 10 p24.
[158] Anon (2003) 'Salford Spaces'. *Landlines* 148 October, p1.
[159] Thorpe, Vanessa (2003) 'Architects plan estates that can vanquish racism'. *Observer* 10 August.
[160] High density terracing examples include; Evans, Barrie (2003) 'Terrace meets flat'. *Architect's Journal* 218(13) pp 29-37.
[161] Anon (2003) ''Corrie' terraces rethink aims for a rovers' return'. New Start 13 June p8.

with underused and undervalued properties and terrace living like warehouse conversions a decade earlier, needing "… a change of perception"[162] in being re-branded as mews and being seen as 'funky' and 'modern'.

Sustainable housing and self build

"… an enormous fund of knowledge has been built up on how to design settlements that are green, sustainable and good to live in. Why don't we put this knowledge to use?"[163]

A relatively new and correspondingly untested niche(s) within the regional housing market are those that are based on innovative in terms of sustainability, energy use and appropriate technology in their construction and / or use. There is growing evidence, some recording consumer preferences for sustainable technologies[164] and residential environments[165] and supporting journalistic records[166], to indicate that sustainable housing options not only has a market in key areas of housing growth but that they can generate developer profits when delivered on a larger scale above that of a demonstration project. There is specific evidence to suggest that the consumer interest and expectations of sustainability issues; around energy sourcing, recycling, transport and the energy efficiency of individual homes; are high amongst women[167]. This is matched by a variety of location and construction specifications for sustainable housing[168] drawing from a range of sustainable development principles and best practice examples[169]. Although, in balance to this material, there appears to be an innate level of reserve and risk avoidance in many consumers due to existing behavioural patterns or habits and the inconvenience associated with sustainable patterns of consumption. It may be the case that many people are aware of and express support for sustainable living in survey work but actually make very few changes in lifestyle in response to sustainable consumer choices. Or alternatively, it could be caused by lack of choice within the range of sustainable housing products.

Innovation in the use of energy and the use of appropriate standards does require the incorporation of up to date good practice guidance into statutory master plans for major regeneration locations; including local authority owned sites and elements for inclusion within development and / or planning briefs prior to release of site freehold. There are a number of recent developments that have adopted sustainable standards relating to energy in use - Zero $CO2$[170], Zero Heating and/or Autonomous standards[171]. The more ambitious the standards and specifications, the fewer precedents there are nationally and the more informed and sympathetic the building users have to become. Moving towards such standards may also have implications for urban densities (and associated use of private transport) and energy in construction.

There are a growing number of 'bespoke' developers who share the commercial view that "… the mainstream might appreciate radical reductions to its energy bills". One example is Gusto Homes[172], a firm that has a range of energy efficient housing types that visually do not differ significantly from national mass house builders. They are still supplying space heating within super-insulated homes whether they are

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[162] Urban Splash chairman, Tom Bloxham quoted in; Hetherington, Peter (2003) 'Salford's terraces turned upside down'. *Guardian* June 10.
[163] p59 in, Nicolson-Lord, David (2003) *Green Cities – And why we need them* (New Economics Foundation, London).
[164] Holdsworth, Maxine (2003) *Green Choice: What Choice? Summary of NCC research into consumer attitudes to sustainable consumption* (National Consumer Council, London).
[165] EDAW, Global to Local, De Montford University (1997) *Living places: sustainable homes, sustainable communities* (National Housing Forum, London).
[166] Minton, Anna (2002) 'Eco experiments (sustainable housing)'. *Estates Gazette* 9 February pp62-63.
[167] Andrews, C Lesley., Reardon-Smith, Wendy and Townsend, Mardie (2002) *But will we want to live there? Planning for people and neighbourhoods in 2020* (Women and Housing, Didcot).
[168] Example specifications include Ecohomes standard.
[169] Hastoe Housing Association (2004) *Good Practice Guide: Refurbishments* (Sustainable Homes, London).
[170] This standard implies no net emissions on an annual basis – by utilisation of it's own renewable sources, purchasing 'green tariff' energy from external sources. This can be on a local basis (for example, Swaffam, Norfolk) or through national grid connections.
[171] Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (1998) *Building a sustainable future: Homes for an autonomous community* (BRECSU, Watford).
[172] Examples of house types, performances and internal space standards can be found at www.gustohomes.com

necessary, in part due to the commercial difficulties of selling a home with no space heating provision. Other examples[173] adopt a high profile approach to 'green marketing' to capture this specific housing niche.

This shows a level of ambiguity over the mainstream commercial reality over sustainable buildings and the actual level of market confidence to place sustainability at the heart of design[174]. It is additionally reinforced in a review over the sustainability of the Greenwich Millennium Village where the development manager has stated the company's commitment to "… profitable sustainability" and as such currently appears to require "… sustainable added value"[175] in a market where there is clear purchaser interest but uncertainty over whether this is in any way reflected in the purchase price. In short, the general market understanding is that energy efficiency and other appropriate technologies can help to differentiate a residential development but not to the point of higher or comparable developer profits,

Significant analysis and monitoring has been undertaken in relation to the nationally high profile BedZed[176] scheme in the London Borough of Sutton. This is a governmental backed and endorsed mixed use development; where the endorsement went beyond references in best practice reports to active public subsidy, the scheme requiring a willingness of the government to accept the release of local authority land to someone other than the highest bidder[177] and at less than market rate. The scheme has had a list of positive critical reviews on the basis of aesthetics[178], mixed of tenure and uses, and it's environmental performance. This is even true of referenced endorsements given to the scheme by anti-urbanists and campaigners against town-cramming[179] who perceive the development in a positive light, due to the green roofs and roof gardens, despite of, or being unaware of, the relatively high density. Although it is still widely understood as a demonstration scheme, it has the potential to for a new "alternative to normal housing estates and suburbs"[180]. The developer; Peabody Trust; asserts that the commercial element of the scheme placed for sale on the open market, "achieved premium prices over conventional housing in the neighbourhood"[181] implying that the design of the scheme, including the environmental performance aspects, were worth paying for.

In a early government review of the scheme; as part of the wider review and evaluation of millennium villages; in the success or otherwise of any environmentally innovative housing scheme … "an important factor … is a public sector land owner allowed to accept a less than market return on the land in return for achieving higher sustainability performance"[182].

In addition to self describing environmentally sustainable housing there are a number of similarly specialist housing products around prefabricated units and self-build.

It has been claimed that prefabrication of homes is "… undergoing a renaissance of interest"[183]. There are a number of approaches by the Peabody Trust in London and by private developers in the form of flats in York (using the local Yorkon supplier). There is a specific view of growth of self-build housing sector

[173] Definite examples of green marketing can be found at www.green-quarter.co.uk a mixed use quarter by Crosby in Manchester and www.parkside-gmv.co.uk as a London based example of PPG3 compliant housing marketed on its' environmental credentials.
[174] Winkley, Rob (2003) 'Building Green Confidence'. *Planning* 31 October p8.
[175] GMV director quoted in; Housing Forum (2002) *Innovative case history: Greenwich Millennium Village, London* (Housing Forum, London).
[176] More detail of this scheme can be found at www.zedfactory.com. This web site contains constant updates of the energy and water monitoring of the scheme.
[177] The Planning Minster, Richard Caborn, set a legal precedent in 1999 when he provided approval for the local authority; the London Borough of Sutton; to sell land for development that favours the greatest environmental benefit over the one offering the biggest financial return. Fairs, Marcus (1999) "Green beats greed". *Building Design* Feb5 p3.
[178] "The design is modern throughout – generous, light-filled, practical, glamorous – and the demand to move here has been overwhelming" p13 in Glancey, Jonathan (2002) "The way we live now", *Guardian* 2 September pp 12-13.
[179] p43 and p58 in Nicolson-Lord, David (2003) *Green Cities – And why we need them* (New Economics Foundation, London).
[180] Andy Mace from Arup quoted in Henderson, Tony (2003) 'Learning to Live with the Planet'. *The Journal*, May 17 p68.
[181] p6 in; Morrison, Doug (2003) 'Special Report: The carbon trust – a burning issue for Britain'. *Sunday Telegraph* June 15.
[182] p5 in; Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *Millennium Villages and Sustainable Communities* (DETR, London).

nationally that argues the effect is evidence of causal links with other growth sectors and demand for specialised products.

There are suggestions that sustainable and / or self-build housing options can be potentially understood as a challenge to the market share of speculative house builders – potentially providing for up to 10% of the new private housing market.

Tower blocks and high rise properties

Many current viewpoints on tall buildings and high rise living are based on heuristic knowledge and the experiences of recent practice rather than primary research[184]. One viewpoint stresses the value that tall buildings and tower blocks have in regeneration as a means of intensifying uses in highly accessible locations[185] and where they have an iconic role in changing perceptions of an area, and as such, they should be treated as a 'special case'[186] with the opportunities they present to urban density housing.

There are multiple reactionary views against the principal of high rise living[187], including specific governmental statements that implicitly discourage tall buildings in the context of the urban renaissance[188], while at the same time, governmental agencies have acknowledged that in their right place "… they [tall buildings] can serve as beacons of regeneration, and stimulate further investment".[189] Some commentators assert that many of these views are based upon generic public opinions and perceptions rather than physical realities and that there are opportunities for transforming tower blocks; including public sector estates; into viable and sustainable[190] housing for a variety of households. The more balanced views stress the necessity of matching location, accommodation, tenure mix and property management regime with the aspirations of potential tenants within tower blocks[191].

Successful approaches to a design makeover for tower blocks have common elements that include external re-cladding, creative lighting, building of penthouse levels, integration of balconies and ground floor communal facilities such as residents' gym or childcare facilities. In addition, changing the specific property management of key tower blocks has had a significant impact of certain buildings.

Affordability and value are important, as target demographics tend to be young people and key workers priced out of nearby city centre locations. This is a consistent factor identified as 'definable' factors in demand for high rise accommodation, namely the penthouse views (with prestigious views and riverside locations); accessibility (the ability to walk to work); and affordability, "… where the negative associations with high-rise are probably strongest amongst those to whom affordable housing is targeted"[192]. The key factors influencing the makeover of tower blocks is evident in comparative 'core city' locations such as

[183] p230 in; Stevenson, Greg (2003) *Palaces for the people / Prefabs in post-war Britain* (Batsford, London).
[184] There are exceptions to this rule as is evident from a study into the public attitudes to tall buildings that found that the majority of urban residents favour tall buildings, although not necessarily as their own residential property. MORI (2001) *Public attitudes to tall buildings in cities* (English Heritage, London).
[185] Breheny, Michael (2001) 'Densities and Sustainable Cities, the UK Experience' in Echenique, Marcial and Saint, Andrew (Eds.) *Cities for the New Millennium* (Spon, London).
[186] Sherlock, Harley (2002) 'For compact, sustainable communities'. *Planning in London* 40 pp 24-26.
[187] The most significant and articulate of these views was; Coleman, Alice (1985) *Utopia on Trial: Vision and Reality in Planned Housing* (Hilary Shipman, London) and subsequent detailed reviews of housing estates and social housing design approaches, including high rise living, within; (1986) 'Dangerous Dreams'. *Landscape Design* October pp29-31 and (1986) 'Utopia Debate'. *Architects Journal* 184(32) pp16-17.
[188] Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2002) *The Government's response to the Transport, Local Government and Regional Affairs Select Committee's report on tall buildings* (Cm 5649) (Stationary Office, Norwich).
[189] Para. 5.1 in; English Heritage and CABE (2001) *Guidance on Tall Buildings: Consultation Paper* (English Heritage and Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, London).
[190] Some positive views on the future of high rise living can be found in; Church, Chris., Gale, Toby (2000) *Streets in the Sky: towards improving the quality of life in tower blocks in the UK – the first report of the National Sustainable Tower Blocks Initiative* (Shell Better Britain Campaign, Birmingham); Church, Chris (2000) 'Streets in the sky? (future for tower blocks)'. *Sustain* 1(4) p29; Bevan, Robert (1997) 'No fear of heights'. Building Design 1315 pp18-19; and Raynesford, Nick (1997) *Still rising high* (National Housing and Town Planning Council, London).
[191] For example see Towers, Graham (2000) 'Reworking multi-storey estates'. *Planning in London* 35 pp27-29. and Wolmar, Christian (1985) 'Living with your head in the clouds: Arguments in favour of tower blocks'. *Public Service and Local Government* November p13.
[192] Para. A2.2 p67 in DEGW (2002) *London's Skyline, Views and High Buildings: Technical Report for the Greater London Authority* (DEGW, London).

Liverpool[193], Birmingham and Manchester. "The quality of life [in tower blocks] is fantastic, with views over a city, and if they are well maintained they can be quite iconic"[194].

There are some common factors in recognising the potential stigma attached to certain public and social sector housing tower blocks as well as a realisation that while there may be a niche for family accommodation within high rise developments, there are few successful examples for how this has been achieved, often being continental examples with a strong emphasis on the role of public open spaces in association with high density development[195], and thus that it will be limited in practice[196].

Summary of literature review

It is possible to characterise the policy challenges within the Pathfinder area in the context of sustainable communities and urban renaissance. This suggests necessary changes in attitudes regarding redevelopment of brownfield sites, perceptions of residential densities and an understanding of housing quality. These attitudes are at all levels from local authority, developer and resident.

A review of existing research and marketing material aimed at recording, understanding or shaping attitudes fall into a number of self-defining categories.

At an area level, research can be grouped around work in three broad areas; (i) city centres; (ii) inner city and council estates and (iii) suburbia and speculative housing. Each of these areas reflects distinct residential markets that currently operate within this or comparative regions and presents particular challenges to revitalising the local housing market. Regionally, the city centre market has exhibited the most dramatic shift in attitudes over the last ten years, particularly as riverside areas that have historically been stigmatised by heavy industrial uses have restructured and riverside / Quayside locations have increasingly been viewed as desirable. The actual perceived extent of the city centre itself has grown, and many current schemes on the edge of the city centre in both Newcastle and Gateshead are being promoted to similar markets.

Specific residential 'products' within these markets can similarly be understood as five typologies. These are; (i) speculative new built development; (ii) conversion of redundant institutional and commercial properties; (iii) the refurbishment of existing terraces, Tyneside flats and inter-war suburbs; (iv) sustainable housing and self-build; and (v) tower blocks and high rise properties. As yet, many of these are perceived as niche markets, with little knowledge of the extent of each within the region and an aversion to risk in testing this extent by many developers, although there are some notable exceptions.

There is an awareness in undertaking such a review that in common with other areas of applied-research in urban planning and regeneration a lot of the evidence base is sketchy[197]. There is often the over dependence on a limited number of good practice case studies that can be difficult experience to transfer and often fail to fully understand the casual effects and the wider context. It is often such weaknesses that make some evidence unconvincing to prospective developers, investors and public sector.

[193] Conway Street in Liverpool and Wythenshawe estate in Manchester have been developed by Warren Smith with architect Ian Simpson (also responsible for new build high rise apartments within Liverpool and Manchester city centres).
[194] Hetherington, Peter (2003) 'From eyesore top icon: rebirth of the council tower blocks'. *Guardian* June 30.
[195] Beer, Anne; Delshammer, Tim and Schildwacht, Peter (2003) 'A changing understanding of the role of greenspace in high density housing: a European perspective'. *Built Environment* 29(2) pp 132-143.
[196] See Weaver, Matt (2002) 'Ups and downs of high-rise living'. *Guardian* January 18; Munday, Barry (2002) 'Designs on high density'. *Regeneration and Renewal* 16 August p18; Cunningham, John (2001) 'Tall order'. *Guardian* February 28; Leslie, Rob (1999) 'Do tower blocks have a future?'. *Urban Environment Today* 79 pp10-11 and Turkington, Richard and Wheelaghan, Suzanne (1994) 'Tenants of the future? Children and young people in high rise flats'. *Housing and Planning Review* 49(5) pp37-38.
[197] For example see; Department of the Environment. Transport and the Regions (2000) *A Review of the Evidence Base for Regeneration :Policy and Practice* (Department of the Environment. Transport and the Regions, London).

The review of existing material and the understanding of how different urban areas and housing products are positioned within the housing market have informed the focus group stage of this research as outlined in the following sections.

Citizen Workshops

The structure for the individual citizen workshops reflected the existing literature and the identified housing typologies suitable for the Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal area.

Citizen workshops were recruited from two existing local authority citizen juries[198]. South of the river we have recruited Gateshead 'Viewpoint' members. This is a self-selecting group, volunteering from a representative cross section of residents within the local authority area. Invitations (between 150-200 invitations for each workshop) were based on a geographical spread, with a mix of ages and tenures. The initial workshop invitees were split between those from households without children (0-16 years) and those with children (0-16 years). North of the river, invitees were selected from the City Council Resident's Panel, also a representative city-wide group comprised of 100 households per ward.

Each of the invitees were asked to complete an attitudinal questionnaire on generic urban areas, and urban housing typologies. They were also asked in advance to define themselves as 'urbanites' or 'suburbanites' in response to the question 'would you prefer to live in the city or the suburbs'[199]. The specific mix of individuals attending the workshops were as follows.

	Cityphiles / Urbanites (People who preferred to live in the city rather than the suburbs)	Cityphobes / Suburbanites (People who preferred to live in the suburbs rather than the city)	Unspecified or with preferences for both residential environments	Total
Monday 20th October, Gateshead residents from households without children aged 0-16 years	3	17	3	23
Wednesday 22nd October, Gateshead residents from households with children aged 0-16 years	3	10	2	15
Thursday 23rd October, Newcastle residents from households without children aged 0-16 years	4	10	3	17
Friday 24th October, Newcastle residents from households without children aged 0-16 years	4	8	6	18
Total	14	45	14	73

Methodology, incentive and recording

To ensure a representative social and demographic cross-section of each local authority area, people attending the individual focus groups were offered a financial incentive (gift voucher for a local retailer). Catering was also provided. The individual focus group sessions were broadly split into two[200].

The focus of the initial group session was to record qualitative aspects of the three areas of suburbs, city centre and the inner city? This was achieved by using open-ended questions to explore ideas and views of how these locations are understood as residential environments and where this understanding comes from; for example, through personal experience, anecdotal evidence, media or marketing. Follow-up

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[198] The authors acknowledge the support of Ann Atkinson, Newcastle City Council, Paula Morgan and Shirley Erskine of Gateshead Council, in the selection and recruitment for the citizen workshops.

[199] This was based upon the similar approach taken by the Urban Task Force identifying attitude groups as part of the 'But would you live there?' report.

[200] Full details of the focus groups (invitations, agenda and dates) are contained in the appendices.

questions explored the interrelations between different areas and how many of the definitions and understanding of 'place' are relative. Due to the in-built bias and preferences towards suburban environments (see above table), the group discussions began with a debate over definitions of the suburbs. It then followed a rough checklist of themes for each type of residential environment and the following open-ended questions to prompt debate.

What is you understanding or definition of the suburbs? What are the physical and social aspects of this type of environment? Why is this? What sort of people choose to live in this type of location? Is it always associated with private housing? Is there a particular housing type typical of the suburbs?

What is you understanding or definition of the city centre? Is this geographically defined? Where are the edge of the city centre? What are the physical and social aspects of this type of residential location? Why is this? What sort of people choose to live in this type of location? Is it always associated with high value apartments? What about affordable housing and social renting? Is it inappropriate for family housing?

What is you understanding or definition of the inner city? What is the typical housing type of this area? Is it associated with social problems? Is it characterised by social housing? Explicitly, what are the good and bad points?

The second half of the citizen workshops did have a change in approach with each of the facilitators adopting an advocacy role and promoting many of the specific housing typologies that may be suitable for Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal area. In doing this, the facilitators used a poster presentation for each of the five housing typologies and a broad range of promotional and marketing material from similar and/or exemplar schemes within other comparative European cities.

Modern housing estates. Higher density (PPG3 compliant 30-50 dph and qualitative 'step-change') and contemporary approach to family accommodation. Again, these will largely be illustrated by precedent images to show new approach to town houses and vertical segregation of individual housing units.

Refurbishment of existing social housing terraces; including Tyneside terraces and inter war 'garden suburb' developments. Sketch options to included individual property conversions; based on incremental change within area of private ownership; and comprehensive areas for remodelling, and the incorporation and reconfiguration of external open space, back lanes, 'thresholds', personal defensible space and street design. Illustrated examples included; Tyneside terraces; North Benwell Terraces and ideas for comprehensive redevelopment for sub area; Scotswood garden suburb refurbishment; and St Anthony's estate, Walker.

Tower blocks and high rise living. Ideas for change in tenure and external / internal alterations for a number of NCC owned tower blocks, including; Park Centre, Cruddas Park; Todds Nook and the Westgate Towers; Shieldfield; Walker centre; and Dunston 'rocket'.

Conversion of ex-institutional and commercial properties. The potential range of property already identified have been passed onto Pathfinder as potential properties for acquisition and for the production of detailed design options. Examples included commercially successful schemes in; Princess Mary Hospital, Jesmond; and the potential for comparative schemes in suitable properties such as; Benwell, Walker and Scotswood Libraries; Sungold Warehouse, Beech Street; Quasar Laser, Condercum Road and Westgate Primary school, Westgate Hill.

Sustainable housing options, including ideas for self-build and 'sweat equity' developments. These were largely illustrated through the use of precedent images.

The following checklist of questions was appropriate for each of the five housing typologies, with the grouping of key issues drawn directly from questions arising from the literature review; albeit these 'housing products' are not discrete. These are suggested prompt questions to promote discussion regarding the perceptions and preferences that actually influence behaviour regarding housing preferences.

Architecture / image issues - How important is the appearance of the property and what does it's design say about you? Can we explain the use of phrases like 'character', 'trendy' or 'contemporary' in more detail? Are you interested in architect designed homes; for example designs by Bruce Oldfield, Wayne Hemingway, Conran?

Internal space issues - What is more important to you, the level of internal space (metre square floorspace) or the number of bedrooms? How useful is it to have a flexible property where you can change the internal layout over time, for example in moving internal walls? Are floor-to-ceiling heights (high ceilings) important in giving an impression of more space? How important is it for the property to be able to be extended or adapted to allow for changes in personal circumstances; for example, in putting in lifts, wheelchair access or ground floor bathrooms?

Investment issues – Do you view your property as a financial investment or a home? Is the consideration of the potential resale value an important influence in your residential preferences? Is the 'right-to-buy' council housing a financial attraction to you?

Car parking issues – Is the provision of secure parking a key influence for your housing preferences? Would shared car parking courtyards or on-street parking make any difference to your preferences? Would you be interested or attracted by living in a car-free development?

External space issues – Would the provision of a private garden be essential to your housing preferences? How large a garden is necessary? Does the idea of living in a 'home-zone', with play streets and traffic calming suggest a lesser need for private external space? Would the idea of semi-private or communal gardens; for example, limited to your street or block, interest or attract you? Do you need front gardens, yards or 'thresholds' to have your property set-back from the pavement?

Community issues – Is being part of a community important in your housing preferences? Doe s an estate have to be an 'exclusive development'? Are mixed tenure areas (mixed private, council and other social rented accommodation) more balanced than single tenure areas? Are 'gated' communities an aspiration to you? Is being close to community facilities; such as schools, shops, healthcare; an attractive feature of residential areas?

Cost issues – What do you understand by affordable housing? How much compromise do you make due to the limitations of housing costs? How do you prioritise between area, size and type of housing when cost is a major factor? Would you consider co-ownership, shared equity or renting in order to acquire a better property or to get onto the property ladder?

Management and security issues – How important are security issues to you in your choice of housing design? Are you attracted by the prospect of on-site management and security guards, patrols or restricted access to your development?

Privacy and amenity issues – Does the idea of neighbour noise discourage you from living in flats / apartments? Is overlooking of rooms or external spaces from neighbourhood properties a problem?

Density issues – Do you have any views about how higher density living can be seen as attractive? Do you have any personal experiences of high density living that has put you off city living? Do you equate high-rise and apartment living to high density living?

Sustainability issues – Are you interested in the environmental performance of your property? Would you be prepared to pay extra initially for lower energy running costs? Would the idea of district heating systems discourage you from a particular property? Would you live in a property without central heating if the insulation was so good that space heating was not required? Do you think sustainable architecture should look different or similar to other housing types?

Marketing issues – Who do you think this particular type of housing is aimed at and does the marketing material reflect this? What appeals to you most from this type of marketing: for example, the detailed specification, architectural images, floor plans?

There was a range of visual prompts, some of which is illustrated in the following pages, and a broad mix of commercially available marketing material to aid in the discussions, particularly with regard to questions on image and marketing.

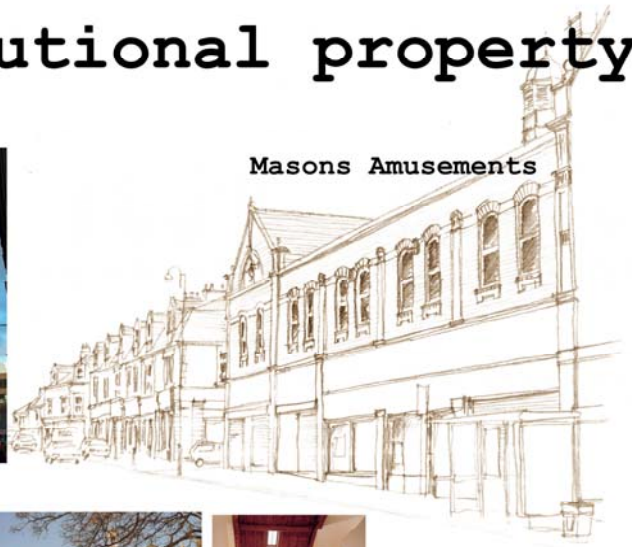# CONVERSIONS of institutional property

Hospital & Office buildings

Princess Mary Hospital

Andrew & Magnet House

Masons Amusements
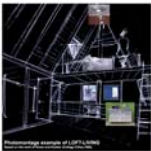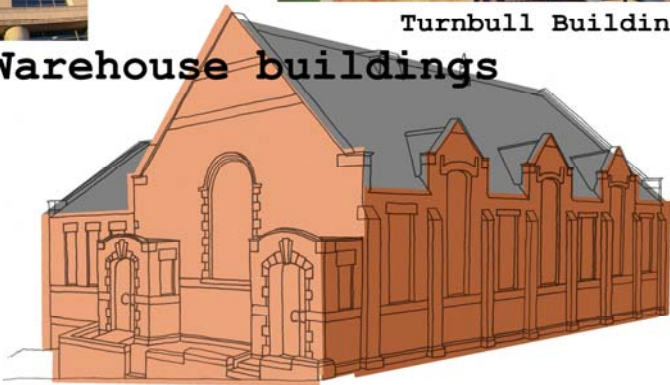
55° North

Lanesborough Court

Wills Building

Turnbull Building

Westgate Primary School
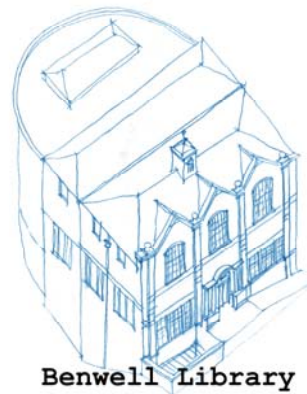
School & Library buildings

Warehouse buildings

Scotswood Library

Walker Library

Sungold Warehouse

Benwell Library
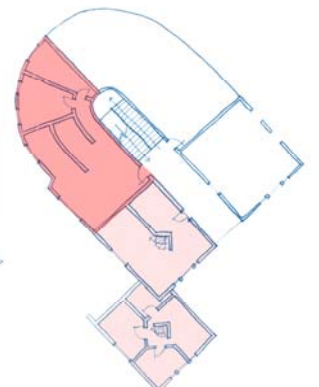
TOWNHOUSES & Tyneside TERRACES

In-fill terrace

Walker Riverside

Back-to-back terraces
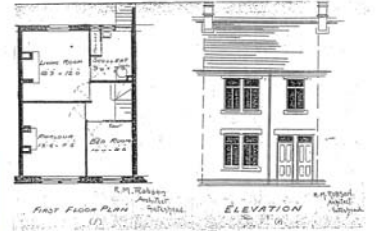
Tyneside Terraces
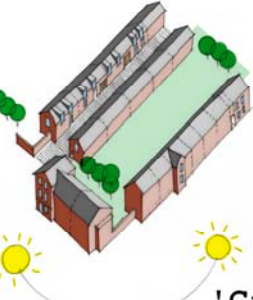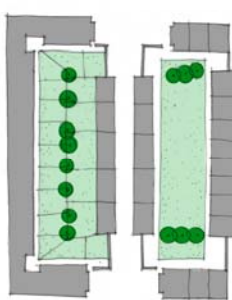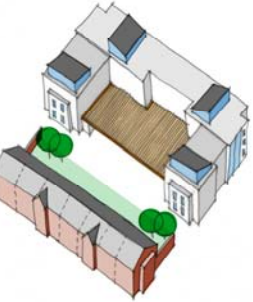
'Garden-suburb' terraces

Elswick terraces

End-of-terrace

Tower Blocks & HIGH RISE

OUSEBURN TOWER

VIEW OF THE CITY FROM 55 DEGREES NORTH
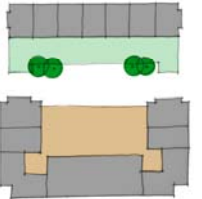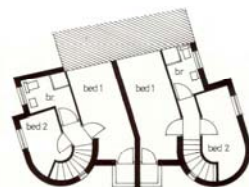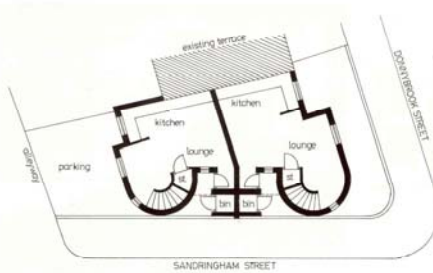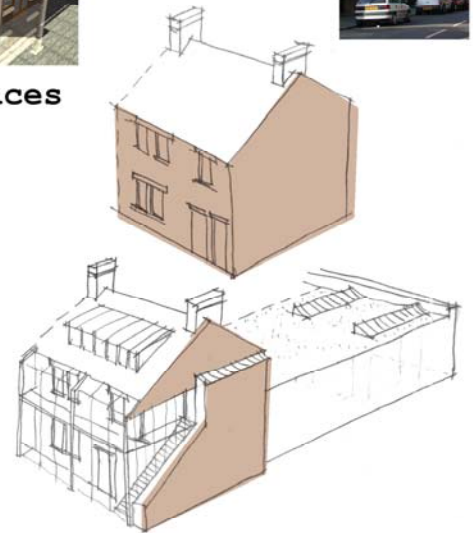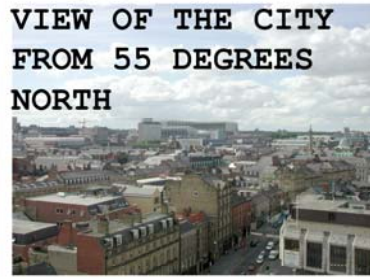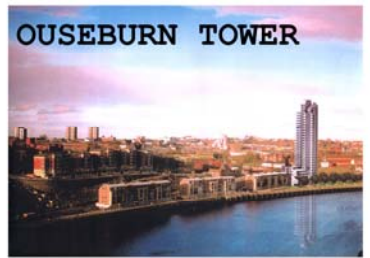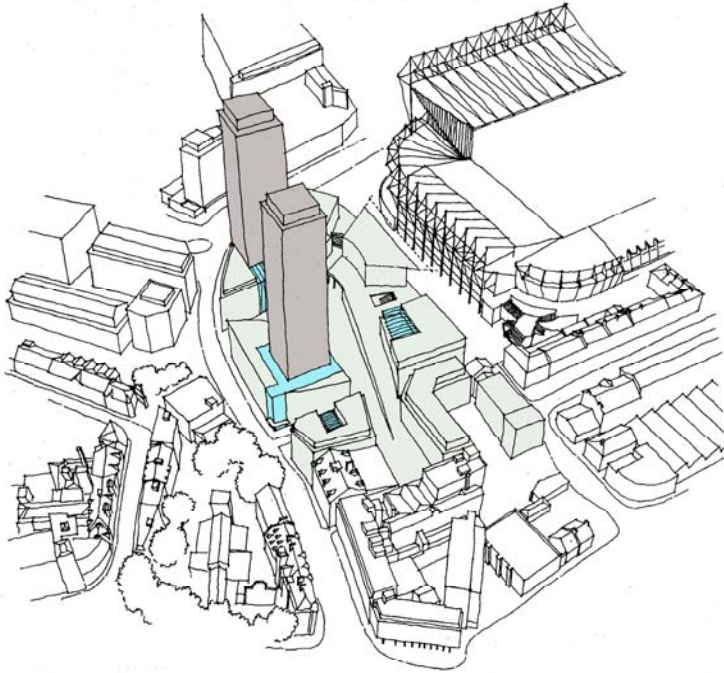
ECOTOWER ELEPHANT&CASTLE, LONDON

ECOTOWERS

SkyZED

Macintosh Village

TODD'S NOOK

The Flower Tower

VIEW OF THE CITY FROM TODD'S NOOK
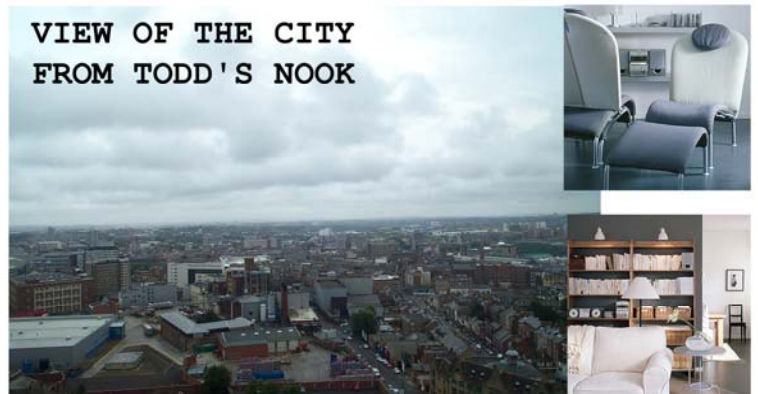
New Housing ESTATES

Crown Street, Glasgow

Amsterdam

Heaton Junction

Newcastle Great Park

Gosforth

Walbottle

Poundbury, Dorset

Benwell, Village

Staithes South Bank

Malmo, Sweden

COURTYARD 1A
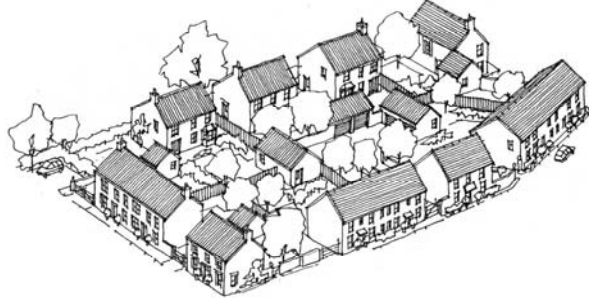
SUSTAINABLE housing and self-build
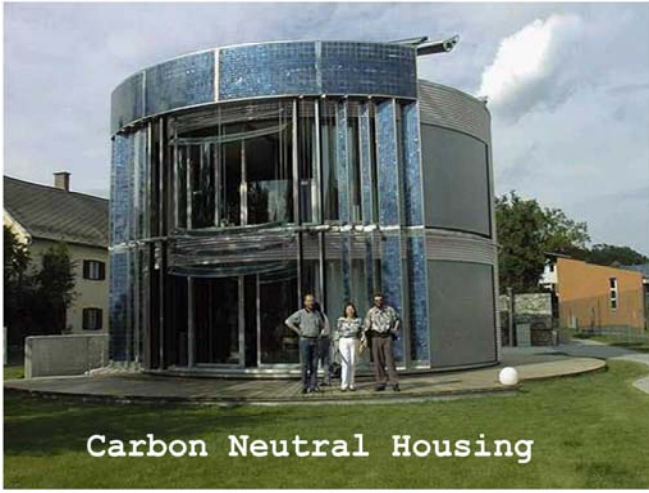
Carbon Neutral Housing

BedZed, Sutton

Hockerton, Nottingham

Earthship

Brighton Grove, INTEGER Housing

Temple Bar, Dublin

Solar Housing, Graz Austria
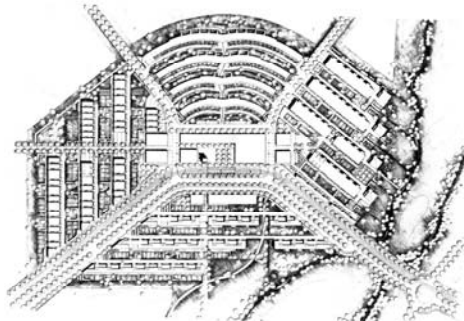
Scotswood Eco-park
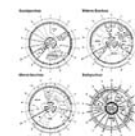
Findings

How do people feel about housing – Focus group responses to urban areas and housing typology

This section provides a thematic description of the key discussion points raised within the series of focus groups and references some of the available statistical analysis arising out of the self-completion questionnaires filled in by each resident before and following their focus group[201]. It is intended to provide a summary and scope of many of the complex views on urban areas and urban housing typologies.

Confused over location definitions

There was a lack of clarity over commonly recognised definitions of the suburbs or the city. While most people attending from Gateshead had an expressed preference for living in the suburbs, very few actually described themselves as suburban. Likewise, Newcastle residents tended to be more urban in their preferences and showed a real reluctance to describe themselves as suburban. The possible alternative definitions for their living environments were "living on the edge of the city", as part of a "fringe-city suburb as opposed to an urban suburb", or as part of an absorbed or "overgrown" village within or at the edge of the conurbation. The suburbs were somewhere "…. you can pretend you are in the countryside with the views of the Tyne Valley and the Cheviot Hills." This was the key attraction for many people, the fact that they lived in a 'village' that was accessible to the city and key employment areas. At a cognitive level, suburbanites preferred to think of living in villages close and accessible to the city, where the 'village' had a centre and a sense of identity; dominated by space and greenery; and community.

An additional theme of those who preferred the suburbs to the city were the reasons for their choice of residential location; as they were defined in relation to areas of the inner city. While the perception of space, easy access to the countryside; irrespective of whether people actually benefited in this access; and greenery were constant themes, the attractions of the suburbs were given less weight that the significant 'push' factors of the inner city. These were the predictable attributes of "… crime ridden dirty slums" and areas of overcrowding which have a multiplicity of social problems. The inner city locations were typically described in relation to their 'soft' social and economic attributes rather than any major physical issues. They were slums because they were badly managed or they were large areas of social housing with criminal elements, bad schools, anti-social behaviour and drug problems. In the minds of a few suburban dwellers, the physical characteristics of the inner city were stereotypical images of deprivation and bad social housing design where "… people pissed in recessed doorways, tower block lifts and shared corridors". Thus, when discussing the attributes of the Summerhill area, a neo-classical conservation area, people refused to class this as inner city based upon it's geography. It had good quality architecture and attractive public spaces - so just couldn't be the inner city because it didn't fit into this perceived stereotype. Instead, there were views that is was actually an "… early city suburb", just like their own "absorbed village(s)" or that it was part of the

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[201] A more complete record of the group discussions are contained in the edited transcripts contained in the appendix. All of the groups were taped, and a complete record is also available by referring back to the original recordings.

extended city centre as the architecture was of similar character and quality to their experiences of Grainger Town. Yet, with regard to certain choices, it appeared that often the size of properties outweighed character as "you [appeared] to get more space for your money out in the sticks".

Thus, there was little geographical emphasis on areas within the city. Individual definitions over city or suburb where very much qualitative definitions that reflected the character and identity of the area. Suburbs were "aspirational" and there was a high level of sophistication over the subdivision of suburban as a simple description. Most people were well aware of the variable quality within suburban environments and were generally more attracted to "established" or "mature suburbs" that contained "larger or more generous properties", had mature planting and an established character, often associated with high prices. These factors were more influential that the particular geographical location of housing and a few people suggested that the inner city can be attractive where it is actually a "more central suburb". It is somewhere where many of the best suburban attractions and with the added benefit of being accessible to the city centre.

This qualitative distinction of an established and mature suburban location reflected the wider attraction of an area with attractive properties with character, particular those of 1930's as they compare favourably with more recent suburban housing developments.

Led by impressions

Those describing the 'pull factors' of the suburbs seldom mentioned physical housing design as a major influence on their choice of residential location. The main attractions were those concerning feelings and ideas that it is "… on the edge … almost country". The proximity to the countryside; an aspiration residential environment for many; was a repeating theme in people describing the attractions of suburban living. Phrases like "quiet and green", "leafy and open", "next to the greenbelt" all stressed the location aspects of living somewhere that has the impression of green space, often irrespective of whether this green space is publicly accessible or not. Alongside the importance of green space was the associated idea of being part of a healthier, quieter environment, where there is the impression of more space for people to "… just get on with their lives". There was a paradox over the fact that many people were attracted to the ideas of space, light, greenery, mature trees and personal space in the abstract but didn't really see these issues as critical in their own choices, "… so long as I live in a green area, I don't really need a big garden and lots of space for myself".

There were many unsubstantiated statements of how the suburbs equated with a "… better standard of living [and] better quality housing", whereas the inner city was still perceived as areas of low income slums. Although, most people accepted that their area didn't necessarily contain "… better people but better-off people" with higher incomes and that it was primarily the higher incomes that helped in defining their idea of a 'better area'. The common references of better standards and quality were generic statements about decent homes and private houses. Thus, the dominant aspirational home tended to have the attributes of suburbia; being private, spacious, green, with good facilities and easy access to the countryside.

Yet there was a certain level of criticism for the growing problems of living in a peripheral green location. People raised issues of the management of the open space and the predominance of planting as it was commonly perceived as a personal security issue. Many people who were initially attracted by planting and space were actually arguing for the removal of planting. There was a similar paradox where families initially attracted to the area due to the perceived suitability for families; which have grown up and moved

away; were now arguing that young people congregating in the streets and spaces was one of the downsides of living in a suburban location. This clearly indicated the relative attraction of areas for people at different life stages and influenced a few older people to think about more suitable urban locations. There were many references to traffic problems and access to schools in peripheral locations; and an acceptance that suburban or 'village' life was inevitably one that was car dependent; with most seeing it as a 'problem with planning' rather than an issue of personal responsibility.

There were many strong views on the growing attraction of city centre living within Tyneside. This residential location was viewed as "… an expensive area [that was] full of luxury yuppie flats". A repeated phrase was of city centre living being "cramped", "… like dormitory living, … somewhere to some back to after work … somewhere to crash out". This impression was reinforced by the dominance of apartments in the city centre; commonly viewed as "small and impractical for families", with problems of noise, disturbances and poor area facilities for families; and anecdotal references by those individuals who had viewed or lived in city centre flats and had acquired a certain level of knowledge over some better known city centre developments. This was a message reinforced by press articles that, as a default, tended to stress the high value residential units – for example, those units reputed to be selling for over £1million[202]. As a result, the city centre flat was not considered a 'home', it was "… temporary accommodation for a certain stage in your lifecycle" and somewhere where career-minded "mobile professionals" could be close to work and close and convenient to the 'buzz' of the city, while still having "trendy up-to-date interior design". It was the common interior design images between hotels and many city centre apartments than seemed to validate the impression of temporary and dormitory living.

City centre locations were generally perceived as high value and with no variety in housing types; generally perceived as multiple occupancy; and not really mixed use – it was an area dominated by retailing and commercial. The key aspect of design detrimental to the attraction of city living were perceptions over the amount of living space, primarily internal space, as there was a common view that residential units became smaller the closer you got to the city centre. As a result, most people felt that such locations were inappropriate for family living, even where facilities were available urban parks were not seen as safe and all the schools were undesirable.

Stigmatised by tenure

There was awareness by residents over the politically incorrect views held regarding mixed tenure areas. There were many strong views about perceived problems regarding mixing tenure as simply "… the planners playing as social engineers" where there were reactive views over the danger for private housing areas in mixing with social rented. There was a common view that social renting not only had lower household income levels but that as a consequence, social housing tenants were less inclined to invest in or maintain their property to a similar standard as an owner-occupier. Also, that they were less committed to the area or community and more likely to be a transitory resident. In this regard, council housing areas were not viewed as "… the bottom end of the market", it was areas of private renting that had developed bad reputations due to the concentration of low income households.

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[202] Moyne, Catherine (2004) 'Why the high life is catching on'. *Sunday Times* February 15 p40.

This was clearly not a view held by those living in social housing and not borne out by more empirical research[203]. However, the perception was real, prevalent and created a strong preference for distinct tenure areas. This was particularly true for households with children. People were less inclined to take any risks, even perceived risks, as urban 'pioneers' when it involved their children and extended family. In this case, the negative views of council estates and social housing was exacerbated as there were real and perceived links between social housing and anti-social behaviour and criminal attitudes. The fact of having children in the household seemed to reinforce existing fears, stigma and personal judgements. While this was a generic view; local knowledge of the city did result in a more sophisticated view of area characteristics where negative stigma was "dependent upon where it was, not just the tenure". This suggests that stigmatisation could be addressed by improved area knowledge.

Social renting conjured up phrases such as "wasted money" and "poor investment" where you have nothing to show for all your time in an area, "… why should someone else benefit financially from all your hard work?". Thus, social housing was constantly seen with a more negative light than private ownership, even though some people recognised that "… council housing is probably better designed and better built that the house I'm in at the moment – but I wouldn't move into an area with council housing". Attitudes to home ownership were positive, as an investment and as an indication of living in a better area "… not necessarily with better people but next to people with better incomes". The role of property as an investment was strongest in households with families as the level of investment as understood as long-term and as something to pass on to your children. There was a common sense of well-being and "security", "… about being in control more" when you have your own property. These positive associations over home ownership often out-weighted many other design or location issues. The counter side of these attitudes is the stigmatisation of areas based almost exclusively on housing tenure, or the perception of housing tenure. There was a discussion about the level of council housing 'pepper potted' around the Heaton terraces in the east-end of Newcastle. The tenure mix was not evident in this area as the properties were originally built as speculative development in the Edwardian era and had since been purchased and managed by the city council. A more detailed investigation of this effect suggests that it is stigma attached to purpose built council housing estates and that a subtle mix of housing tenure in an area can be physically unnoticeable in many instances, and thus not a substantive issue in influencing housing choice. Yet, a repeated view was that "even one bad house can bring an area down" and that that 'one house' is often rented.

'Village Heights' Gateshead

The timing of the workshop with Gateshead residents coincided with local and national press coverage associated with a governmental announcement regarding stricter building standards and environmental controls. Part of the press coverage involved CABE's chief executive citing "… a new development of traditional village homes called 'Village Heights' by the Tyne at Gateshead as truly awful" and "… the worst housing in the country"[204]. People familiar with the development took issue with this statement as they saw it as a major improvement to the area. They didn't defend the design or build quality of the new

[203] Office of the Deputy Prime Minster (1998) *Housing Research Summary: Attitudes to Home Ownership* (ODPM, London).
[204] Jon Rouse quoted in; Hetherington, Peter (2003) 'Prescott to outlaw 'Noddy' housing'. *Guardian* October 21. This statement caused Tyne Tees local news to pick up the story, visit the development and talk with residents on the regional news programme.

development but compared it to the previous local authority housing on the site.

The housing was poor quality but the development was still viewed as an improvement to the area as it indicated a change in tenure and the introduction of private owner-occupier to an area to the edge of the town centre. In many people' minds, the appearance as speculative housing was indicative of the tenure as so was viewed in a positive manner.

Often were a particular preference for housing type was expressed it was in the context of how it appeared to others in tenure. "The attraction of the property" was often just the attraction of a property that was clearly understood by others as owner-occupied, this factor being as important was any other design issue discussed in relation to external appearance, quality or character. These later issues were important as additional points once the property was clearly legible as private. People were well aware of the paradox that standardisation of design was as prevalent in speculative development as it is in certain council housing areas and that often the quality of materials and construction could be poorer that established council housing areas. Yet, this familiarity with and common understanding of what a private housing development looked like provided a level of certainty and reassurance that the area was likely to "attract the right type of people". This sense of private ownership seemed to extend to a "feeling of Security" that was often initially established by an estate agent confirming that "you *are* moving to a good area".

Innately conservative

There was a repeating theme or ethos underlying most views irrespective of whether it was applied to residential areas or specific housing types – an ethos of personal conservatism or aversion to risk. This local view is surprisingly similar to the intuitive understanding of politicians that "… there is a very conservative culture in this country and we want to change that, but what do we want to change it for?"[205]

There was an awareness of personal and family risk taking in location and housing preferences. These risks could broadly be categorised as financial and/or personal security, although there were many close links and examples between these two. The financial risks were directly related to moving to an unpopular area, specifically area associated with high levels of crime or with historical criminal associations; for example the "risky inner city"; and those which are perceived as declining, again as part of a cycle of decline as more socially mobile residents decide to move.

This aversion to risk appeared to mostly related to residential areas and certain tenures rather the design of individual properties. "Risks" were responding to stigmatised areas with poor reputations and that this was again often related to "… cultural differences" between owner-occupiers – "the people with higher incomes who invest in [their] properties" and social housing; including certain registered social landlords. Some organisations had a poor reputation in their approach to the "upkeep of social housing areas" and concerns over the rent levels and choice, leading to poor local estate management and a poor reputation.

Alienated by marketing

Public views on current speculative housing development is significantly influenced by the level and precision of marketing material available. Perceptions of urban areas and specific developments within the

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[205] John Prescott speaking at "The new agenda for British housing. Creating new communities?" Conference, April 8 2003 – Church House Conference Centre, London.

city are influenced by what can be unrepresentative marketing material and excessive publicity for particular schemes. For example, the overriding perception of current residential schemes in and next to the city centre was of high value flats for single young professionals. The phrase 'professional dormitories' was used to describe typical units for people, with busy lives, little time for relaxing at home, wishing to move directly into a fully finished apartment. Few individuals had ever ventured into the city centre housing market, viewed properties for sale to personally evaluate their size, cost or location. The perceptions of the market was based on the property press and, significantly, a high level of local media coverage for 'top of the range' housing.

An unexpected aspect of this unrepresentative marketing was the level of alienation created in demographics not targeted directly by marketing material[206]. People's expectations based on affordability, space standards, and aspirations with regards to the particular housing product were formed to a large degree by this marketing material. Thus, if the housing location or product was targeted to young single people for high value, it had the result of alienating older people, couples and especially families. The collective impact of this material cannot be underestimated as most material was reinforcing similar media messages with regard to "… who should live where".

An additional significant issue with regard to the impact of the media was the "culture of fear and crime" that made the headlines for many inner city areas.

Awareness of quality

There was a surprising level of awareness of architecture and design issues, in some cases to the point that group acceptance of a specific property or area of high quality appeared to compensate for negatives associations of an inner city location. For example, there was almost total recognition of the high quality of the architecture of Grainger Town and comparative areas of Tyneside Classical, such as Summerhill that made them attractive locations irrespective of location. There was also an awareness of good individual buildings; both new build and conversion; that formed the basis of an attractive residential area. In many cases, this bias towards quality in spite of location was because good architecture was understood as a good financial investment in the longer term. It would always remain an attractive proposition to other owner-occupiers. The extend of 'urban quality' included the majority of the city centre and the well-established or mature inner suburbs, even up to those dominated by 1930's housing design where the approach was still perceived as "bespoke and individual in the level of detailing". Established character was largely associated with design quality in contrast to new build areas, where quality in design proved harder to define and to have any consensus.

The knowledge of these high quality areas was influenced by media coverage, associated publicity that promoted a particular area and an awareness of physical improvements to individual properties and public realm. However, one of the outcomes of an awareness of high quality design; in places such as the East Quayside; was an element of exclusivity. This was borne out in detailed discussion as most suburbanites placed aesthetics and architectural design; where it was mentioned at all in relation to personal property choices and preferences; as a minor issue in comparison to location and size of property. High

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[206] This is consistent with other studies on place-marketing which is seen to have similar limited views over how places and locations are understood and attractive to a broad diversity of groups and individuals in a manner that can alienate local audiences. Murray, Chris (2001) Making sense of place: new approaches to place marketing (Comedia, Croswell).

quality design and 'character' was valued and sought but often seen as unattainable, unaffordable and "…for someone [else] who can afford it" as well as the space they require. Internal space was at a premium and 'character' and design was an important means of differentiation between residential products of similar size but tended to be secondary in affecting choice to internal space standards and the overall impression of property size.

There was also a surprising level of understanding regarding proportions, layouts, detailing and materials in housing design. People were aware if something wasn't right that they could express but couldn't fully explain. There was significant discussion around particular approach to housing design and external appearances where an understanding of the existing context often led people to recognise pastiche (without using the phrase) and to suggest where particular design approaches would be most appropriate. For example; in suggesting the Ouseburn valley as an appropriate location for a design like West 8's Boreno Sporenberg; or next to Byker as a potential location for a BedZed development.

Families are not 'pioneers'

There was a significant distinction between the focus groups members with and without young children. There issues raised in discussion and in response to the design and location questions indicated a subtly different way of thinking about property and choices for residential locations. A broader range of issues were influencing decisions, most noticeably educational factors such as access to good schools and the supporting social networks of the school.

Heavy levels of traffic, real or perceived, were a negative factor in many inner city locations. Other personal safety concerns were also raised in the group discussions but few were as significant as the fear of urban traffic levels and the limits it placed on playing in the street. The 'fear' of "too many teenagers" and anti-social behaviour were common throughout the city and many felt they were as significant an issue in many suburban locations. Thus, beyond the tenure of the surrounding housing, area-based stigma in certain inner city locations was influenced by traffic levels, lack of external areas for play or 'teenage congregation' and perceived poor education provision - all inter-related issues.

Families are 'pioneers'

The surprising contradiction in the parallel workshops of households with and without children was how the family groups chose residential locations compared to their choice of property types. While there was an inherent conservatism in reducing risks with location, due in part to perceived influences on their children and school catchment areas, there was a calculated approach to overcoming many of the remaining risks to family life, such as the influence of traffic, security and community issues and many of the underlying ethical values attached to sustainable housing options.

This could be described as taking pro-child risks. This seemed to be due to a very different attitude in how potential purchasers viewed particular properties and location. Families clearly placed a priority on the idea of a house as a 'home' rather that an investment. They were attracted by an area or property as a place to establish a home and that any potential financial aspects relating to rising property prices or resell value

were clearly expressed as side benefits rather than key aspects in their decision making. People felt that 'traditional' family properties with 'character' were also suitable for families and appropriate for children, even in some of the inner city locations.

People were attracted to the particular character of a family home. In detail this means that there was a strong bias towards the idea of a 'homezone' development where low traffic speeds and pedestrian bias was designed into an estate and the street was understood to be a place for children to play. This was also true for the family bias towards more environmentally friendly development. The causes for this were the underlying understanding and shared values of sustainable development, where consideration for children naturally led to thinking longer term about society, the environment and "… what sort of world are we going to leave for our kids". This challenges the idea that there is "passivity … across all [demographic] groups – young and old, better-off and lower-income, parents and those without children"[207] – it appears that family consumers are more informed and less passive and thus more inclined to be attracted by sustainable housing options.

Lifestyle attractions

Many personal preferences expressed had little relationship with any physical environment but related to sense of community and feelings. For example, people were attracted to a "stress-free environment" – somewhere without any "hassle from traffic jams, neighbours or personal inconveniences". Often, these were described as personal responses to particular environments after having lived in a particular locality or property type. Both urban and suburban environments were contrasting described as "stress-free" due to cleanness, peacefulness, accessibility and convenience in separate instances. It was clear that individual preferences were giving particular weight to certain attributes and that these preferences could be altered by better information or contradictory experiences.

The attractions of community and social networks were common across areas and between households with and without families[208]. In some urban situations, the sense of community was defined "by the catchment of the local pub" or similar walking distances to facilities. Local networks existed between families with children in the same area even if they were attending different schools. In some cases these networks were well established and formalised to the point where people in inner city communities were enjoying street parties[209].

In suburban locations there was a common acceptance that movement was much more car based and as such there was much less local interaction. Where the city had the pub or school as the community focus, in peripheral location people described "Tesco as the community point" where social interaction was in the car park and the supermarket aisle. Suburban attitudes tended to be described as more individual "… the suburbs are made up of territorial people". Yet for some individuals this lack of community and social interaction was actually the very attraction of a suburban lifestyle as long as someone's lifestyle didn't impact on their privacy or property amenity. In some cases neighbour intrusion or potential impact was the major disincentive of moving into particular suburban streets because some people "… kept sofas in their garden"

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[207] p5 in; Holdsworth, Maxine (2003) Green Choice: What Choice? Summary of NCC research into consumer attitudes to sustainable consumption (National Consumer Council, London).
[208] In common with practitioner studies on factors influencing future housing demands that highlight the importance of social networks and the notion of community. Rudlin, David and Falk, Nicholas (1995) *21st Century Homes: Building to last* (URBED, London).
[209] This is consistent with parallel research that showed how higher density and more urban schemes seemed to have a significant influence over a sense of community, Mulholland Research and Consulting (2003) *Perceptions of Privacy and Density* (Design for Homes, London).

suggesting they sat outside in their front garden and drank. People preferred a certain level of "anonymity" and privacy provided by suburban cul-de-sacs. These were explicit views that showed how places like Kingston Park possessed attractions because of the layout that reduced opportunities for social interaction – "I like it because it's where people just keep themselves to themselves".

Responses to housing types

There were many overlapping comments between areas and housing types, in part simply because certain typologies were historically associated with certain urban locations. These were also reflected in certain attitudes and associations, where high rise living and terraces were inevitable part of a wider group discussion around inner city living. The following sections have summarised some of the thematic comments on housing typologies with the understanding that there are still these kinds of associations between typologies and locations.

Contemporary housing estates

There was a level of scepticism over designer houses or "… Rockport Homes" in responding to ideas on modern housing estates. The Staithes South Bank was one of the more obvious local examples and many people were surprised that there was a design-led approach being adopted by a house builder in a location like this. There was the repeated associated in many peoples mind that "designer homes are too expensive … only something you find in the city centre … for the 'yuppies' [and] not for the likes of me". This was a prevalent issue, that high quality design was only possible on high value housing schemes.

In contrast to many of the professionally well know schemes, people were aware that many standard housing properties were "… boxy but safe" and that they were put together with materials they were familiar with "… and somewhere they could feel comfortable with design and materials".

There were mixed views on the level of conformity or individuality available in new housing developments. While some preferred an area with "… a uniform nature and character", others were explicit in their aspirations for some unique and different. These contrasting views were repeated in the groups making a distinction between integrity in the design. Traditional housing designs were both "fake" and "familiar" and contemporary housing was "honest" and "characterless". Overall, there was a high degree of design awareness in any approach to new housing and the varying views on the aesthetics reflected the area based views, that residential tenure is immediately apparent, where modern design; often characterised by "flat roofs"; could simply look like "… a revamped council house design" that could "date really quickly". This was one of the common concerns over contemporary housing designs even when people have positive views on the aesthetics and ethos of living in a mixed community, that they still present themselves as an investment risk in comparison to

While the visual appearance of the individual properties was an immediate attraction or repulsion, the level of design awareness and apparent weight extended to the estate layout and the approach to the design of the external spaces. There were repeated concerns over the inappropriate spacing and "crowding" of certain sites that put people off several new estate developments around the city. This was often expressed by the use of the phrase 'boxy', were 'boxy' was clearly a negative term. High quality external spaces and mature landscaping had an important effect on perceptions and attractiveness of an area

Internal spaces and standards were similarly important, outweighing many of the external factors. People were often unable and unwilling to judge on appearances – they wanted to look inside and "… get a feel for the size of the property". There were also issues around the practicalities of family lifestyle within certain properties and the level of flexibility possible, most groups recognising that there is no longer "… a traditional, stereotypical British" family and community.

Yet, ultimately "… if you said you could have any one of them (new housing estate examples) which one would you choose … I'm thinking that I wouldn't want to choose any of them". For many people, new housing estates could simply not compete with existing housing areas and types. This could be in part to a lack of choice within new developments across the city, where "… new housing is all the same" as well as representing the preference for established housing types that have both integrity and character.

Terraced housing

Traditional terraced properties, as a building form, proved to be popular with most groups, individuals through to family groups.

The attraction of terraced property was individual access "… you have your own front door …", the level of internal space with "… nice big rooms", split over floors to provide privacy within the property. Often the level of internal space; and the potential for additional adaptation for more as personal circumstances changed; was weighted much higher than garden size and external space. "I'd be happy with just a backyard … something that is simple and easy to manage." This was evident of the trade-offs that were often made and referred to between internal and external space standards. When faced with a direct choice, more people preferred to have more internal space. If this level of space could be provided in a terrace or town house at a level above a semi or a detached property, then a similar trade-off was described. People who preferred terraced properties had often already made a comparison with new build and detached. "If I could afford a five-bedroom house like that (a terraced property) in Walker, which gave me loads more room (to where I live now), I would seriously consider it".

The negative associations with many of the terraced properties on Tyneside remain associations with the wider geographical area. The implications were that looking at the demolition of large areas of terraced properties wouldn't achieve much in terms of image and stigma – the social problems and/or reputations remain with the area, not with the particular housing type. There was a general feeling that if the authorities took over a block and created a "… big enough scheme to have an identity of its own", it would be possible to turn an area around based upon the attractions of the scale, character and value of terraced and townhouse properties. "There is no point in regenerating one row and leaving the surrounding streets empty". Yet, this view was often restricted to existing terraced housing, generally Victorian and Edwardian properties, and the options of "… bring them up to modern standards" where there were perceptions over low maintenance demands, rather than new infill blocks.

There were many issues raised regarding the use of back lanes within many of the traditional terraced areas within the city. Mostly there were seen as a disadvantage due to poor management, control and security issues, although there were several people with positive experiences of community development as a result of getting involved in "… back lane societies".

There were several clear design principles to follow in promoting terraced properties within the Pathfinder area. The associations with many of the older terraced properties were maintenance, repairs and

neighbour noise. People felt there was a requirement for repairs in older properties in comparison to newer developments and that this was simply an additional risk in moving into a terraced property. There were repeating worries over security within terraces, based upon anecdotal and personal accounts. Internal noise was a common concern, based on personal and family experiences. Yet, most people felt 'familiar' with the idea of terraced properties, "… as a link to our past" and recognised that if treated corrected, there could be design or construction standards that resolve all of the concerns raised above.

High rise

High rise living is still largely stigmatised and stereotyped by the reputation of post-war local authority developments and seen as "… the last housing option for most people who want to live in the city", although there was a recognisable shift in attitudes when addressing the detail of any particular high rise development. It seems to remain generically unpopular but that in the right location and with the right management, it can become an attraction to many individuals for a variety of personal reasons.

Management issues within blocks were dominated with concerns over security and the issue of shared entrances. Where this was being address by concierge and CCTV systems, there was recognition that blocks can become more secure than other housing types, and as such can be an attractive housing option in locations where personal security is a concern. In this context many people were attracted by certain high rise blocks where there was a waiting list; for example in Jesmond Vale; as an indicator of demand and equating this with good management. If tenants can be controlled; for example, in a sheltered accommodation, then many of the negative concerns over high rise communities and anti-social behaviour within the block itself could be addressed. Thus, while the form was generally understood to be unpopular, there were many practical examples of how they can be popular and aspirational. Yet, "… this is down to management", to security and to location.

"I don't think any tall building looks pleasant". There were few people who expressed any appreciation for the appearance of high rise blocks, but many who could appreciate the advantages of a good view in a good location, in riverside locations, in the city centre or on the edge of the town moor.

There were mixed views on the potential for community within high rise, with the most positive views being expressed by those individuals living in high rise blocks. The enthusiastic support from existing and former residents of high rise and multiple occupancy blocks stimulated a wider interest in the attractions of high rise living and prompted a shift in perceptions away from pre-judging such blocks as unsuitable for individuals and even families. Even concerns over noise appeared to be addressed by real life experience and knowledge of existing tenancy agreements.

Conversions

There were many mixed views on the idea and attractions of property conversions, largely based on individual knowledge and examples within the city and region. The quality of the original building appeared to be directly related to the perception of the quality of the conversion, irrespective of the level of detailed design and specification. Often, the idea of character and quality was reflected in the comparative age of the conversion property, and the older the better. This also appeared to be turn in a negative sense,

"… however brilliant it (55 degrees north) is on the inside really doesn't enter my equation … because I hate looking at it".

People attracted to conversion properties were those also attracted to bespoke properties or all kinds. "I would probable prefer to live in a characterful conversion like the Wills building than some anonymous purpose built building" … "I agree, I would rather live in a building that has character and a bit of history to it", "… something that had some historical value". This attraction to character was reflected in the type of trade-offs people were prepared to make between different property types – where character and individuality was given weight by people; particular within the singles group; to a point where it could begin to compensate for certain location characteristics. Yet there was still an awareness that you are taking a risk moving into certain areas, irrespective of how individual the property may appear to be. The level of risk was dependent in part on the household size, type and the number of children. Again, within the family group, people would appreciate the attractions of certain property types, including conversion of old institutional properties, but where still asking "… which one of us here would take the risk to move there?" "As a buyer, I wouldn't risk buying something there … I would need reassurance that that is then going to become a better area". In a similar line to these comments, people were asking why there were only property conversions in well established and popular parts on the city?

The range of marketing material produced by many of the conversion properties within the city had the effect of reinforcing many of these perceptions of bespoke approach to design meant high value, and some extent a superficial gloss of quality – where people were sceptical of the 'appearance' of a high specification rather. This seed to be part of the overall trend of potential property purchasers who are attracted to bespoke buildings were those who had sophisticated understanding of design and were not easily fooled by glossy marketing material.

Sustainable Housing

There were largely positive views whenever the detail of sustainable housing was explained to each of the focus groups. There were expressing the personal value system of the potential house purchaser as much as an attraction for any particular sustainable housing type. Many people simply felt that they are a "good thing" and that the detailed aspects of sustainable properties should simply become part of every new property.

There was a strong attraction for certain people to those eco-properties that had "… a wow factor" and that actually looked different because of the sustainable design ethos. This attraction was particularly strong with younger people within the various focus groups. In contrast, there "… may be problems with the elderly population … because they're not that green". There was an extended group of people who were attracted by the ideas but had preferences for "a more traditional looking property" rather than "… living in something that looked like a fishbowl". Again, there was an added attraction on the basis of the financial imperative in the reduced energy bills, although this was largely secondary in emphasis to the level of debate over environmental sustainable buildings, simply being the right thing to do. "It certainly is the way forward" … "I can't understand why it isn't just do in every property".

Yet in spite of the overtly positive views, there were a number of practical reservations over this particular niche housing. Some people were worried about the 'visual impact' and the particular look of sustainable housing – they preferred a more "traditional" and "commercially desirable" look of housing. The

image of sustainable housing was a concern when it came to a "lack of character" typified by the "desire for a fireplace as a central feature for a living room" and the potential market for resale in the property being limited. This reflected the general attitudes to the immediate visual appearance of the property and the tendency for some people to pass judgement based upon the appearance. In this case, this reinforced worries that tenure was evident in the external appearance of the properties and associations between 'experimental' sustainable properties and social housing. There was also the perception over risk as many people still felt that they as 'experimental' housing there should be a small scale demonstration scheme within the region that may prove to me more convincing.

Feedback from the citizen workshops

The feedback following each event was almost exclusively positive. Expectations of planning and housing debates were changed and many expressed a surprise at how interesting many of the challenges for the Pathfinder programme are in scale and detail. The thematic range of the discussion surprised many, particularly the non physical aspects of housing dosing, such as the sophisticated management and tenancy arrangements, the approaches to developing mixed income and tenure communities, the financial aspects and the links they had in planning for successful and sustainable residential environments. This level of personal interest was evident in the expressions of enjoyment and interest in feedback from the event.

The level of debate was understood at a high level and there was an appreciation of the role of the local authorities in undertaking this work to inform many of the strategic directions for the role of design in the Pathfinder programme.

Recommendations

Summary

This overview of qualitative views on the area and housing options suggests a number of key areas of activity that, in part, may continue to develop the evidence base for the regeneration of the core of the Tyneside conurbation.

Understand the market

This focus group exercise has been limited to understanding the qualitative views of existing residents in Newcastle and Gateshead. The success of inner urban regeneration will be dependent upon understanding these complex views as well as the creation of new housing markets and choices for new comers to the sub-region. The review of area specific research on the qualitative views and choices made by prospective residents has highlighted the limited record or understanding of these views.

It is vital that qualitative views; the aspirations, perceptions that actually influence the locational choices of individual households; are not only recorded, but given a similar weight and resources to the more extensive work on monitoring and evaluation housing numbers. There is a significant underused source of housing data available in the monitoring recent housing completions. It is recommended that qualitative trends are derived from evaluating long-term housing completions within each local authority area (for example; using a mix of photographic survey, evaluation based on ODPM / policy derived criteria; content analysis). More targeted research is also required to develop a longitudinal study of the housing market on Tyneside that links qualitative decision-making and social attitudes with existing empirical and analytical material. Specific target demographics, such as graduate and family retention within the city, should be given specific attention in undertaking additional qualitative research. Any approach should be consistent in learning from the choices, views and experiences of new residents.

Size is important

In spite of a high level of awareness and appreciation over good design and functionality, this was consistently less important that the amount of internal space within the property. The apparent importance of space provision and any potential trade-offs within the decisions of individual households should be explored in detail through the use of stated preference survey techniques, or similar. The output from this work, in understanding space standards in absolute terms (square metres floor area) and number of bedrooms, should be directly linked to any marketing of housing on inner urban sites.

Address restrictive choice

There is a discerning and design literate public that will welcome additional choice and variation in the range of housing types and choices available within the region. Mechanisms should be outlined, specifically for sites under public sector ownership, which encourage a more sophisticated degree of housing mix and bespoke design. This could include approaches to limit the scale of plots sizes within any specific

development sites, and measures to encourage a variety of different designers working on a limited number of housing units to ultimately provide improved variety, competition and choice within and between housing sites.

Embrace a sustainable future

There are public expectations that new housing has to become inherently more sustainable. The expectations are that this is largely a matter of national and local government. There is an acceptance that the future housing market will change and that the mainstream will embrace many of the sustainable housing options that are currently considered experimental and innovative.

The inevitability suggests that there is potentially market advantage for being a pioneer in this form of housing development and establishing a market and commercial reputation within the sub-region. There are clear benefits for the local housing market in mainstreaming sustainable housing options by addressing their public perception and acceptance.

Pathfinder should continue to support the delivery of sustainable housing on a variety of sites through the Pathfinder area, and aim to meet 'Passive' house standards as part of this exercise. Any exercise that provides a practical and physical 'demonstration' project within the region will be ultimately more convincing for prospective developers.

Innovative-marketing

There are opportunity to explore the benefits and approaches to co-ordinated and creative 'place-marketing' for the Pathfinder area based upon the development of existing approach, experiences and promotions which have occurred at strategic level for settlements[210]. There are already several approaches to place-marketing the north east and the city in general as a location for economic development and inward investment. The empirical results clearly indicate strongly positive local attitudes to cities in general that should provide a base for re-imaging the city and urban lifestyles. For example, there are opportunities to benefit from recognisable design 'products' in the regional urban vernacular, Tyneside classical (based upon the architecture of locally significant architects such as Dobson, Payne) and the strength of art deco within some of the Pathfinder areas.

Location, location, location

There are many negative perceptions associated with many inner-city locations and associated housing types. For specific areas within Pathfinder area to develop a mixed private housing market, there has to be a significant change in perceptions and associations with the idea of inner urban living. These concerns within the potential housing market will remain, irrespective of options for large scale clearance and rebuilding or refurbishment. The strong associations between housing image and tenure that has to be addressed in parallel. This is an additional task for marketing and public relations to raise consumer confidence, alongside the large physical programmes proposed for the area.

Provide consistent leadership and guidance

The approach to urban regeneration and the priority given to geographical areas and housing types is ultimately a political decision, supported by clear planning policies and public funding. There has to be clear political support and commitment to shaping urban attitudes rather than simply providing what people want, to meet existing policy aspirations. The later has been limited by the restrictive housing choice and knowledge of comparative schemes that demonstrate sustainable design, high quality family development at relatively high densities. Clear and politically endorsed guidance should be provided as to the areas and forms of development.

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[210] For example see; Ward, Stephen V (1998) *Selling Places: the marketing and promotion of towns and cities 1850-2000* (E&FN Spon, London); Hown, Joe (1995) 'Urban regeneration: a case of selling places?'. *Report* 10 pp 10-12.

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Appendicies

Edited transcripts of Focus Groups

This appendix is a partial transcript of the focus groups and the discussion held when covering area and location issues as well as the detailed discussion regarding specific housing types. The extract from the transcript is a record of those relevant statements of opinion and personal view as opposed to anecdotal material. It is structured around a section of (I) city living and (ii) housing types.

City Living

Suburbia

"I grew up in the city and I wanted to move out for economic reasons and aesthetics reasons"

"What does the future hold? At the moment the suburbs are the place to be but maybe not in the future"

"Not all people like having the garden and some people do want to be in the city amongst it with all the shops…as yet the city doesn't offer enough for me"

"Better standard of living in the suburb…in Gateshead in the centres you've got your poor quality housing if it gets better then maybe you can get people to move in"

"we move to get out of the slums like in Blaydon not the city…the slums of today could change in the future."

"a quality of life is what we are all looking for…a decent home"

"I like where I am because theirs a lot of greenery and I've got a lot of time to enjoy it"

"we see our villages as one of the positive attractions of living in the suburb"

"its not the building that is the slum, it's the people who live in the area make it that slum"

"you might not get better people though, they might just be better-off…no trouble makers"

"the lower society the council are guilty of pushing them all together…turning them into ghettos"

"at the moment in the suburbs you have choice…you can choose according to your means, if your not as economically well-off you go where your put"

"in the old days it was the poor who lived in the suburbs and were pushed away from the centre, but then the rich decided to move away – Westmorland Road etc where the terraced houses were"

"suburbs are still the aspirational place to live I would say"

"I wouldn't want to live in the centre of Gateshead because it's a bus depot now. Newcastle has a centre but until 10 years ago no-one lived there…theirs a difference with the suburbs as well, if you look at Elswick and Scotswood compared to Jesmond and Gosforth, there's a difference - £200,000."

"Jesmond itself has changed a lot since I lived there its full of students…I wouldn't want to live there as Osborne Road has become a stretch of bars now and you cannot get parked within three streets of where you live."

"on parking even in the suburbs theirs cars on the street…car used to be a rarity but now not so…they occupy most backyards"

"I think suburbia start with affordable housing for families who don't want to live in the confines of the city…but near enough the city for school shops etc"

"younger families"

"lots of the ideas came from Llewellyn garden city projects…which was when all we had was terraces, terraces and terraces."

"to move away from the centre…10minutes away from town with lots of greenery"

"we are close to doctors etc which you aren't in town"

"you find that people who live in the suburbs don't want to move into the city and those who live in the city don't want to move to the city"

"when we lived on Scotswood road that was it we all had our family there"

"its Geordieism where when you get married you want to be 4 doors from your mother and 6 from your granny"

"this isn't the case I feel as we can use the car to see our family"

"its quieter in the suburbs and I think it's a better class of living"

"the city has a lot going for it now where it didn't in the past"

"I think they were trying to get people to live in the suburbs because it was better living but now they want people back in the city"

"I lived in high-rise before not here but abroad and what I noticed they don't give us here is a balcony so they can have their own little space. I must admit I brought up my family in one it was great."

"I live not far from the tower block in Dunston and its appalling but you look at Montague Court and its beautiful"

"its to do with management and location"

"transport is a negative in suburbia if you haven't got a car your stuck."

"you can choose to live to a next to a good school"

"if you were to ask any young family looking to move I'm sure their chief concern would be a school"

"security depends on where you live"

"gated communities with swipe cards like in American seem good but its like telling other people your well off"

"in suburbia you are less compact and you seem to have a better community"

"community is key without doubt"

"I don't feel vulnerable being in suburbia but people further out might be isolated"

"the changes in the city look appealing, I've got to say if it was just me and the wife then I'd love to a flat looking over the Tyne"

"its not just the price of living in your flat it's the service charge as well"

"parking facilities are better in suburbia than the city"

"if the facilities were there yes I could live in a car-free environment"

"using the bus is a lot easier"

"it can be done. In Manchester they have a tram system which seems great"

"where we live we have a wonderful bus service were we live but after 7pm we cannot go anywhere..if we had a late bus service we'd be fine"

"I think you have a lot more privacy in the suburbs"

"communal garden would be quite good"

"I don't think they work, the ones we had in Washington weren't concealed enough"

"having your own space expresses your personality"

"it an extension of your house"

"I live in the garden in the summer"

"the gardens the other room not used"

"I don't think a decent public space would be enough as it would get vandalised"

"Maybe we've gone to far and everyone is so used to having a garden"

"you could base it on what the allotments that was a community"

"I think what springs to mind is leafy avenues, and schools, you're away from the hustle and bustle of the city centre even though it's not far away"

"Fresh air, privacy in your own garden, use of parking… nearer to the countryside, safe for children, the schooling is nearer… cheaper rates, likeminded neighbours…"

"Suburbia can be nearer or away from the city, as long as you've got the money to afford better quality living"

"I would say new housing is suburbia"

"It's down to the type of housing, and the money"

"You've got to have easy access to public transport, and if you haven't it's not an easy life for anybody"

"If you bring your children up (in the suburbs), the children know other children, and you become friends with the parents. So this way you become part of the community. But I don't think you get this in the city"

"I had a better social life when I lived in The (inner city) Avenues, than I do now living in the suburbs… we were all friends, we had parties… It was noisy, there was the hustle bustle, you knew when people were coming home – but now I don't see anyone… nobody wants to know"

"Nowadays you walk on the street, and you're the only adult on the street… it's quite nerve-wracking. So most people get in their cars… Nobody walks on the streets any more, and that's what made a massive difference"

"I currently live at High Hills in Gateshead, and I would prefer to live in the city centre… because of the close amenities within the city centre. I don't live very close to it, I mean the closest amenities to me is Gateshead High Street"

"I live in Whickham. I live in Whickham because it's quiet and it's close to the countryside, yet it's got a lovely village that you can walk to. And all my family's there"

"I live in Sunnyside. We don't have a lot of amenities in Sunnyside but I prefer it that way, I wouldn't like to live in a city centre. I like the fact that two minutes away we've got woods and fields and trees, and I prefer that to living in a city place"

"I worked in Newcastle when I was a youngster, in fact all of my life, but I still prefer to get away from it"

"To me the suburbs is anywhere that's not within walking distance of the town"

"There's two types of suburbs to me: there's urban suburbs and there's rural suburbs"

"I've lived all across Europe. And I have not come across the question of suburbs, urban, like there is in England"

"In Rowlands Gill they sell two different types of houses… they've got the ordinary bit of paper with a house on it, or they've got a posher piece of paper with a bigger house on it… You're thinking 'that must be posher so that must mean we live in the country whereas that one's just a terraced house so we just live in a village'"

"I live in a house that is about £170,000 in Dunston. To me it's not an 'Executive', it's just simply a semi-detached in a residential area. So there is a different perception of how people like to live, or what they're trying to be, or what they're trying to portray to other people"

"The terraced house, it was the main community, because you knew the families next door and next door to that as well. And in terms of barriers, there was very little barriers to get to know people on the street, where semi-detached you have fencing – detached you definitely have fencing – so you have more physical barriers to actually get to know people"

"Saltwell Park's a lovely park, I've taken my kids to Saltwell Park, but you have to make the effort to do it. You can't just turn them out and let them play out, because you're frightened to let them play out… You're always worried about where you're children are"

"There's always something on the tele about… kids getting abducted, and stuff like that. And it's a big big worry"

"If you're in a busy centre, there's more people about, there's more people to watch out for"

"You're more aware of strange cars as well, because you know everyone's cars that's in the estate"

"I won't let my son go where I used to go at his age. At the same age I could go further afield than I would let him because I just don't think it's safe anymore"

"It's publicised more, it never used to be… When I was a kid I never heard anything on television about paedophilia, about children being abducted, about all these murders. And we all watch television, and it does rule your thoughts"

"It's like Low Fell in Gateshead…not in the city"

"it has a couple of shops but not that many"

"Houses with gardens…once you reach that point and start seeing houses with gardens and you know your out in the suburbs."

"in between the Inner-City and suburbia I see as being urban"

"Somewhere like Jesmond, Heaton and Scotswood is where I would class as Inner-City…further out is the suburbs"

"Inner-City is like Clayton Street and Dobson Street, old buildings in the city"

"Just a few miles from the centre point of the city"

"Inner-City has become almost an insult; you start to think of deprivation"

"suburbia is a welded route the city centre with parks, gardens etc"

"The housing? Large and less"

"Less people. Less pollution"

"Less services"

"Short of all services, statutory and voluntary"

"Sense of community, there's a pub and a church, and a community centre"

"Some places just seem to have been plonked there, without any services like no community centre, no shops, some haven't even got pavements"

"I think it would be quite boring for the kids. If there's not a lot going on. And also with the detached properties you're isolating your children to a certain extent"

"We moved there because it was semi-rural, and now it's not. We're all sick to death of the council building hotels, and filling stations where there was once greenery"

"Maybe that's what we perceive as suburbia, as somewhere that's all private, with people who can afford that sort of lifestyle"

"I suppose we've all been to somewhere, all these little villages and little places and said that's lovely that, I'd love to live here – you don't know what's going on there, you just drive through and say isn't this lovely. If you drove through Meadowell you wouldn't think this is lovely"

"Technically it's a geographical location isn't it?"

"It's the opposite to the city isn't it?"

"You can pass the time of day, and that's the idea of a community"

"outskirts of the city"

"open area, tree, grass, semi-detached houses etc"

"Friendly, family orientated, settled…a really good pub"

"council tend to build houses the way they want to build houses, crammed, back to back"

"the physical conditions aren't great, they're squashed"

"the physical form is very important on how the social aspects work…that's how you build communities up"

"gardens open access and help communicate with your neighbours"

"its about the people, I mean less than 20% using the community centre."

"I live in a square…and I feel locked away"

"where I live in Brunton Park I can go out of my back gate and I've got fields"

"physical removal from the town"

"lack of choice, single people couldn't get a house…only flats and maisonettes are all you were considered for"

"multi-storey became the best option for me as I used to live on the ground floor of flats near a park. Lots of vandalism took place and the best option was to go higher away from the trouble."

"this multi-storey block was refurbished and looked beautiful, a different class to the usual but its out of our range we couldn't afford it…the security is great"

"crime is an issue, I live in a one up on down and its quite vulnerable on the ground floor"

"I lived in Jesmond and it was great all the amenities were good we had shops, pubs and restaurants but when we started to look at starting a family we didn't want a family near to the city centre…wanted to give the family what we had, the freedom to run around"

"in suburbia its not as busy, you're less worried about the safety of your children as the roads are less busy and you don't always have to be there to hold hands."

"its great we have greenery, I love it being on the edge of what's left of the greenbelt…we've got gardens, we've got trees but if you want to be in town its only 20minutes away"

"occasionally the bus service but that's the only thing for me"

"night time can be an issue, youths drinking late at night"

"but the kids cannot go anywhere so what can they do?"

Inner City

"Big squares…Bars, nightclubs…like the Bigg market, I wouldn't want to live there"

"the city centre is the line from the Haymarket down to the Bigg Market, down onto the Quayside"

"Most of the flats are sizewise… not appealing to family are they? They're appealing to young professionals"

"They're like a dormitory, you're out to work, you come back, it's handy"

"I'd probably live there till I started a family"

"There's no shops… where's your nearest store, where's your nearest corner shop?"

"The type of people who buy these places down on the Quay are all geared up for the young yuppie"

"Different styles of homes for different people's wants… so we have a right mix"

"Your inner-cities, your quaysides what-have-you, you're paying a fortune"

"I live in a flat, and exactly the same flat… in Jesmond… is £250,000 more. Now what the bloody hell do you want to spend it there for?"

"On the Quayside, you're getting a one bedroom flat for £120,000. You get a three bedroom semi for that where I live"

"You could bring a family up in there… there's nowhere for the kiddies to play… you wouldn't dare let them out the door!"

"The Byker Wall… the kiddies could play there. (the flats) are only two or three high and the kiddies could go to the centre circle and play. And it was a brilliant idea"

Now if you put (flats) around the town moor… you can wine and dine there, there's a bit more space"

"If they're paying rent, they don't worry about the house. But if they're buying it, they worry about (it). They're going to look after it"

"We have our Jewish community… (they're) just taking over. The normal person can't get the grant to do their places up – the Jewish community can"

"what makes the inner city is the shops"

"I would never associate council estates with the inner-city"

"its more shopping than housing"

"Newcastle has a bad name with all the drinking so it's a question of security…you cannot walk the streets late at night on your own"

"the city has expanded so much that the boundaries maybe different in 20 years and what we think as the city will be suburbia"

"the appearance of a building should look good just look at grey street"

"a building shouldn't stand out it should fit in with the area"

"St.Cuthberts village had prefabricated rather than bricks and then they knocked the thing down. They thought they could do it on the cheap but they ended up being knocked down"

"a home only becomes an investment if you can sell it"

"initially its just a home rather than an investment"

"the difference is that some people want a home and some people want a house. Those that want a home stay and raise a family those that don't sell on."

"in a council estate you get the impression because they don't own it they don't care about the property and don't look after it"

"unless you can change people you cannot change the perception of the estates"

"media stigmatise the estates…they play devils advocate"

"it a lottery of people put in these places and it doesn't work they just let in anyone"

"if an area looks neglected your not going to live there"

"I'd rather live in a smaller house in a better area because of the social problems."

"we all don't know what ahead of us, especially when you get to our age so I guess it is an important consideration to have a building that might adapt to the needs of a person"

"To me space is important, older houses with higher ceilings make you feel like you've got more space"

"history makes character, when you look at Grey street although for me it more the view I love the view its worth more than the house"

"when you think about it there isn't much character in suburbia"

"Dense housing"

"You think of Elswick and Benwell"

"You're only down the road from me and I'm classing myself as inner-city and you're classing yourself as not"

"It's bandied around all over the place, inner city deprivation"

"To me inner city means in the city limits"

"I like living where I live because you're close… to the amenities, you're close to coming into town. I couldn't live out it would drive me batty. The schools are just round the corner, everything's close at hand, it's what I like"

"The term seems to suggest social deprivation to me"

"I lived in the Byker Wall… I remember going to live there, and thinking it's going to be a dreadful place, and it was amazing – I mean there was gardens there, they didn't smash things anymore… It was a massive difference and the people actually liked it… They just moved a whole street into the wall… The community stayed where it was"

"You can take the people out of the slum but you can't take the slum out of the people"

"People buy them up to rent them out for student accommodation, and then the local people who used to enjoy living there… move out and it's a sort of downward spiral"

"Easy access to the city. That's why they have the inner city, so that people can have easy access to work or shop"

"In Jesmond, although there is houses with big gardens, they're way out of the reach of young families. That's why the people move out (to the suburbs)"

"We used to have a lovely, old terraced house in Heaton. And it was only a small street but we were all young families. And we were static – no one moved out of that little street for years until the children were all grown up and then we decided we'd best move out somewhere"

"I regret leaving Heaton – I wish I could go back but the prices have gone up so much I can't afford to go back"

City Centre

"The words that go with inner-city are slum, trouble, bother, and whatever, whereas city centre is shops and things"

"I'd rather live in the city centre than these tower blocks"

"The majority of these modern houses are only small"

"They stay there (in the city centre apartments) – they eat there, they drink there, they sleep, and then they're out – but we live in our houses and our gardens"

"your city centre is your shops and leisure"

"I wouldn't aspire to live there…the crowds during the day and then it's deserted at night"

"you cannot have a 24hour city there comes a time when everyone's had enough"

"I think I could live in Grey street…to get people to live there you have to have good public transport"

"I'd feel like I was penned in if I lived in the City Centre"

"you have less space and privacy being in the city centre…like being in prison"

"I don't see the city centre as being safer than the suburbs…in suburbia everyone knows everyone and looks after them whereas in the city there's too many people and you cannot get to know them"

"I think its snob value to think that living in the city is stylish"

"the marketing to me seems aimed at younger people I don't know if its meant to but it does to me"

"familiar faces help make a community…you go to a pub in your local in suburbia you know everyone, you go to a pub in the city and you don't know a single person"

"city centre isn't permanent, lots of students who are going to go elsewhere"

"Suburbia has a community advantage over the city"

"I personally feel we shouldn't build anymore high-rise"

"you cannot compare Montague to high rise in Dunston as its private and at a better quality and a different way of life"

"If you walk around the city wall, you can say this is the city centre"

"It's not children friendly… there's nowhere for them to play"

"There is old people living in the city"

"Although my Grandmother isn't around any more, she'd love to have lived in the city so she could nip out to go shopping in Fenwicks and Bainbridges"

"If I was young I'd like to live in the city centre simply for the lifestyle and for people that you meet and for the places to go, but also as you get older… and you become lonely, the city centre might be a nice place to move back to because you can end up with a greater opportunity to meet people and do things"

"That is part of our cultural problem…because of all this worry and because of the car, we don't walk about… it creates a situation where the young people, who are the only people walking about because they can't afford anything else, take charge (of the streets)"

"One of the bad things in the city is pollution – if you walk down Percy Street you can taste it"

"I drive my car to town, never get the bus… and I'll complain about paying two or three pound to park, when I should get a bus for 50p"

"You know which school you want your child to attend, so therefore you always look in that surrounding area, you always buy around the schools"

"If you work in the city it would be wonderful"

"There seems to be an expense associated with living in the city centre, but if you had everything available like your work and your social life, you could make savings in that you wouldn't need to pay for a car or transport, which will balance it all out"

"What puts me off moving into the city is the prices of the apartments"

"I think sometimes you just look for what your parents have done. My parents bought their house and to me I never even thought of renting somewhere. It was a natural thing that I was going to buy a house… I just wouldn't think of doing anything else"

"Too many people are always trying to go that bit higher, and sometimes it doesn't work. And they end up in difficulty. Yes, it's nice if you can do it, but you've also go to be aware of the financial implications. I work at a bank and that's what I see. I see people that come in and you think 'don't borrow that sort of money because you're dropping yourself in it' and they want more than what you're prepared to give them"

"young single people, possibly married people live in the city centre"

"I've always fancied one of those Quayside apartments, if I won the lottery I've always said I'd buy a place there"

"maybe it's the cost that just puts me off from living there"

"Even flats and things in the city is quite expensive"

"I've never had a desire to live in the city because I've grown up with what I know"

"its not suitable for families but if I didn't have a family I would definitely live there"

"I live in a cul-de-sac and I can open the door and let my kids out and play and not worry like I would in Newcastle…I'd much rather have that than have to take them all the way to a park."

"I lived in a 2 bed terrace and as soon as I was going to have kids I said I wanted to have a larger house and a garden"

"could you live in the city?"

"I don't think crime in the city centre is worse that in the suburbs"

"I wouldn't want a view out on to a main street, its not what I'm used to"

"If you have kids I cannot see any reason for living in the city"

"I live in a terraced street and there's virtually no kids there and maybe that's because they have nowhere to play."

"but we used to live in terraces with big families its just different now, a change in state of mind…I wouldn't want to go back to where I lived back then."

"we don't let kids breathe"

"you don't get that sense of community in the city, that sense that everyone is looking out for everyone else."

"where I live the stretch of road is about a mile long and I only know a few of the people in the street, the high fences separate where we live…I feel isolated"

"I know a family that live there, and I was surprised that they lived there, on St Thomas St leading up to the RVI, I couldn't live there"

"I think it would be fabulous to live in the city centre, in a different situation, if you were a young couple, especially now. If everything's on your doorstep, you don't need a car…"

"If I was 41 and single, or married, and a business woman or career woman with no children, I would definitely settle for one of the pads in Newcastle"

"If I was to start a family, I would definitely be thinking if I was sitting on top of smog and the busy-ness, and the crime, there's no schools, I'd have to be travelling out all the time"

"I would imagine if you lived in one of those and you had children you'd want to move out"

"I don't know how they would cope with the noise and things on an evening!"

"You want to retire somewhere quiet"

"Everything's on your doorstep"

"On a Friday night you wouldn't pop down the town to see somebody would you?"

"I know I'd be quite worried coming home (late at night)"

"If you provide a big enough range of services, and friends and neighbours, in any particular area you can make it attractive and useful for anyone, but you can't do that. The effort to provide that within the city centre, just to try and attract elderly people, who probably wouldn't be interested"

"I can't think of any old people I know who would want to live in the city centre"

"It's each person to their own. I mean, to be truthful, it wouldn't be any worse me living in Newcastle to where I'm living now. But I'd have more services, I'd be able to nip across Eldon Square, do a bit of shopping"

"I think the crimes are getting less, but more horrid"

"You hear more about killings, stabbings, guns, knifes, and that sort of thing"

"When I lived in the city centre, I lived there for six years, and I really loved it, I loved living in the city centre. But when I had my first baby it was just inconvenient, it wasn't easy at all. And I couldn't imagine living in the city centre now with three children"

"I class myself as living in the city, living in Jesmond, I know it's not the city centre but it's very, very close, you can walk into town. I feel far enough out to call myself living in the suburbs"

"I don't think the city's a place for children"

"I think there's a safety aspect that's much bigger now"

"Where we live it's becoming like a little town, because we've got Tesco, we've got an industrial estate, so you think you've moved out but everything's stretching further and further"

"I said to you I aspire to live in the countryside, but then there's lots of aspects I don't want, having to ferry the children into educational things and to see friends, so you feel that if you're on the edge of the suburbs you get the best of both worlds"

"Most people can't afford to live in the city now"

"If you just taxed people and public transport was free it would just make everyone's life so much easier"

"To get from Jesmond it was costing me four pound on public transport, and well really it's still just cheaper to go by car, there's no real incentive. And then if you've got a family… it's just expensive"

"I think that's a major problem with some suburban life that if you don't have a car you rely upon public transport which is very poor in some areas"

"I think when you live on a council estate, council tenants can change quite a lot, and you've got to be hoping that your neighbours are nice"

"I'm not poor or anything, I'm middle-class, or working class, but I wouldn't mind if there was a poor person living next door to me, as long as they weren't harassing, and were toeing the line, not dealing drugs"

"Well I think I know our neighbours because on our street there's actually nine children, there's only two houses that don't have children, and I think when you have children that's when, even when you don't want to, you've got to know who lives in the houses"

"Just going back to community, we could probably say that Tescos (in Kingston Park) is our community because when you go into Tescos there's always somebody. With the boys going to school on the estate… we see parents there now that our children went to school with their children"

"I think that what you can afford is slightly bigger in the suburbs than in the city"

"We've got a sports centre, but I still wouldn't let my kids go round to the sports centre because it's surrounded by bushes and you've got all the young teenagers doing drinks and drugs and glue-sniffing"

"There's probably been the same amount of attacks in the 60s and 70s, but it's in the news more now… people are a lot more aware because it's on the front page of The Chronicle"

"One case for me is the traffic, more than anything is still the traffic… but you still get cars bombing along at 35mph, forty, which is still fast if you've kids playing on the street, and that becomes a worry, all the time… my son's ten now, eleven, and he can finally go out and play on his bike, but until then it was too scary"

"Well with having my school in Jesmond, the traffic's hideous first thing in the morning, and I've spoken to the councillor about taking the children to school and her response was why don't you walk them to school? And I think sometimes they're just not listening to everybody… I couldn't walk the children to school and then get to work"

"About half a mile to three quarters of a mile around Eldon Square"

"Well it used to be where the Newgate Street stores used to be… that was classed as the middle of the town, then, but I don't know where it is now because they've changed all that"

"The likes of a young family wouldn't want to be living in the city centre, they'd pick suburbia"

"They're for the younger generation – if they're working in the town they'll want to live in the town"

"If I could get a nice house in the city centre where I had a garden and some space for my grand-children – but where are you going to get that in the city centre, they're all high-rise flats. I like the city centre"

"When we lived in the town centre there was no gardens, you lived in three-storey townhouses… and we lived in them for years. There was one couple on bottom, one family in the middle, and one family on the top, and when we moved away we had a garden, and it was marvellous to have a little bit of grass"

"If you had a nice house with a little bit of garden I'd move back to the town"

"Where the housing's got more space, more room"

"I think the planners have a lot to do with changing the suburbs. You get big, detached mansions… with big grounds around them. The people who's living in them can't keep up the maintenance on them, so they sell the property, a builder buys it and then he sticks multi-storey masonettes on it and just swamps the whole area, and he's taken the green completely away"

"There should be a limit to the amount of green they can take away"

"I think age changes where you want to live"

"I don't think it'd be healthy for children with all the pollution, you couldn't open your window"

"Osborne Rd…it looks a very vibrate area, with the trees and the lights, but for the people that actually live there it must be awful"

"The city centre generally, especially the west part of the immediate centre, has improved"

"I think if you do get a mix of housing, right from expensive private housing, right to what the sort of young people, young families look for, you get more chance of a community"

"If you get good quality private housing, and you mix it with absentee landlord-type properties, plus council properties, the people with private properties are going to have the value of their properties lowered, so they're not going to want to do that"

"It's where the immigrant population comes in as well. You see some of the houses, the brickwork's painted bright blue and things like that. Just imagine if you lived next door. So you move, and another one (immigrant family) comes in. You see that's why you get bigger populations of them all together"

"I think it's like that up in Fenham now, and that used to be quite nice in Fenham, but it's all Indian now"

"Really it boils down to a bad tenant, a tenant who just doesn't care. It's not his property and therefore he doesn't care. And he doesn't care what the environment he lives in. If he lived in the Bronx he'd be happy"

"What you need is a nosey-parker in each street. And that's why I like to live in a neighbourhood that is predominantly of an age group. I think a community should have a good mix because older people help younger people… I like to have a mix"

"city is Northumberland street, Grainger street etc…everything out of that immediate circle is inner city"

"anything outside the shops"

"inner city is the shops"

"I even class Sandyford behind the civic centre as inner-city"

"where you live is your mentality, where you perceive places as being…some people might think differently to me and think where I live is the sticks"

"where you come from is home – my friend has lived here for 60 years but when's she's asked where home she says London, she's lived here for 60 years!"

"things change though, and what you want changes"

"I was shown plans of a house we quite liked but couldn't see what it looked like so they said told us to go and look at the ones next to the Freeman…the house was £60,000 more expensive for exactly the same because it was in the city"

"difference between cramming and higher density…Multi-storeys are tiny"

"some council houses have massive gardens and they are poorly looked after. You cannot win, people complain when they don't get given a garden and then when they do"

" is totally tasteless an soulless"

"Im sure if we were all given £5million today we'd all pick a different house…Im not even sure if I'd move as I'm happy with my multi-storey."

"The Mills building and 55 degrees north are tiny spaces…the lobby is great but as for the rooms."

City Housing

High Rise and Tower Blocks

"I cannot think that the architect (of the Dunston Rocket) has given thought into where he's put it? But if that was put built… on the edge of the town moor, that would go"

"If they were secure, and you had privacy, they would go"

"They were a good idea in theory, but with the height, you felt lonely"

"If it's man managed, it'd work"

"If you felt safe, you wouldn't mind living in those tower blocks"

"I don't think there's community anywhere these days… you keep yourself to yourself these days"

"I bet the designer wouldn't like to live in that"

"You're just like battery hens in there aren't you?"

"My friend had one, and someone used to urinate in the lift every morning, or evening when they went to lift"

"I think it depends where it is. Montague Court is in the middle of a private estate, and it's stereotypical, you're not going to have unemployed people there are you"

"Some of these towerblocks are nice though. The in-laws live in one, and the council put all the same type of people in. Most of the people that go in are over 50, and they're tear-aways, they're not drunks, they just put nice people in"

"I'll give you an example - Regent Court in Gateshead, the average (age) is between the 50s, 50's and 70s, never have a problem, that is a very successful block in Gateshead"

"Well it is in a way (a matter of management) because it's managed by the council and they obviously rent it to that age group and it obviously works, so it's down to management"

"Do you think if they changed the tenancy agreement and defined it more, do you think that would be better?"

"The child-friendly decks sound like a good idea… I mean if you did work in the city and you really want to live in the city and you don't drive or you haven't got access to transport… it sounds like a good idea"

"So it would have to be someone child-orientatied that was going to design these levels"

"I like the idea of the every fifth floor thing, because if they're securely managed your kids can't get out, and people can't get in, so it's got to be good"

"It (the Dunston Tower) still looks like an office block and it'll never look like anything other than an office block!"

"the rocket is horrendous"

"at my age away from the kids, secure, safe in my multi-storey flat is fine"

"the corridors are massive and the other spaces are tiny"

"you've got one door, no pets, no drying area and everyone is putting up with everyone's noise…£50 is a disgrace when you could rent a flat for £40"

"skyzed with its mixed use would appeal to me definitely"

"it depends if the amenities were available to everyone or exclusively for the residents"

"if they were better managed and fitted with a concierge it would help"

"Cruddas Park is shocking…Cruddas Park will always be Crudas Park its hard to change that"

"sometimes you need to re-educate people"

"if you want the right type of person to live there you have to provide the right type of facilities for those people there"

"the environment has to be nicer…where you have shops you have rubbish"

"if its private it will work if you get a mix it just doesn't work"

"shared equity seems like a good idea, keeping the property right"

"They were very unpopular, the one's down in Cruddas Park, until they got security in. Now they've got security in they're genuinely safe places to be. They're quite popular, especially with elderly folk. And the views are brilliant"

"There's the Spinney in Heaton and that's fully sheltered, and that's 14 floors. And she never has a void"

"It's difficult to get broken into on the 5th floor"

"I would have to be totally destitute before I could go into a high-rise flat"

"I think it's the way we're brought up in this country. If you lived in somewhere like Hong Kong you automatically live in a high-rise block, you bring your children up in a high-rise block. It's what you're used to"

"I hate any sort of high-rise building"

"My lads would love it"

"My fifteen year old would live in something like that"

"You've got to put facilities with them"

"I don't think English people like living in apartments"

"It's like living in a hotel"

"If you built one of them, and in the bottom you had a nursery and shops and things at the bottom for the residents to use, I think it'd be a lot more attractive"

"It's been done on the cheap in this country"

"I think the stereotypical idea of a towerblock would look like the Dunston Rocket, so comparing that to (these new examples), it's a completely different concept"

"We just spend such a lot of time in the garden or in the conservatory, and I think, would I not get fed up of that same floor?"

"I can see St Mary's Lighthouse from there… I'm on the 18th (floor)... But looking the other way I can even see when the Eye (the Millennium Bridge) opens. You know it's just amazing. (I can see) as far as Penshaw Monument in Co. Durham"

"Around it you've got plenty of open space, at the base. That's the nice bit about it. And like this one here, with gardens and things to walk around in. It's set in a pleasant situation, it's not concrete garages all the way round the bottom. And I think that's the attraction"

"I don't think any tall building like that looks pleasant. There's not aesthetically pleasing"

"It's a very efficient way of housing a lot of people in a relatively small area"

"Even if I thought it looked ugly from the outside, if I was happy with the inside and where it was, I'd live there"

"They're not suitable for families are they"

Conversions

"If you've got a good building, which is a landmark, like these old schools, they should be kept and used"

"Now *that's* the type of places you want"

"You've got that 55 North… looks bloody hideous, I'd hate to live there, but the Turnbull Building? I'd love to live there. It's given a bit of character, it's not just a block of glass, there's character it that building"

"Security. That's your main priority nowadays, security"

"I would think the location of the building would dictate what use it could be put to"

"55 North… when it was the BT building… I used to think why on earth did they build it, it was horrible… but now it's finished, I think it's looking quite smart and attractive"

"I wouldn't thank you for the Turnbull Building, or 55 North"

"I think it would be nice to have something of some kind of historical value"

"It's nice to go there (the city centre) for a visit, but living in it I think you'd be going out (of the centre whenever possible)"

"Princess Mary's Hospital? That's where my children were born! It is absolutely disgusting that somebody would convert the hospital like that! I find that ghastly"

"Would it not be more cost-effective to demolish and rebuild?"

"But what do you rebuild with though?"

"I don't think that's a bad building actually. If you take away the steel fencing, and the security cameras, and the scaffolding"

"These teenage kids… they're gonna grow up and they want houses like this, they want trendy house. They don't want old-fashioned type houses… A lot of the children now will probably love one of these houses when they're older"

"I don't think it necessarily has to be old to have character"

"You instantly feel part of a greater whole"

"In a building where you share walls ceilings and floors with other people it just multiplies your chance of having problems, potentially"

"Or you could look at it on the other foot, that it's an absolutely brilliant place to build a community"

"It wouldn't be for me to live in that"

"If I was to live in a flat I would probably prefer to live in a characterful conversion like the Wills Building than some anonymous purpose built building"

"I agree with yourself, if you had to live in a maisonette-type thing, or high-rise at all, I would rather live in a building that has character, and a bit of history to it"

"However brilliant it (55º North) is on the inside, really it doesn't enter my equation because I'm not going to live in it, I hate looking at it"

"55º North is always going to be the BT place. My husband worked there for BT, and it's offices and it'll always be offices"

"We're a bit like that with Wills because it's on our doorstep. That has something to do with it. I think if you asked my son, I mean he's 24, and he might love to live there. And he would love to live in Wills because he wasn't around when it was a cigarette factory"

"You have to sell them at the price the area will allow"

"I mean as you get older yes it's lovely to have gardens, for so long, but if you are looking to the future and are looking to stay in your own home for many years, it does get to a point where you can't do the garden.

So to have a communal area would be nice, and to be able to get in and out of town easier without driving and using public transport would be lovely"

"If you're saying to me would I want to move to Scotswood and live in the library, well no, because there isn't a library and I like having a library, it's that kind of thing"

"The Westgate school… might turn out to be beautiful, but which one of us here would take the risk to move there?"

"Why can't they modernise it as a school again?"

"But surely there's more to life than just being a person who's forever making a profit from buildings? We're just a nation where you're thinking about how can I make a profit on the housing… should I have a second home, should I have a property to let?"

"Swan house? Just the noise… I just would hate to be there, and the constant traffic stopping and starting around there"

"What I fear is that we'll finish up living in something that resembles a shopping mall where you could be in any town, any city in the country. Every area has its own individual style. Now I accept we're not going to stick to them, we have to move forward but we have to keep something to go with it"

"I think the Wills (Building) is a first class example, beautiful"

"A lot of these buildings are landmarks, people get directions from them, all kinds of things. They're part of the community, and part of the town, the city"

"I think it was worth getting rid of Swan house. It's an eyesore"

"Well every conversion that's been done, whether it be St Nicholas's Hospital or 55 Degrees North, they're all occupied, they're all sold and gone… So it works, when done correctly, at a cost"

"If you're doing a conversion like that, to me, you do it to a very high specification because of where these buildings are"

"Whoever took on Swan House, I they were absolutely stark raving barmy… I was the one that was wrong!"

"That's a completely different area, with different people in – you don't have the asylum seekers all along the road"

"Anyone that comes from Newcastle won't want to live there because they know the area"

"As a buyer, I wouldn't risk buying something there… I would need reassurance that that is then going to become a better area"

"The council's only after one thing – quick turnover of money"

"I think its wonderful how we can convert these existing buildings"

"communal space is a good idea"

"I have high fences so it defines my space…I could go nude if I wanted"

"I think having your own space is important…even if its just a small garden"

"I certainly could live in a converted building"

"disused warehouses in less desirable places even if it was cheaper depends on who lives there"

"again it comes down to location,location,location…you could put Buckingham Palace in there and no-one will buy them."

"I think its about investment which will lead to rise in value"

"if you offer security at Westgate School conversion then yes I could live there"

"Its difficult, by making it more attractive in this run-down area you are going to be more prone to people wanting to break in"

"I thinks its hard to attract someone to an area which is overheated with one particular culture"

"different cultures, their should be a mix it should work but it doesn't work"

"not really many examples of gated communities in Britain but security does make a difference"

Sustainable housing and self-build

"I can't see why they're not using them more, these (wind turbines). I think every house should have one"

"Why aren't they selling them (solar panels) to the likes of me?"

"They're (sustainable homes) not being promoted, therefore the general public don't know about them"

"They're more popular abroad… than they are here, because they don't push them"

"The price is limiting at the moment"

"If it was Persimmons or Wimpeys, and they said we're building these new houses… and all our houses have solar panels. And they will give you the benefits"

"I would prefer something that looks like a house and not a goldfish bowl"

"I think that one (the Bedzed) looks quite attractive now"

"It would be difficult to get the full benefits in a conventional (style) house"

"I would have my roof done like that tomorrow"

"We've got to think of the future"

"I would be interested in that"

"If it's saving using up the energy and the earth's resources which is what everyone's keeping going on about… then it's got to be a good thing"

"That is as trendy as your 55º North"

"My living (style) is my privacy, and that to me is not privacy. To me it is a different concept altogether of living"

"Depends how quickly you got your extra investment back"

"yeah I'd live in Bedzed housing"

"if they-re cheap I would live there"

"I'm sure we don't have enough light here…we bought a solar panelled fountain and it didn't work even though we were reassured it would"

"you could make some look more traditional rather than so different"

"if the bills long term are cheaper I would"

"I like the open plan idea"

"really?? £30,000 (for an earthship)…I'll have one"

"It would attract people because there are a lot of people who are green"

"You may have a problem with the elderly population or the over 55's with that, because they're not that… green"

"I think a lot of it is going to hinge on how it looks when you're selling it. If you're selling it and it looks like a house people are going to buy it. If it looks like it fell out of Star Trek then, you might get problems"

"Sometimes the 'wow factor' for me, I've some of them ones on the telly… and they're all, nearly all eco ones, and I think I could live there"

"We've all got children, and children, and children coming up"

"If its running costs were sufficiently improved then you'd look at the whole equation and not just the purchase price, but what it's going to cost you year on year"

"You know when you understand this all, it's so impressive that you just think, why hasn't Tony Blair just come out and said 'Look yous, no more building like that, you're going to build like this in future' because this is best for everybody"

"People should be educated in this… The kids… on environmental alone they should be brought up and educated on this"

"My girlfriend's dream is to get a plot of land and build a wooden house, so it's a shame she couldn't come tonight"

"Can people see into your house with all this glass?"

"You'd be saving on the fuel bills"

"It's certainly the way forward isn't it?"

"I can never understand why the houses aren't automatically insulated so well, that the wind doesn't come through"

"(Not having central heating) would save us £100 a month, so we would be interested!"

"It would appeal to me, but there's too many questions, I would be frightened that, am I going to be so hot in the summer, and am I going to be so cold during the winter"

"I think a lot of people would be sceptical"

"You could do that with most housing, you could put them on the roof, those solar panels"

"The initial cost is going to be dearer than building normal houses like we live in now, obviously, but you're going to end up with something that'll last a lot longer"

"We all agree that we can't keep using the world's resources at the rate we do, so if you're gonna build these houses you may as well build them now"

"I'm too old to start with all that now"

"Fossil fuels aren't going to last forever, so this technology's got to be developed somehow"

"I would think the potential is there, but the initial program should be small units of them"

"Well that to me just looks like a converted factory"

"I think they should be done as individuals (detached) to start with"

"I would never enter into a house looking like that. I mean look at the things on the roof"

"What's wrong with the traditional house? It's been proven that it's a thing, a traditional house. Why not build more traditional houses at affordable things. Rather than going for all these new styles and all that"

"I think they look okay"

Town House and terraces

"If the council could clear everyone out, gut them, and get them all done, and once they're all done it's up to the council to put the proper type of people back"

"Once you get rid of the anti-social neighbours, the likes of these houses would be ideal"

"You've got your own front door and your own yard. And nice big rooms"

"My daughter had to stay with some friends who live in a terrace house… and they could tell everything that was happening next door all the time, day or night. The walls were just not killing the sound"

"I live in a terraced house, and I see no problem with it, but who are you trying to attract back?"

"As people have moved out of these to the suburbs… people will be saying 'I prefer to stay in the suburbs now'"

"People won't go back into them because of the reputation of the area… knock them down"

"(If you knock them down) it's just going to be something else in Elswick… it's not necessarily just about the housing, because you're still going to have the same problem"

"Right, Cowgate – they did wonders with the housing, they were beautiful. It is absolutely diabolical (now)."

"You've always got repairs (in an old property)… Who would live in an old property and who would live in a more modern one when you can pay the same for both?"

"Because of the reputation of the area you're asking people to take a big risk"

"You're not going to turn the area around until you've got enough people to begin to turn the local schools around etc. So is there some kind of way of giving people an incentive to take a risk on it"

"That's a waste really knocking down all those, isn't it, if they're all structurally sound!

"Bleach Green… They were talking at the last Viewpoint meeting I went to, it was about Pathfinder. They were talking about this, where they'd knocked a group of these down, and built these, and they were quite popular"

"I think personally if my circumstances changed and I couldn't afford to live where I live now, and I could afford a five-bedroom house like that in Walker, which would give me loads more room, I would seriously consider it. As opposed to downgrading into a smaller, tinier house with no room in the area I live now"

"What I didn't like about a lot of these is back lanes though, back lanes are normally just horrible. They're full of dogs dirt, rubbish, the wheelie bin tends to get left out"

"I like the idea of this idea of the living room up the stairs, I think it's a great idea"

"Is changing the interior really going to achieve what you're after?"

"It would have to be low cost to get people in"

"I have a feeling that to turn it around you need to create a big enough scheme that can have an identity of its own, where you can show that it's got amenities design for it, that safety and security have been thought about and it's got CCTV or police on the beat or whatever. But that it overcomes the prejudices that you'd associate with the area"

"In another three years I'm looking for a new job, because I do not rate the schools in that area"

"I'd be very tempted to buy one of those properties without the back lanes though, because back lanes means rats to me"

"It'd be more appealing if you got rid of cars as well"

"I think we need to have things for teenagers… as soon as they get older, what do they do?"

"I would gladly live in that"

"It is ideal… but it comes back to the old lady next door or the family next door have got the television on loud or playing their records, you're going to be very unhappy"

"It's money, it comes down to what people afford"

"I think if you're looking to sell them for £30,000 you'll have no problem"

"I think there's more to it than just the design of the houses. Anyone who knows the Northbourne St area will know that there's a lot of problem families and a lot of crime, and a lot of other things that would affect your choice, not just the value for money of that property"

"If you bring them up to modern standards you've still got something with a bit of character, big rooms, high ceilings, but you've got the other side of that, of drafty windows and creaky floors"

"Is it cost effective? To do all that to these houses when you could pull them down and build new ones?"

"Pull them down and rebuild them"

"There's no easy answer"

"In Lemington… they could have pulled them houses down and built new ones, desirable properties, but they didn't"

"I'm biased, I like terraces"

"The older terraced houses are very well built, you don't have the noise from your neighbours and things that you get in modern houses"

"There's no point in (regenerating) one row, and then the next three streets are still empty"

"depends where the terraces are"

"if you turned them into large family houses I'd be interested."

"I think visually those along in Elswick are impressive"

"to convince me to live there you'd have to make it low rent".

"Security-wise the terraces are bleak"

"converting a terrace into a 3 bedroom with a garden would be appealing"

"terraces with backs to front where you have your parking in the alley would be useful"

"depends on the people, if they were private they could be beautiful"

"having it privately means that it will be better looked after."

"I see where I live as an investment and you look after it…if your renting maybe you don't"

"this terraced housing is a link to our past, very northern unlike the Swedish housing for example"

"I'd have to be desperate to live here"

"what does the area offer…this area doesn't offer me anything, supermarkets etc"

"I'd live here if it was secure"

"Benwell is being taken over by refugees and Asian people…the white people there are becoming very hostile about the situation"

"the area where I live in Sunderland a lot of Asian and Bangladeshis have moved in and its true that a lot of white people have moved out…people are jumping ship and its affecting the market value of the housing there"

"for a first time buyer this type of housing would be good, it gets them on the property ladder"

"I don't want to live next door to somewhere which is boarded up"

"in Sunderland they have a good/bad tenant points system where you pay more if your bad and less if your good"

"its about building community spirit"

New Housing Estates

"I prefer a design where the housing has a certain uniform nature"

"I don't like to be the same as everyone, I like to be different"

"If it's new build I could go for something that looks completely different, and incorporates lots of these environmentally friendly things, like solar panels, stuff like that"

"It kind of feels a bit fake… I like the oldie-worldy look when they're genuine, but I don't like it when they're new houses made to look like old cottages"

"But do you not think that's more suitable to the area anyway, because of the area? I mean why not draw from what are the natural resources (architecturally), even if it isn't, but it looks like it?"

"Within reason that (Staithes South Bank) looks reasonably safe to let you kids play in"

"You've got to think of ethnic minorities… in trying to sort of like build houses for these groups and then merge them together with the traditional, stereotype British community, although you're trying to look towards integration, it's forced rather than natural"

"The ones that own (their homes) you would reasonably expect would have a genuine interest in keeping the community fairly good. The ones that are part-own and part-rent would also be the same, because at the end of the day they're aspiring to buy it anyway. And then the ones that are in social (housing) are the ones that, with all due respect, you can't find a house for so you've just fired them in there anyway… so they might not have the same commitment"

"We have a mixed tennanture (sic). I live in rented accommodation, I live in a housing association house, there are some people that have bought, and some people that are on social security and the government pay housing benefit. And to be perfectly fair the houses are upkept, you know, the people on social security have intermingled with the people that are working, that own the houses, and they look up to them. And they've kept the houses, and there's a big community spirit"

"I didn't know that the people next to me didn't own their own property, it's something that's kept personal. But the people that are on social security and get their rent pay via housing benefit things don't cause any problems, they never have done"

"I've never seen a new housing estate yet where they can't sell the houses, people want new houses"

"They're (the NGP) just little boxes"

"They're too close together"

"Don't build on greenbelt, that's the first thing"

"They look a bit like a revamped council (house)"

"Of all those ones I'd go for the Amsterdam ones because they've got character"

"A Victorian-style house built in the 60s or the 80s doesn't look like a Victorian house, it looks like a house built in the 60s or the 80s"

"They've missed something out"

"If I was going to buy a new house it would an eco-friendly one or a modern design. I love old property, I would love a castle somewhere"

"I would seriously consider moving to a place like that"

"It's designed to make people communicate with each other, which is a good thing"

"I just don't like a load of regulations, I never have. I mean I agree that people should use public transport, but I wouldn't want to be told I have to. I would object to that"

"My criticism of that development (Staithes South Bank) would be why put the high flats on the water's edge and put the houses inside them? Why not do it the opposite way round, and that way everyone gets a view of the river?"

"I know Persimmon built an estate next to where to where my Mam lived, and it was horrible. When it was first built it was soulless, it had no character to it. That was about ten, fifteen years ago, it has over time, trees have grown, and it has improved. But that first impression of the new estate, it just didn't have anything nice you could say about it"

"I don't like flat-roofed houses… it wouldn't work here"

"It's funny, I'm looking at all these (picture examples) and I'm thinking if you said you could have any one of them which one would you chose, and I'm think I wouldn't wanna chose any"

"Why do they have it mixed? Why do they have people without children there? Because in my experience people who have children that have grown up and left don't want the noise of the other children… I know when I've looked for houses I've always avoided streets with bungalows one side and houses on the other because I think, oh, bungalows – there's going to be older people without children living there and they don't want to live beside people with children"

"It's nice to see someone trying to do something different, as opposed to exactly the same looking houses on estates all round the country at least it's something different"

"I think as well as looking at the outside, you've got to know that you've got the size (internally)"

"They look like doll's houses to me"

"I hate the Great Park, personally. It just looks horrible, the houses are really, really close together. I couldn't afford to live there anyway but if I could I wouldn't want to live there"

"What are they going to do for shops and things like that, it (the Great Park) just seems like this massive sprawl of housing"

"You just feel caged in, I'd just hate to live there"

"I think that's quite good (the architecture in the Great Park), that appeals more to me than your boxy, average Barratt-house, with your little garage on the side. I mean it looks a bit like a farmhouse if you cut the houses around it out. So the style's quite nice. And they do have a mixture as well because they have the townhouses etc"

"It's nice to see a variety of styles"

"I think the younger you are the more you'll accept (new styles)"

"I think the Staiths housing looks rather nice"

"I'm worried that in 20 years it might be out of date…I mean look at Byker Wall some people like it some don't"

"one car per house doesn't work"

"people don't work next door, they need a car to help pay for their mortgage"

"the Swedish style worries me. They look ok now but I feel they will age in time"

"look at the civic centre, that still ages well and it was very modern at the time it was built"

"I don't think its realistic to think that you can have one car per household. Im a teacher and I have pills of work to mark and theirs no way I could get on the bus with all of them"

"The bypass is horrific…the local authority have to get it together and provide a cheap bus service that is going to make people leave there car home"

"if you work in the town you'd think that the best way to get into the town is by bus"

"I would be happy to live in this type of housing"

"I wouldn't live in the Gosforth one, with stairs like that"

Self-completion questionnaire

	Agree strongly	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Disagree strongly	Don't know
Living in cities means you have less space in your home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
More people want to live in cities than ever before	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Suburbs are as stylish as the city	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Living in a city means you've got everything on your doorstep	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cities are a more dangerous place to live than the suburbs or the countryside	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cities have become better places to live in recent years	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The quality of housing in cities is the same as in suburbs or the countryside	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Living in the city is more convenient than living in the suburbs or in the countryside	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Living in cities means you live too close to your neighbours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Living in the city is more exciting than living outside the city	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are areas of every city that will always be unsafe and undesirable to live in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Despite the idea of mixed communities, people will never happily live next to people of a much lower income and social status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is important to have shops within a short walking distance of home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When available, good public transport is favourable to driving to work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Housing without off-road parking and/or a garage is simply not attractive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Terraced housing is too high density for the lifestyle people aspire to	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sustainability in housing is genuinely something worth paying extra for	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Converted warehouse living is expensive and impractical for most people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Modern, contemporary style housing is more appealing than more traditional styles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Environmentally sustainable housing should have its own distinct architectural style	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Apartments cannot provide the lifestyle I aspire to	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It isn't important to have a private garden as long as there is attractive public open space nearby	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
High-rise housing is a housing choice of last resort	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

% Agree (aggregated 'agree strongly' and 'tend to agree' responses after citizen workshop)
The workshops in London, Bristol and Manchester were undertaken November 1998 and the comparative workshops
in Newcastle Gateshead were undertaken October 2003.

Newcastle Gateshead

London

Bristol

Manchester
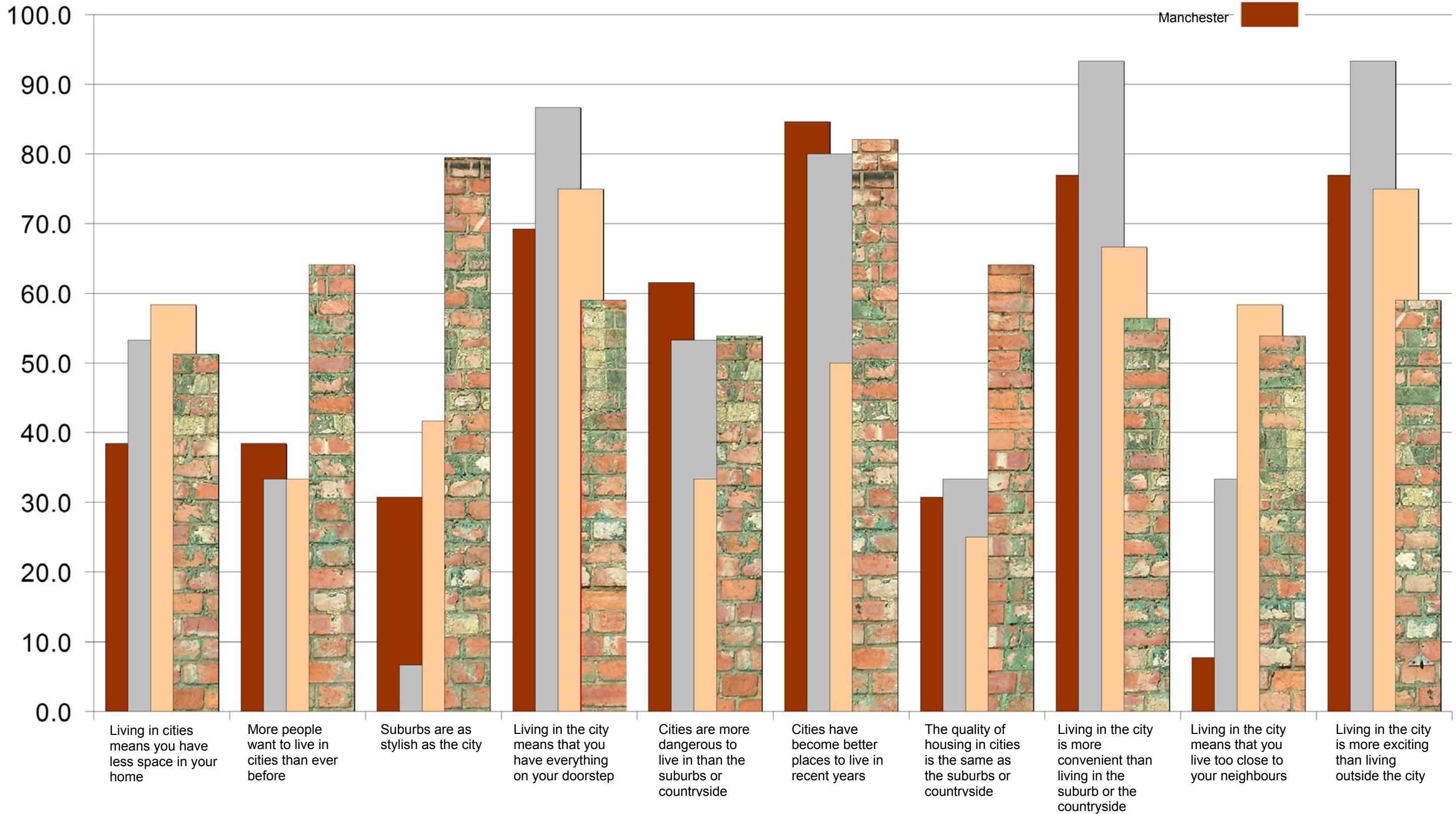
Suggested approach for undertaking a qualitative trend analysis of recent housing completions in Newcastle

The criteria for selecting sites for analysis is that they were made a significant contribution to completions within the identified year. All sites of 5 units and above or sites over 0.2 hectares should be identified and included for analysis.

The criteria for critiquing and analysis of these housing completions should be been based on an understanding of existing policy definitions of design quality. In every case, it is impossible to remove subjective judgement from an analysis but the establishment of a fixed set of criteria does allow for a consistent and comparative approach.

The nucleus of a definition of good urban design is contained within the publication 'By Design'[211], in the form of a checklist of criteria. Good design has character (understood as a place with its own identity); continuity and enclosure (where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished); a quality public realm (attractive and successful outdoor areas); ease of movement (easy to get to and move through); is legible (a clear image and is easy to understand); is adaptable (that can change easily); is diverse (variety and choice).

More recently, a companion guide to PPG3 (Planning Guidance Note 3: Housing) sets out the qualitative intentions behind the guidance which is explicitly described as a document that "… demands a step-change in quality required to break the mould of mediocrity that has characterised so much new housing development"[212]. It lists the multiple attributes of successful housing (compliant with current aspirations within PPG3) as a checklist of movement, mix, community, structure, layout, place, amenity, parking, safety, adaptability, maintenance, sustainability and detail. It also explicitly refers to terraced forms of development within Jesmond as examples of successful housing areas in the north of England.

Another governmental endorsed approach has established the criteria used for consistent evaluation of good housing design. Factors to be considered within any overall evaluation of good housing design include; (i) the relationship to surroundings and neighbourhood; (ii) the design response to site constraints and opportunities; (iii) the approach to layout, grouping and landscaping; (iv) the planning of roads and footpaths; (v) the detailed handling of garages and car parking; (vi) the attention given to safety, security and accessibility; (vii) the scheme's external appearance and internal planning; (viii) the sustainability in construction; and (ix) the finishes, detailing and workmanship.[213]

Attempts have been made to value the importance of design and urban design in new developments, including new housing development, in a series of reports from CABE. Although this has also been questioned regarding the range of criteria chosen to evaluate development schemes[214]. The interest in residential development has precipitated an additional study addressing the value of housing design and layout[215]. More recently, the 'Building for Life Standard'[216] has been established as a national standard for housing and neighbourhoods awarded to new housing projects that demonstrate a commitment to high design standards and good place making. The criteria for the evaluation of housing quality is based around

[211] p15 in DETR and CABE (2000) *By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System – Towards Better Practice* (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions and Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, London).
[212] p2 in Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions and CABE (2001) *Better Places to Live: By Design – A companion guide to PPG3* (DTLR, London).
[213] This is the jointly agreed criteria from the National Housing Awards, supported by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minster with the National House Building Council, the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Royal Town Planning Institute.
[214] For examples, see Benjamin, Alison (2001) 'Space probe'. *Guardian* February 7 p8.
[215] This was in part an update of the work by FPD Savills and published as; Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and Office of the Deputy Prime Minster (2003) *The Value of Housing Design and Layout* (Thomas Telford, Tonbridge).

twenty questions and four broad themes relating to ***character*** (Does the scheme have an identity that you can easily sum up? Does the scheme feel like a "place" or "address" rather than housing? Does layout create street enclosure? Do public spaces feel safe and do visitors find layout easy to navigate? Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscaping or topography?); ***roads, parking and pedestrianisation*** (Does the building layout take priority over the roads and car-parking layout? Does layout promote use of the street by those not in cars? Is the car parking situated so as to support the street scene? Does scheme integrate with existing roads, paths and development? Are pedestrian routes overlooked?); ***design and construction*** (Is the design specific to the scheme? Is there appealing public amenity and is designed to be durable? Do buildings or spaces outperform statutory minima, such as Build Regulations? Has the scheme made use of advances in construction/technology? Can building spaces be remodelled easily or accommodate other uses?); and ***environment and community*** (Does the development have easy access to public transport? Has the development any features that reduce its environmental impact? Is there a range of tenure? Is there a range of accommodation? Does the development have features to help knit community?).

A suggested basis for consistent and comparative evaluation of recent housing developments within Newcastle is the demonstrable compliance with the quality and design requirements of PPG3[217] and it's supporting best practice guidance. This is as adapted from the above government housing and planning policy and government endorsed best-practice. Although there are many other academic and practical sources that have attempted to define what is meant by high quality housing development[218], this report has limited itself to those sources that have potential weight within the statutory planning system due to being directly policy-relevant and being produced and / or commissioned by government.

[216] A partnership between the House Builders Federation, CABE and the Civic Trust established in July 2003. (http://www.buildingforlife.org)
[217] Specifically as Para. 63 in Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *Planning Policy Guidance Note No.3:Housing (Stationary Office, London), states that "…* local planning authorities should reject poor design particularly where their decisions are supported by clear plan policies and adopted supplementary planning guidance … [and] … Applicants for planning permission for housing development should be able to ***demonstrate*** how they have taken account of the need for good layout and design and how their proposals reflect the guidance set out in this PPG." (my emphasis).
[218] This includes a specific 'frame of reference' for high quality urban design within Newcastle in Giddings, Bob (1996) 'Towards the urban restoration of Newcastle upon Tyne'. *Urban Design International* 1(3) pp 265-281.

Timetable of focus group discussions

All group discussions to be held at;
Central Square, Orchard Street, Newcastle upon Tyne

Monday 20th October, 5.30-9.00pm

Gateshead Group 1 (attendees 12-15 residents from a variety of areas and housing tenures within Gateshead – from households ***without*** children 0-16 year)

Wednesday 22th October, 5.30-9.00pm

Gateshead Group 2 (attendees 12-15 residents from a variety of areas and housing tenures within Gateshead – from households ***with*** children 0-16 year)

Thursday 23th October, 5.30-9.00pm

Newcastle Group 1 (attendees 12-15 residents from a variety of areas and housing tenures within Newcastle – from households ***without*** children 0-16 year)

Friday 24th October, 5.30-9.00pm

Newcastle Group 2(attendees 12-15 residents from a variety of areas and housing tenures within Newcastle – from households ***with*** children 0-16 year)

Dear sir/madam,

Housing choices - Where, what and why?

The University of Newcastle upon Tyne, along with Gateshead and Newcastle Councils, and the Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal program are undertaking a series of focus groups looking at urban living. We are interested in your views on a range of housing choices provided in the city.

We are arranging group discussions to take place over a single evening, and would look at where you choose and wish to live, and why. Your views would then contribute towards a larger piece of research currently being put together by Pathfinder.

> **Where – Central Square, Newcastle upon Tyne**
> **When – 6.00pm to 9.00pm, (insert date to match attached timetable)**

A more detailed rundown of the program for the evening is included with this letter. Detailed directions to the venue are also attached.

To compensate you for your time and travel expenses, you will be given a £50 high street voucher, and an optional buffet served between 5:30 and 6pm.

If you would be interested in participating, please contact Michael Crilly to confirm attendance.

> **Phone 0191 2778951**
> **Email michael.crilly@newcastle.gov.uk**

You will need to give your name, address, as well as answering the following question:

'would you would prefer to live in the city or the suburbs?'

You are also asked to complete and bring with you the questionnaire that accompanies this letter in advance of the group discussion.

We hope the discussions will be enjoyable and help to inform many of the decisions on providing new housing within the city.

Yours sincerely,

Programme of events

Central Square Building, Orchard Street, Newcastle
(nr. Central Station)

5:30pm – 6pm Buffet

A buffet will be provided at the venue for all participants who wish to attend.

6pm – 6:15pm Introduction

An opening talk to introduce the purpose of the discussion group, the outline programme with opportunities for questions.

6:15pm – 7:15pm Part 1 – City Living

Short presentation focusing on your perceptions of urban, inner city and suburban living.

This will lead into a group discussion on city living to look at people's views, both positive and negative, and your responses to the issues raised within the presentation.

7:15 – 7:30pm - Coffee break

7:30pm – 8:30pm Part 2 – City Housing

Presentation introducing the 'Pathfinder' project in Newcastle and Gateshead and particular housing types and styles likely to be provided in the city by 'Pathfinder' projects.

This will be followed by a group discussion of the topics involved.

8:30pm – 9pm Conclusion

The session will be rounded up with a discussion on how people's perceptions of the issues discussed may have changed, and what part of the presentations or discussions caused this. Finally, participants will be asked to quickly fill in a questionnaire before leaving.