



Rural masterplanning fund prospectus



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Rural masterplanning fund prospectus

Purpose

1. This prospectus implements the commitment given in the Government's response to Matthew Taylor on 25 March 2009 *"to develop the Review's suggestion of a competition, particularly for rural authorities wanting to provide growth over an extended period in one or more of their market towns."*
2. The Government's response stated:
 - *"Authorities who present the most compelling vision for their futures would receive a package of resources, and be given expert support to help develop their vision into workable masterplans for their areas."*
 - *The resulting plans, and the experience and expertise developed through the process, would be used to develop a range of rural-proofed tools to support other authorities to build on these exemplar programmes, and possible future national policies."*
3. The Government has made this commitment as we recognise that in protecting the countryside we must also recognise people's need for somewhere to live and for a job. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity of a decent home at a price they can afford. We want a countryside which can shape its own future, with its voice heard by Government at all levels, and in which people have access to the jobs and services they require.

The competition

4. The competition principles:
 - through a competitive bidding process successful local planning authorities (LPAs) who are seeking to accommodate new development in rural locations (as defined in paragraph 5 of this prospectus) will be provided with technical support. The support is being funded by CLG and DEFRA and totals £1m over two years (2009-10 and 2010-11)
 - only the bids that in our judgement best meet the criteria will be selected to receive technical support
 - the overarching aim is to ensure that planned development (mixed use, housing, commercial, community facilities, green space, employment use) is brought forward and meets the local authority's policies for quality and sustainability

- the technical support will focus on helping the local planning authority to take forward its emerging policies and plans for key settlements and development sites through urban design strategies for settlements and masterplans
- the technical support will be in the form of expert advice provided via CABE and the HCA. The HCA and CABE will provide technical support through its in house teams and their panels of experts and consultants, on the broad areas of expertise identified in points (a-f). The funding for HCA and CABE support will be provided directly from CLG and DEFRA to the HCA or CABE as appropriate
- there may be some instances where we consider it necessary to provide funds directly to the local planning authority for particular activities
- in bidding for support local planning authorities are therefore asked to identify which areas of technical support they are most in need of
- an important aim of this rural masterplanning fund is to learn lessons from the local authorities throughout the process of planning and designing for new development which then provide opportunities for dissemination. Therefore participating local planning authorities will play an important role in providing and sharing their experience
- it is important that local planning authorities take the opportunity to develop and test proposals with the local community. The rural masterplanning fund will therefore address how to engage local residents and businesses in the process and identify where there are opportunities relating to the future stewardship of development

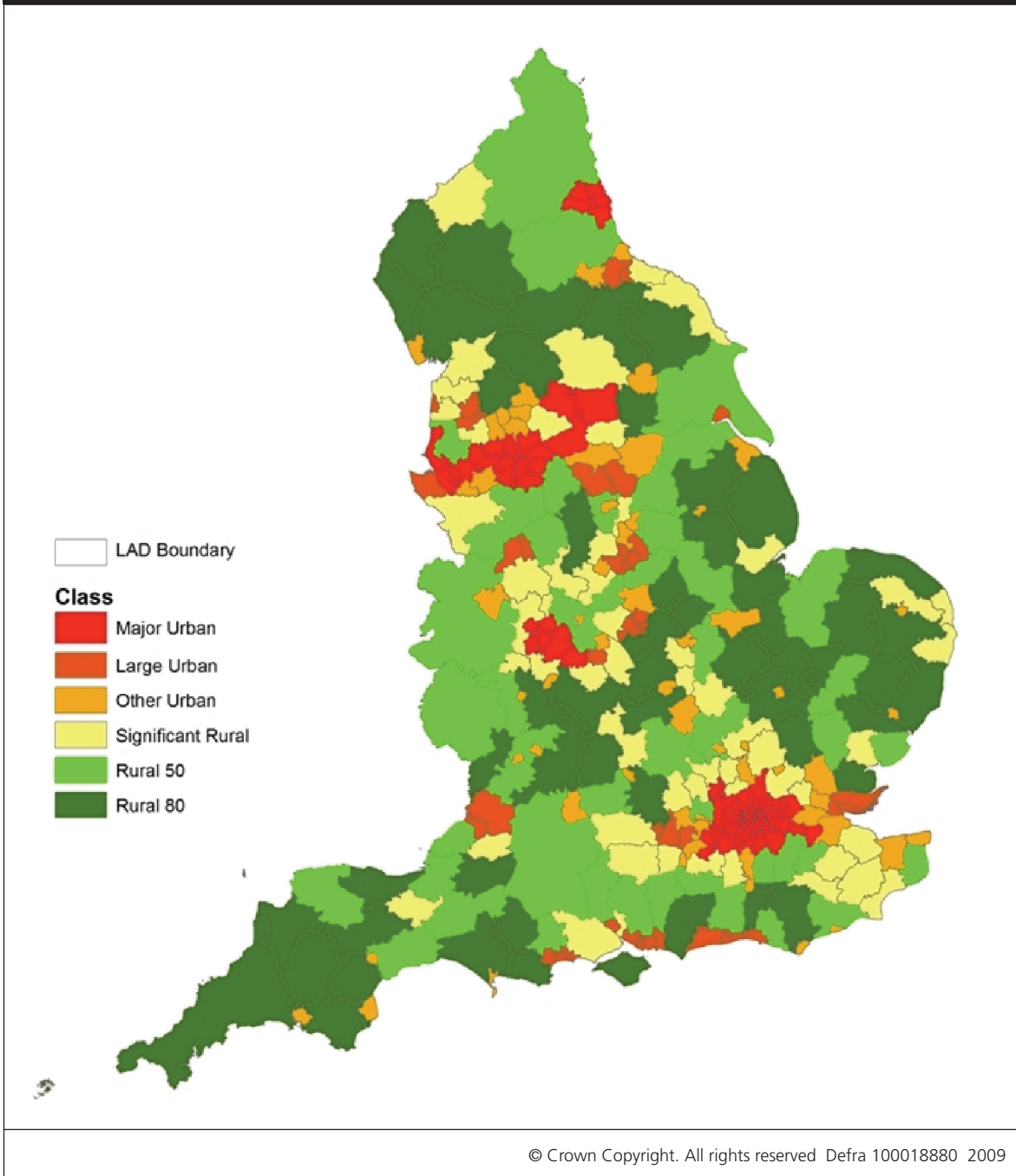
Terms of competition

5. The competition is primarily open to local planning authorities or any group of local planning authorities classified as *Rural – 80*, *Rural – 50* or *Significant Rural* in Government's Local Authority District Classification (see map on following page). However, it is also open to other local planning authorities provided they can demonstrate that the proposal relates to a predominantly rural area within the local planning authority area.
6. In developing bids, local planning authorities must have regard to the terms and criteria in this prospectus.

Bids

7. It is at the discretion of the local planning authority whether to make a bid for technical support, bearing in mind the range of criteria that will be used to assess and prioritise bids.
8. The deadline for receiving bids is 5pm, 15 January 2010.

The Geography of the revised LA Classification



9. We will not normally be able to consider bids received after that date.

What is on offer

10. Local planning authorities may bid for technical support for masterplanning processes relating to one or more of the activities identified (a) to (f) below. The illustrative budgets below indicate the level of grant that could be allocated for each of these areas of work and could be used to fund specialist consultants via CABE or the HCA to provide expert assistance in support of local authority officers, councillors and the local community, should the bid be successful. In

preparing bids, local authorities should indicate which areas of support they are bidding for and provide an explanation of why the assistance is required (as part of their application as outlined in Appendix A). Some local authorities may benefit from a variety of the technical support, either simultaneously but more likely in sequence.

11. Successful candidates will be expected to provide detailed feedback on the programme, to enable dissemination of best practice and longer term evaluation.
12. Technical support provided under the Rural Masterplanning Fund is separate to the HCA's or CABE's existing programmes of work with local authorities.

a) *Consultancy support for urban design and masterplanning commissions for individual development sites: up to £50,000 per site*

13. Through the HCA's consultancy panel, local authorities will be able to appoint specialist consultants to carry out substantive urban design studies or masterplans for individual sites. If bidding for this type of support, local authorities should indicate what level of fees they anticipate HCA would need to allocate to fund this consultancy work. The HCA consultants' panel have already been pre-qualified and therefore can be appointed following a fast track process.

b) *Procurement and project management support for masterplanning, site brief or design guide projects: £7,000*

14. This area of support is for individual projects (development sites) for which the local authority wishes to prepare a masterplan, site brief or design guide. This would be related to locations/sites identified for housing, mixed use or economic development. The aim is to address how to embed design quality and sustainable development in the requirements for development through the delivery processes. Through the technical inputs of staff and their experts CABE or the HCA would provide the following support:
 - establishing the client's needs and aspirations for a project
 - developing a clear vision and a strong brief
 - developing a procurement strategy, including criteria for selecting and evaluating a skilled design team (or development partner)
 - advising on project management
 - assisting with evaluation of tenders and selection of preferred partner
 - briefing design teams and reviewing progress

c) *Spatial thinking in relation to where to locate housing and other development in the rural areas – either considering allocations across a number of settlements or a single settlement (indicative budget £10,000 per local authority or individual settlement if more intensive engagement is required)*

15. Local planning authorities need to consider the spatial and design implications of the location of new development (particularly where there is pressure or demand for new homes). The aim will be to help a local planning authority to embed design quality and sustainability into the land use and urban design principles for development in their area. This work will take a holistic approach to preparing a strategy for development – particularly focusing on the physical, policy and political context for development across a local authority area, market town or village. Through the input of expert urban designers and planners this technical support will help local authorities consider either:
- issues of land use and urban design for clusters of small towns and villages that might be inter-dependent or
 - urban design issues in relation to an individual settlement, its character and identity, transport provision, community facilities and green infrastructure
16. The output for this work will be a high level spatial strategy for a number of settlements or an individual settlement – depending on the needs of the local planning authority. The work will be carried out with the local authority's officers, with high level strategic and technical input from CABE and members of their Enabling Panel. Depending on the needs of the local planning authority the work may include design workshops, officer and councillor events, advice on implementation of design aspirations and input into the preparation of planning and design strategies or principles for development.

d) *Leadership capability and capacity building: £6,000*

17. In order for local planning authorities to be able to consider how best to accommodate additional growth in small settlements it will be important to engage all those involved in the plan making and development control processes within an authority. This could also be extended to include key local partners including parish councils and lead development partners. Through the input of CABE and their experts or consultants from the HCA's expert panels this strand of support offers the opportunity to underpin the leadership and joint aspirations of local planning authority senior staff, elected members and officers through workshop based discussions and appreciation of:
- the role of good urban design and placemaking and how to deliver this through the planning system

- the role of *Building for Life*¹ in evaluating and delivering better quality neighbourhoods and
- the role of *Manual for Streets*² in relation to placemaking (including the highways department)

e) Embedding design quality in the development control process: £7,000

18. Where there is a recognised issue with the quality of development already being delivered, CABE can review existing approved applications or pre-application schemes for sites using *Building for Life* as an assessment tool and use the findings to inform local authority policy and practice and the delivery aims of key partners (housing developers, RSLs). This would then be used to inform a working session with development control officers and planning committee or cabinet members with responsibility for planning. If desirable the process could also engage with key RSL, house builders and development partners in the local authority area. Also, if the local planning authority would welcome some guidance on design matters on key community buildings or space CABE could discuss these issues at the workshop (based on their extensive knowledge of public building procurement and public space design and management). The main output would be in the form of a workshop and supporting material that would address:

- the opportunity for pre-application negotiations and use of *Building for Life* (BfL)
- applying tools to assess and promote design quality, including how to set appropriate standards in briefs and policy and agree a programme of implementation
- setting out how BfL should be addressed in development proposals and design and access statements
- structuring design guidance to help applicants address issues of local character and identity

f) Other

19. Where local planning authorities have identified different areas of technical support which are not addressed in items (a) to (e) above but which they consider to be within the aim and principles of the programme, they are invited to identify these in their bids. The decisions as to whether such bids fall within the programme will be the made through the assessment process and the Decision Panel.

¹ <http://www.buildingforlife.org/>

² <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets/>

Bid content and assessment criteria

20. In order to submit a bid local planning authorities must complete the application form included in Appendix A in hard copy and by email to:

Louise Wyman
Homes & Communities Agency
Central Business Exchange II
414-428 Midsummer Boulevard
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 2EA

Louise.Wyman@hca.gsx.gov.uk

Deadline – 5pm, 15 January 2010.

21. Bids will be assessed according to the extent to which, in our judgement, they meet the criteria (a) to (d) below. These will be weighted as detailed in the table.

| Assessment criteria | Evaluation weighting % |
|--|------------------------|
| <p>a) Strategic policy fit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> outline how the development area (e.g. site, settlement) to be supported fits within the regional and local policy context e.g. regional planning policy, local planning policy, affordable housing needs, market housing demand and economic development plans, and any evidence provided by the strategic housing land availability assessment; strategic housing market assessment, local housing needs surveys or other studies that may be relevant <p><i>A view will be taken on their fit with policy and the evidence base. Priority will be given to those with the best policy fit and supporting evidence base.</i></p> | 10% |
| <p>b) Deliverability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the status of the relevant local development document in the local development framework (LDF) and, where relevant, other design and planning policy documents that would form a planning framework for the technical support the local authority is bidding for? describe whether political and community support exists for development and whether any engagement with key stakeholders and the local community has taken place please provide a brief summary of any experience of providing community led affordable housing³ in the area <p><i>A view will be taken on the status of the planning framework which supports the proposed development with priority given to those most advanced; those with the greatest degree of community and political support; and those with the most experience of providing community led affordable housing.</i></p> | 30% |

³ Community Led Affordable Housing is discussed in the Taylor Review – Chapter 3
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/livingworkingcountryside.pdf>

| Assessment criteria | Evaluation weighting % |
|---|------------------------|
| <p>c) Local authority capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would be the benefit to the local planning authority of receiving technical assistance? • What specific type of assistance would be most useful to the local planning authority? <p><i>A view will be taken on the basis of their specific need for specialist technical support and the benefits it would bring, with priority given to those with greatest need and benefits.</i></p> | 40% |
| <p>d) Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What resources (staff time/ money etc) would be allocated by the local planning authority to ensure that this project progresses effectively and efficiently? • If the local planning authority were to receive technical support through the rural masterplanning fund, is there additional funding that would be put towards delivering the project? <p><i>A view will be taken on the resources the local planning authority can contribute, with priority given to those able to provide staff and/or financial contributions.</i></p> | 20% |

22. We will assess the relative quality of the applications from eligible local planning authorities, having regard to the benefit of having a range of exemplar projects in terms of size and location. We will reach a judgement having regard to the bid, any information submitted, other information available and government policies we consider relevant in making the judgement.
23. Only proposals which, in our view, meet the criteria will be considered.
24. Government will accept no liability for costs incurred in preparing a bid.

Handling of bids

25. Once your application is received you will receive an email notification with a reference number within five working days. This will be to confirm receipt and to facilitate future correspondence.
26. Applications, once received will be subject to an internal assessment process to determine whether they conform to the terms of the competition. This process is designed to be fair and transparent.
27. Where necessary more information may be requested in order for a final assessment to be undertaken. HCA and CABE will obtain it by contacting the lead officer identified on the grant application form by email in the first instance. Local planning authorities should be prepared to co-operate. Where information is not available, we will make reasonable assumptions as we see fit.

28. A shortlist of local authorities will be identified and the final decision on grant funding will be made by a decision panel chaired by Matthew Taylor and consisting of CLG's Chief Planner, and officials from CLG, Defra, HCA and CABI.

- HCA will undertake an initial assessment of eligibility
- HCA supported by CABI will longlist applications and make recommendations to the decision panel of a shortlist
- HCA or CABI may contact LPAs for any further information necessary to make assessments of their bids and draw up a shortlist
- HCA with support from CABI will provide a detailed assessment of shortlisted bids to the decision panel
- the decision panel will meet to make final decisions on successful bids
- an announcement of the successful bidders will be made in the new year

Prioritising proposals

29. Details of how bids will be prioritised are set out in the assessment criteria table above. The Government has made £1m available and considers that it can proceed with at least eight bids, ideally one in each region (excluding London). However, final decisions on the number of proposals that will be implemented will depend crucially on the content of local authority submissions and the potential requirement from the fund if these proposals were approved. This would not preclude the Government from deciding to implement more if they offered good value for money and were affordable, or fewer if in our view they did not meet the criteria.

30. Through the evaluation of bids the Government reserves the right to consider if all or part of a bid is eligible or appropriate for funding and therefore successful local authorities will be allocated support according to the most appropriate mix of technical support as recommended by the decision panel.

Indicative timetable

Launch event: 26 November 2009

Bid deadline: 5pm, 15 January 2010

Bids announced: Early February 2010

Projects undertaken: February 2010 – Oct 2010

Dissemination: November 2010 – Dec 2010

Further information

31. Irrespective of a local planning authority's application for grant, there is a wealth of useful information already freely available relating to the above issues. See Appendix B for a list of relevant publications. CABE also advise local authorities on *Building for Life* and local development frameworks:

- **Building for Life accredited assessors** – Building for Life is the national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods and is structured around 20 criteria. Building for Life assessments measure the design quality of new housing developments using the 20 criteria. CABE are currently setting up a nationwide network of 500 accredited assessors, with local authorities and government organisations increasingly using Building for Life to assess housing design quality at the pre-planning stage. CABE's commitment is to enable local authorities to act consistently when negotiating and assessing design quality. To achieve this CABE have agreed with central government to train one assessor in each local authority by 2011.
- **local development frameworks** – CABE have held more than 50 workshops with local planning authorities, and with the help of a panel of independent professional experts, discussed local authorities' core strategies, the challenges they face and their ideas for the future. The workshops supported local planning authorities in improving their core strategies and contributed to CABE's knowledge of placemaking

Key websites for best practice and case studies:

- through CABE's main website www.cabe.org.uk you can search for publications and case studies on masterplanning, housing, urban design, etc and also link to a wider set of information on:
 - Building for Life (accessible via CABE website) or via www.buildingforlife.org – information about the Building for Life standards, for guides to carrying out Building for Life assessments, case studies of housing projects and information about award winning schemes
 - CABE's best practice website on sustainable design of urban systems at www.sustainablecities.org.uk/
 - urban design summer school www.udss.org.uk – including some introductory learning on urban design
- Atlas – <http://www.atlasplanning.com/page/index.cfm>
- HCA National Consultancy Unit http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/public/documents/NCU_Handbook_1.pdf
- PAS – <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=1>

Appendix A

Grant application form

For eligible local authorities to complete in order to bid for technical support from the Rural Masterplanning Fund

Submit to:
 Louise Wyman
 Homes & Communities Agency
 Central Business Exchange II
 414-428 Midsummer Boulevard
 Central Milton Keynes
 MK9 2EA

Louise.Wyman@hca.gsx.gov.uk

By: 5pm, 15 January 2010

Please complete the following electronically (the form can be downloaded from <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/>) and submit hard and email copy to the contact details above.

| | | |
|--|--|------------------|
| 1. Name of local authority: | | |
| 2. Lead contact: | | |
| 3. Position: | | |
| 4. Address: | | |
| 5. Email: | | |
| 6. Telephone (direct dial and switchboard) | | |
| 7. Rural classification | | |
| 8. Areas of technical support for which funding is sought. Please indicate reasons and main focus (geographical and technical) which are most relevant to the local authority | <p>Briefly set out the geographical focus of the project, e.g. which settlements(s) or location(s)</p> <p>Explain the reasons why technical support is required. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – related to a settlements need for growth – related to the current stage in planning processes – related to the skills available to the LA <p>Where appropriate please provide a map the local authority area marking the locations of key settlements and/or sites which would be part of the programme.</p> | Funding required |

| | | |
|--|--|--------------------|
| a) Consultancy support for urban design and masterplanning commissions for individual development sites up to £50,000 per site (unless development is of a significant scale – please indicate scale of development and funding.) | | |
| b) Procurement and project management support for masterplanning, site brief or design guide projects £7,000 | | |
| c) Spatial thinking in relation to where to locate housing and other development in the rural areas – either considering allocations across a number of settlements or a single settlement (indicative budget £10,000 per local authority or individual settlement if a more intensive engagement is required) | | |
| d) Leadership capability and capacity building £6,000 | | |
| e) Embedding design quality in the development control process £7,000 | | |
| f) Other | | |
| Total value of funding bid: | | Total £ |
| 9. Provide information to support your bid against each of the assessment criteria below | | |
| a) Strategic policy fit | | |
| b) Deliverability | | |
| c) Local authority capacity | | |
| d) Resources | | |

Appendix B

Relevant best practice publications

| Organisation | Publication | Description | Pub date |
|--------------|---|---|-------------------|
| CABE | <i>Creating Successful Masterplans</i> | Sets out the process of commissioning and preparing a masterplan, identifying key client roles and interactions throughout the planning process | 2004 |
| | <i>Agreeing a procurement strategy</i> | Briefing outlining how important a long-term procurement strategy is for delivering high quality development | 2009 |
| | <i>Selecting design and development partners</i> | Briefing describing how evaluation and selection processes can be structured to deliver successful, well-designed places | 2009 |
| | <i>Building for Life Standard</i> | The national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods | 2002, rev '06,'08 |
| | <i>Design Reviewed Masterplans</i> | A review of masterplans on which the CABE design panel has advised, with case studies that highlight good practice in masterplanning | 2004 |
| | <i>Actions for Housing Growth: creating a legacy of great</i> | places10 actions for local government and delivery vehicles that are seeking to create high-quality places in areas of housing growth | 2007 |
| | <i>Housing Market Renewal Action Plan</i> Put forward jointly by CABE, English Heritage | and the Sustainable Development Commission, the action plan proposes a shift in the HMR agenda away from housing and towards a broad-based, design-led regeneration programme, with placemaking at its centre | 2008 |
| | <i>Start with the Park</i> | A good practice guide for people involved in developing and managing sustainable green spaces in housing growth and housing market renewal areas | 2005 |
| | <i>Open Space Strategies, Best Practice Guidance</i> | Practical guidance to local authorities and their stakeholders on how to prepare, deliver, monitor and review an open space strategy | 2009 |
| | <i>Paving the way: How we achieve clean, safe and attractive streets</i> | Paving the way sets out an agenda for improving the most neglected element in the built environment – the street | 2002 |
| | <i>The way to better residential streets</i> | A briefing on residential street design aimed at planners, urban designers and highway professionals | 2009 |
| | <i>The Value Handbook</i> | Practical guidance showing how public sector organisations can get the most from the buildings and spaces in their area | 2006 |

| Organisation | Publication | Description | Pub date |
|--------------|--|---|----------|
| | <i>Building in Context – New development in Historic areas</i> | Explaining how to achieve high design standards in historically sensitive contexts, with case studies to illustrate good practice in design, development and planning | 2001 |
| DETR | <i>By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System, towards better practice</i> | Promotes higher standards in urban design and provide sound, practical advice to help implement the Government's commitment to good design, as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 1 General Policy and Principles | 2001 |
| | <i>Better Places to Live By Design: A Compendium Guide to PPG3</i> | The guidance draws together the principles of good urban design as they relate to the residential environment to help move the practice of good design forward | 2001 |
| HCA (EP) | <i>Urban Design Compendium 1: Urban design principles</i> | The key aspects of urban design and how these can be applied to create places where people want to live, work and socialise | 2000 |
| | <i>Urban Design Compendium 2: Delivering quality places</i> | Practical guidance on the steps that can be taken and barriers that need to be overcome during policy and project development to improve the quality of place delivered | 2007 |
| HCA Atlas | <i>Guide to Planning for Large Scale Development</i> | To provide advice and guidance to all stakeholders involved in taking forward large development projects | |

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