

For instance, road engineers build roads in a manner consistent and good all over the country. Irrespective of environmental change the roads remain standardised. The materials are the same, no alteration is made to echo the particular "spirit of the place". Materials are not chosen that blend with or compliment the area. Leafy lanes where the environment is soft have hard edged concrete roads laid that do nothing to enhance the local character. It is here that design intervention is necessary. It brings out the memorable and unique, and capitalises on them. Man's life is enriched by the special in the environment, and it is the enrichment of man's life that is primarily important.

Urban design does not only operate at this level. It operates at a broad level of urban form and structure from a city large scale down to specifics for various sites. The main thrust is at the local environment level where environment specific to place is dealt with. Blanket zoning is another problem to be dealt with because this denies the unique. Development controls set by town planners govern land use and building heights. These controls are inflexible and designers are hamstrung in their efforts to contribute to these environments. These controls preclude real intervention specific to place because they already stipulate what the environment must be in broad terms.

According to Dr Barry Senior and Erky Wood the goal of urban design is

" TO STRIVE FOR A QUALITY OF PHYSICAL URBAN ENVIRONMENT WHICH NURTURES HUMAN DIGNITY AND CULTURE THROUGH DESIGN BASED ON AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, PHYSICAL, TEMPORAL, POLITICAL AND LEGAL PROCESSES THAT INFLUENCE THE STRUCTURE AND FORM OF CITIES."

Senior & Wood (1981 : 10)

i) The General Concerns of Urban Design

1) focussing on the local environment

Local environment concern is for buildings and the spaces between the buildings. Concern is for the way buildings relate to one another and for the treatment of space created by these relationships.

2) spatial qualities of local environment

Current practice in town planning does not concern itself with the architectural qualities of public space. In other words; the form, mass, volume and proportion aspects that make spaces. The aesthetic contribution to the environment enriches man's experience thereof.

3) the public environment

The public/private relationship is one of the major urban design concerns. Private realm design is amply dealt with by architects. No one has the responsibility for the task of public realm design.

4) city dynamics

Cities should be in an ever growing state. As they grow they change. Different pressures on land change its use. The needs of the local environment must work in a balanced relationship with the needs of the city at large. The interdependence and ramifications of actions need to be fully considered. The balance between places of fix and places of flexibility should be maintained, so that a coherent sense of structure emerges.

5) process versus product

Process is defined as "the right person making the right decision at the right time." Decisions are made on an ongoing basis. The brief is always changing according to varying needs. Process then allows for immediate response to current needs, whereas product is inflexible and responds to needs that are, maybe, no longer necessary.

6) multiclient design

Every city user is a client, their varying urban need can only be fulfilled in a full environment. A full environment is one that meets myriad needs. This sort of environment needs the input of many people in its design. David Crane refers to this as "the city of a 1000 designers." For the sake of coherence their designs should be consistent with the guide lines of the urban design.

7) preservation and ties with the past

Within the context of change, anchors in a time of flux are essential. They help man to root himself.

8) community participation

Design professionals often draw the wrong conclusions from their observations. Interaction and participation of the community in design helps set the record straight. Community involvement helps create a personal, meaningful environment.

9) helping the CBD compete with the suburbs

The urban centre is being neglected. Through design this can be remedied.

10) transportation

Design of transport routes has to relate to the city. Major routes can help in city structuring.

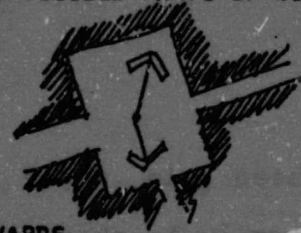
11) design quality and review

Review is needed to check consistent and adaptive response of design to user needs. Design quality is subjective and views will be different.

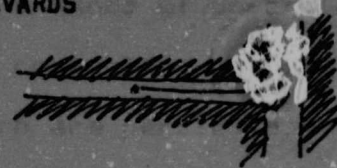
"In aspiring to design cities that go beyond the mundane and express the art form that has been reached only at sporadic times in history, when cultural goals were prominent in the body politic, it is necessary to seed and nurture the urban design discipline as an integral part of city building."

THE MOST VISIBLE PARTS OF CITIES

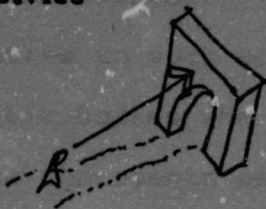
PIAZZAS



ENDS OF BOULEVARDS



GATEWAYS TO CITIES



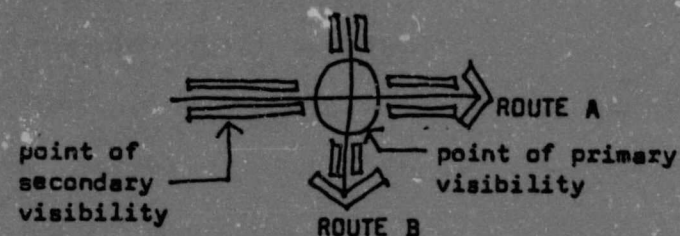
SKYLINES



THE MAIN SOURCE OF VISIBILITY

IS THE CIRCULATION SYSTEM

"the highest information channels are the most heavily travelled routes, particularly at their change points."



DURATION is the reason why this is the place where most messages can be read.

- i)- while vehicles are motionless messages can be read
- ii)- when people walk they move slowly and can read messages simultaneously.

SYMBOLISM AND MEANING IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Environments that offer social and economic opportunity also convey meaning. That meaning can be success. Good environments usually mean a good life. The relationship between the environment and meaning is dealt with next.

Donald Appleyard says that the environment is seldom seen as a "social or political symbol", by professionals. He finds this peculiar for he says that "ordinary people view the environment as a social medium." The physical environment is a symbol of the socio-political structure of the country. "The concept of symbolism, the link between the physical environment and socio-political structure, should therefore be central to our thinking about environmental planning and urban design."

Appleyard (1978 : 2)

He states that in rural villages "each part is understood territory," in terms of family background, wealth, personality and social structure. In today's big cities mobile people are often in unfamiliar territory and are "dependent only on appearances to interpret what is going on".

Appleyard (1978 : 3)

Responses to this are either;

- a) stereo typical interpretation or
- b) giving up with interpretation view appearances as
 - i) sensuous experience or
 - ii) screening out what is seen altogether.

In unfamiliar territory the environment becomes in Appleyard's words "light, strange and, to many, hostile." In each case man is a passive observer "apparently powerless to control the form he sees."

Appleyard (1978 : 3)

But change in this attitude is occurring, "the new neighbourhood activism - block watch etc., is challenging and changing the passive aesthetic view of the metropolis." The physical environment is becoming

We depend on our environment for light, air, peace and stability.

The environment is usually in the hands of governing public

bodies. This situation is now contested, especially

when these bodies do things which are perceived as detrimental

to life, for instance test nuclear weapons. Operation

GREENPEACE is a counter initiative to such action. It represents

groups other than governing public bodies who want to have a say

in environmental control. This represents self motivated

participation in the environment.

" An environment becomes symbolic in the social sense when it is

perceived as representing something or someone else." " The symbolism

is ...the immediate personal, social, and political meaning of

environments and environmental actions. In other words the environment

or parts of the environment are identified with a person or thing. When

the mental link is made the environment is taken to represent the person

or thing. " Environments " that epitomise the character of the referents

are usually labelled as symbols," for instance highrise buildings are seen

to symbolise corporate power and the People's Park is seen as a symbol for

youth rebellion and " emerging attitudes towards nature."

Appleyard (1978 : 4)

The components of a model of environmental action and perception are

given by Appleyard as actors (with their motivations, perceptions and

environmental behaviour) who produce, manage and experience the

environment.

ACTORS IN THE ENVIRONMENT

INITIATORS of environmental change range from individuals who may

plant a tree to major developers, property owners and public agencies

who are regarded as the primary urbanisers.

EXECUTIVES of environmental change are those who " actually effect

environmental change." Environmental professionals and contractors

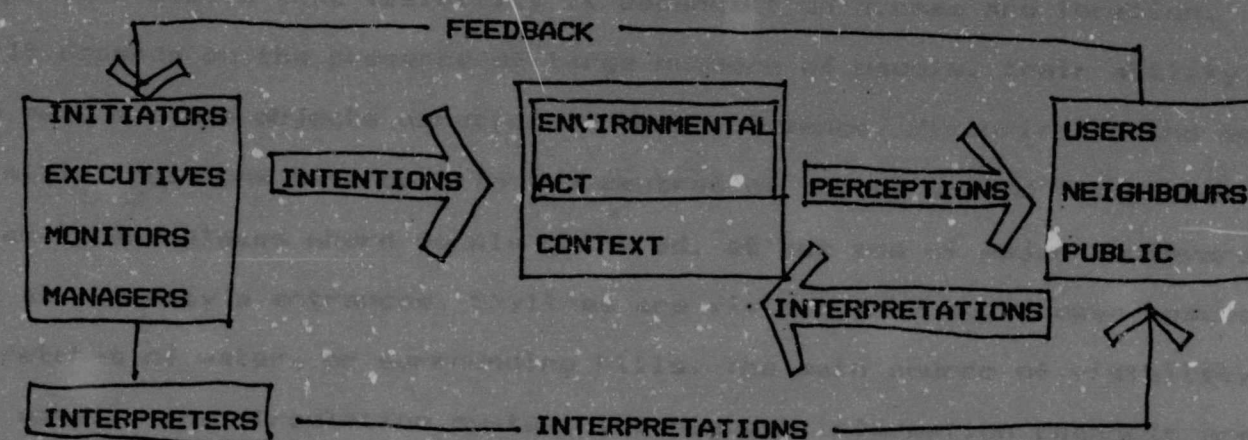
and others who design, construct and destroy places form this group.

Appleyard (1978 : 5)

In modern society those who effect change aren't free to do as they choose. Society MONITORS actions through conservation groups, planning commissions, public agencies, politicians and the courts. These monitors may oppose change. Or evolve guidelines for what may be appropriate. They arbitrate among conflicts and generally try to interpret public interest. OWNERS AND MANAGERS have a more direct continuing influence over the environment, as owners they have more rights over their private property. Besides the property owners, managers include state and council workers in the form of the police, firemen, rubbish collectors and parks and public works officials. These are representative of the public side of the environment and it is they who maintain the physical stock, and control the quality or the ambience of the environment.

A new force in environmental politics are the INTERPRETERS who are the reporters and news commentators, guide book writers and publishers and researchers, scholars and authors who are making environmental information available to the public. It is these people who can change public perceptions. They can mould public opinion by publishing changing views on the environment. The interpreter's leverage is thus in changing the attitudes of the general public towards the environment.

The RECIPIENTS of the environmental action are those affected by the project. In the proposal phase the recipients are those who are made aware of the project through the media and public hearings, and once created the recipients include the users, neighbours and general public.



According to Appleyard the intentions behind environmental actions are orientated towards either oneself, the action or others. The motives for SELF are given as;

- identity,
- power,
- status,
- being expressive and
- being exclusive.

The motives for ACTION are given as;

- instrumental,
- economic and
- aesthetic.

The motives for OTHERS are given as; attention catching,
 giving information,
 giving direction,
 being persuasive,
 being friendly and
 urging caution and discretion.

" Environmental initiators, executives, monitors and managers view their actions ...as multi-purpose mixtures of instrumental, economic, aesthetic and symbolic intent. " For instance housing for the poor could be money spent on housing for the poor for the sake of getting their support, symbolic of the good nature of the benefactor. If done well, the gesture will contribute positively to the environment. This will make the gesture more noticeable. Catching the attention of the general public is essential for the communication of intentions.

Appleyard (1978 :10)

Directive information, for instance a keep left sign on the road, is concerned with social control which helps the city operate smoothly. Informational intentions in the form of guide books and maps have become essential because cities have become more complex, obscure and faceless. Persuasive information comes in the form of coercive political manipulation of the general public to vote one way or another. Discretionary information " means a low profile " being in harmony with surroundings. An example of this is highways being sunk into the ground, " the statement is hidden from view."

Appleyard (1978 : 15)

VISIBILITY AND IMAGEABILITY

In order for the environment to convey meaning it must attract attention. The prerequisites for catching attention are visibility and imageability, " These are the attributes that display power and express desired identity." It is visibility that lets the public see the message that should read and it is imageability that gives the impact to the message so that it remains imprinted on the brains of the public.

Appleyard (1978 : 18)

Appleyard states that visibility is dependant on access and location.

" It depends on the presence of large numbers of people, their ability to see, and the objects duration in their presence. Historically the most visible locations have been in the centres of cities around the principal piazzas and places where people gathered, at the end of major boulevards, or at the city's entrances. Sky lines are visible from major open spaces, stretches of water, or surrounding hills. The main source of visibility is usually the circulation system; the highest information channels are the most heavily travelled routes, particularly at their change points ... The interaction between circulation and use creates visibility."

Appleyard (1978 : 18)

Appleyard states, " Once visible, an action must attract attention, in some way it must create an image in the viewers mind. The most potent means is uniqueness. If an action can be not only distinguished from its immediate surroundings but stand out from a whole city of such actions, its chances of attracting attention are high."

Appleyard (1978 : 19)

Major messages should be located at positions of prime visibility. A hierarchy of visible positions should be worked out, as should a related hierarchy of importance for messages. Those of prime importance should get prime locations in the city.

The application of the theory in the appendices to the project is dealt with in the conceptual framework.

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