



# CONSIDERATION OF COST AND VALUE THROUGH THE BUILDING DESIGN PROCESS

# INSIGHT

# AUTHORS



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Chris has worked across a variety of sectors with a strong body of his experience coming in Residential development, delivering schemes across the UK and overseas for over 20 years.



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David is a Chartered Surveyor who joined Quantem in 2018 and was promoted to Partner in 2019. While his primary focus is Residential, he has a wealth of experience across a range of sectors undertaking both pre and post Contract roles.

*Quantem are proud to have long held and lasting relationships across our industry, collaborating on work and sharing understanding and experience. Here tp bennett provided thoughts and inspiration to this paper.*

## tp bennett

Inquisitive, imaginative, individual, tp bennett has been at the forefront of architecture and design for just over 100 years, offering cross-sector expertise from a world-class team.



**Nick Hirst**

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Nick joined tp bennett in 2000, since when he has maintained his involvement in heritage and conservation while also working on many other sectors: masterplanning, health, education, mixed-use, hospitality and residential schemes, all for a wide range of public and private sector clients.

Quantem have been providing services to our clients for over 16 years and fully understand the implications of change set out here and strategies to overcome and manage these changes.

As a global design practice tp bennett has the responsibility to influence positive change.

*“The World, our environment, expectations, legislation, performance and aspirations are changing. How we collaborate and coordinate to deliver fine cost-effective buildings, through shared understanding and informed decisions, should be changing too.”*

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# WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

## What is changing?

- **Identifying the best tenure;** location, site opportunities, market
- **Design standards;** cost and efficiency impact for perceived quality betterment
- **Understanding;** new good metrics net:gross, wall:floor etc
- **Façade depths;** thermal performance, design aspiration, programme and cost
- **Dual aspect;** evolving SPG and policies, what is the value vs cost

## What does the new good look like?

- **2nd Stair cores;** the cost of safe homes
- **Overheating standards;** what this means for design solutions
- **Design influencers;** how to best message to Planning Officers, Planning Committees, Design Review Panels and the community with different drivers
- **Tightening London design criteria;** will ripple out across the UK over time

Designs have come under greater review and expectation from planners, building performance regulation and the Building Safety Act. Compounding this legislative inflation is build cost inflation as barriers to material supply continues due to global unrest. Change is inevitable and leaning into this collectively, based on understanding the drivers to a good design, its cost, programme and value is key to successful project delivery.

**+4%**  
The forecast  
cost of Future  
Homes Standards  
from 2024 Building  
Regulations  
(Quantem)

*“We’re finding a number of our clients are bringing to us projects developed either prior to changes in standards, or with a planning award prior to any clear assessment of the design or forecast build cost. There are challenges we’re embracing to bring schemes back to viability, but early involvement would save clients money and time.”*

*— Chris Patrick, Quantem,  
Residential Sector Lead*

40%  
UK BtR detailed  
planning awards  
taking over 1 year  
(EG)

*“A design without planning has limited value, but so too is a design with planning that is unviable. Sharing and setting clear achievable design metrics allows the design team, QS and client to forge a plan, measure from it and deliver a great and affordable design.”*

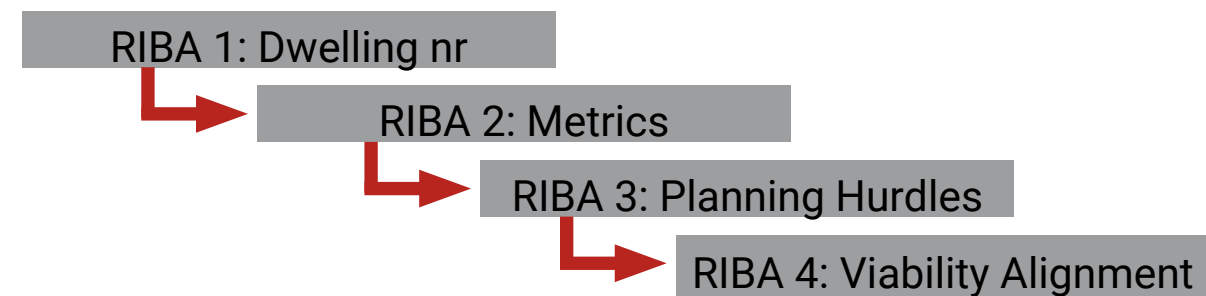
— Nick Hirst, tp bennett

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## RECOGNITION OF CHANGING DESIGN PRIORITIES WITHIN THE DESIGN PROCESS

Housing demand remains high with home vacancy rates below <1% and a backlog of 4.3m homes. (Centre for Cities). But consumer affordability and planning are obstacles, with new build starts between July to September 2024 falling 68% and 93% of SMEs stating planning delays hamper their abilities (DLUHC).

The definition of quality can change during the design of a project. All these should instead be agreed at the outset.:



Funding and Income can change during a project too:

- **Fluctuations;** create design change need
- **Early headroom or a flexible strategy;** can be adopted to manage this
- **The Building Safety Act;** is further change and creates potential delay
- **Changes between Gateways;** unlikely to be welcomed
- **Simplifying the design and processes;** mitigate change

Value perception changes too:

- **What's sold or rented;** (inside-out) influences consumer values & take-up
- **Look and feel of the development;** (outside-in) provides planning surety
- **Short-term sale value;** (quick buck) can strive for lowest cost
- **Long term retained asset and income;** (investment) might mean best value

# IS THE IMPACT OF A BUILDING ON ITS SURROUNDINGS JUSTIFICATION FOR DEFINING ITS IDENTITY

- **First design;** resident value and use
- **Generate envelope answers early;** harness norms and understand project opportunities
- **Cost model;** Good is changing
- **Deviation;** Risks justification of from 'the norm'
- **Monetarise betterment;** yield viability
- **Don't stifle design;** potential to marginalise innovation
- **Blend ESG;** Environment and Community into viable design
- **Support engagement;** during pre-planning to arrive at a prior understood application

Cost models and design metrics provide viable design parameters, allowing designers to understand design implication.

**+30%**  
Density increase  
through better  
design  
(Urban Task  
Force)

*"A quality building can also be viable. Collaboration across Client and team to yield cost effective design solutions to functional elements, increases the residual available for the 'look and feel' internally and externally to a building."*

*— Jake Hanson, Quantem*



# QS'S AND ARCHITECTS COLLABORATING BETTER AND EARLIER

- **3D model use;** IT Platform Management & collective responsibilities
- **Share cost and metric dynamics;** inform design direction
- **Informed design;** by prior sharing of affordable solutions
- **Good design;** has value and provides opportunity for greater density and planning award
- **DfM & MMC;** requires greater interaction and earlier decision making

The sharing of design models and generated quantities speeds up the process of initial cost assessment, yielding more time to examine design for improvement whilst mitigating issues of information transfer.

**+\$1.6t**  
Inefficiencies  
through design  
& construction  
process each year  
(RIBA)

*"Construction is the 2nd slowest to evolve, but now embracing modelling and MMC as means to save time, reduce waste, and respond to a decreasing pool of labour."*

— Andy Rasin, Quantem

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# CONCLUSIONS

- **Innovation and regulation will drive change;** changing what good looks like
- **Community = Value;** Psychology of shared spaces important to informing design
- **Leaning design into design standards;** changes and charges for development and use
- **Early unified reporting;** provides holistic understanding and response
- **Harness understanding;** of 'Cost = Function of Design = Value'
- **Early sharing of project drivers;** provides a more unified, coordinated response changing less
- **Whole project gateway review;** at early RIBA stages provides clarity on direction and understanding

**+5%**  
£/ft<sup>2</sup> NIA  
Cost of 'true dual  
aspect' SPG  
definition  
(Quantem)

*"What good looks like will continue to change. Working collaboratively to mitigate functional cost and collective drive to efficient design metrics yields a better design from the outset with less risk of change. The collective and holistic reporting during a design allows greater understanding and better developed responses to changing needs."*

*— Chris Patrick, Quantem, Residential Sector Lead*

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## THANK YOU

*Get in touch, our principle strength comes from the experience and quality of the Partners and staff, together with a hands-on approach.*

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