

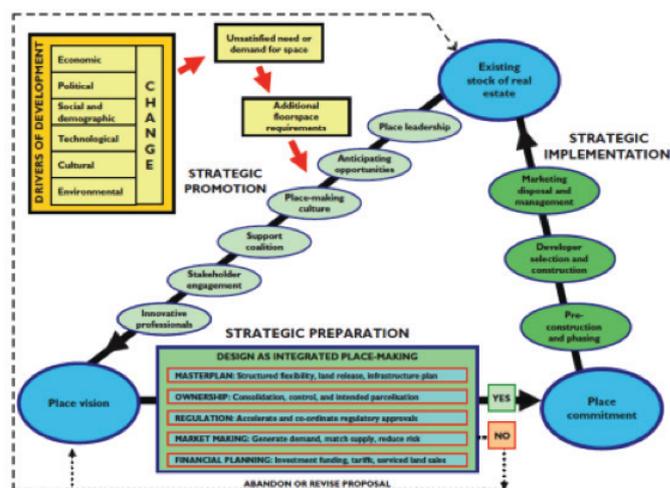
SHAPING PLACES NEWSLETTER

The 'Shaping Places' seminar, held on September 6th, opened with a presentation on and response to the book by David Adams and Steve Tiesdell. This discussion looked both the role of the state and its institutions in setting the framework for achieving better places, and the role of the private sector and its institutional, cultural and financial frameworks in delivering better places. Following the presentations, the debate from the floor located some of the arguments in the book in both the UK and Scottish development contexts.

Chair's opening Alistair MacDonald, Head of Planning, Glasgow City Council

Alistair opened the evening by introducing the speakers for the evening: Professor David Adams who provided the keynote summary of 'Shaping Places' and two responses to the arguments in the book; one from the public sector perspective by Fraser Carlin, Head of Planning at Renfrew Council and Chair of Heads of Planning Scotland, and one from the private sector perspective by Alasdair Morrison, Associate with GVA consultants

For the authors, it is important that value is measured holistically, in terms of social capital, environmental justice, image etc but also in terms of use and exchange value: financial value. Value, and the market, are social constructs; we create them, therefore we can shape them. The second and third sections of the book look at who and how this shaping might be achieved.



Places are shaped by events and developemt actors coming together in time and across time.

A key proposition in the book is that planning for places is **investment in transformation to create wealth**. Any investment activity needs a framework to set a context for market participation, risk and public goods. This framework is about understanding state-market relations where planners are market actors working with planning, real estate and urban design.

The purpose of planning is to **challenge disaggregated market behaviours**, and encourage **collective action**. Value and wealth creation, in this context, are about pursuing 'plan shaped markets'. Different planning is about changing market rules and changing outcomes that otherwise would have happened if the markets operated on their own.

The Market roles and actors section of the book discusses the different types of developer, the role of the funder and landowner and motivations for participation. Within this discussion, David presented the funding landscape from the 1990s to the present day, showing both the motivation for funders to participate in property markets and their removal from them. Throughout this discussion, the key role of landownership, at a variety of scales, in influencing outcomes through the real estate process were emphasised.

The policy instruments section of the book discussed how the state can influence outcomes through state market relations.

“ Moving from concepts to development is about understanding state market activities and actors

Keynote presentation Professor David Adams

David Adams presented an overview of 'Shaping Places', co-authored with Steve Tiesdell. At its core, this is a book about the actors and institutions that come together to shape decisions about how places are made, primarily through the development and real estate process. The book looks at both process frameworks and behaviours. In this, the book aims to achieve three things:

- [i] provide a clear explanation how things can happen
- [ii] undertake a critique about planning and development processes
- [iii] on this basis, ask the fundamental question: can we do things differently to achieve better?

The book is laid out in three parts: the development context, market roles and actors and policy instruments. The book starts by reviewing what makes place successful and identifies a set of characteristics that make places more valueable. Specifically, these highlight the importance of people to place, of connectivity and permeability, of variability in use and form, of local distinctiveness, and of sustainability, resilience and robustness.

Three key instruments were identified:

- > the publication of plans, policies and regulations,
- > the reform of institutions around issues such as property rights and taxation, and
- > strategic market transformation where the state plays a direct active role.

Being clearer on what outcomes we are trying to influence informs which instruments are best for the job.

David presented a case for eight key outcomes to form the basis of development planning through better state market relations:

- accessible locations
- quality choices
- efficiency in land use
- broaden consumers
- broaden and modify products
- sustain places/stewardship
- stretch development horizons
- increase development production.

Thinking about these outcomes shifts thinking about value from 'location, location, location' to 'location, product, timing'.

The book concludes with a challenge: institutional reform of the processes and behaviours of how we make and manage places are needed. Within this there is a need to develop capacities to act, particularly within the planning system so that we can achieve better planned places achieving more positive outcomes through active and positive state market relations. This informs discussions about reconstructing markets, using different levers for influence, and investing in place as a public good.

Responses to 'Shaping Better Places'

Response by Fraser Carlin

Fraser began his response focusing on quality; a key role for planning is to be clear on the quality we are trying to deliver. Over the last 10 years, the practice in Local Government has been to try and get over silo working, reflect what developers and communities need to deliver better quality in terms of built environment, jobs, employability and social outcomes. However, we struggle in this to show that the quality of place, which is a person's context across time is as important as say employability.

The places we have delivered from conflict between developers and planners are a poor quality evidence base to support this story. In this, the role of development frameworks is to set out a better basis to achieve quality, manage issues of land ownership, funding and design. We also need to express the quality of outcome in different terms; in terms of social capital, environmental capital and accept that sometimes the performance of some of these outcomes in the economy of the place may not necessarily be reflected in the quality of architecture in all instances. We need to be clear about what we are trying to achieve and how we get there.

Response by Alasdair Morrison

Alasdair's reflection started from a consideration of some of the key arguments in the book and where we are relative to them. For him, planning is a long way from shaping better places. The default urbanism described in the book differs from place to place, as does the quality. Is all of it bad?

A key element of Alasdair's observation related to the state role in state-market relations: does the state have perfect knowledge to act? How do we deal with the issue of demand despite the best effort of the state to put in enabling infrastructure in areas the market isn't participating in? He developed these points further by suggesting that the current set up of planning is not organised to deliver development, it is there to control. Alasdair suggested that the current UK political context is not organised well to take on the strategic market transformation ideas of places like Vauban, a problem which plays out in the way the current development plan system works. Self interest is a key motivation in developer participation in the UK, as is the issue of land ownership. A key challenge is to change the status of planning: make it more politically relevant.

Debate from the floor

Following the presentations there was a lively debate from the floor. The debate included consideration of the effectiveness of policy levers in existing legislation and guidance on place in Scotland, the diversity of development models, the differentiation of markets and conditions for active placemaking spatially, and the vested interests in maintaining a status quo situation.

The key issues in this debate related to:

- clarity: what is a place, what outcomes does it achieve and why is it a concept we aspire to
- evidence; where is the objective research that shows that a place approach achieve better outcomes
- roles: who are the placemakers and what is the role of the citizen
- collaboration: how do the actors involved work more collaboratively, what are the benefits
- structures; do we need institutional reform to achieve better places
- status; does place matter, where does it figure politically, how does the Treasury see it for example?

The Shaping Places Exhibition will run at Level 2, The Lighthouse, until October 7th, 2012.

Steve Tiesdell Image Library
http://www.flickr.com/photos/steve_tiesdell_legacy

Support the Steve Tiesdell Endowment Fund at:
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