

NEW APPROACH TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT PLANS "DESIGN LED PLANNING"

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Revue and evaluation of urban planning process and assessment of development plans in past three decades in Iran confirms that these processes are not responding properly to the qualitative aspects of urban areas. The current situation stems from numerous reasons which could be found in rational nature or manipulative process of survey, development, approval and implementation of plans. To confront these problems and in order to learn from past experiences and develop an appropriate new process which could encompass both city planning and design the past trends of city planning process and its tradition has been studied. Consequently, design led planning approach is introduced as an intermediate approach which has been appeared at the commencement of 21 century in urban studies literatures. This approach which criticizes the linear relationship of urban planning and urban design disciplines, tries to relate the two disciplines together. In practice this approach can have positive outcomes at all levels of the new strategic planning hierarchy and policy oriented urban design. Planning and design process will overlap at a certain level at which supplementary planning document would be produced.

The present article reviews the literature to realize the position, the role and the necessity of applying design led planning in contemporary urban studies literature. It then defines the principles and characteristics of this approach. Major principle of design led planning areas follows:

- Is based on practical objectives
- Flexibility of rules and regulations
- Realizing the importance and interrelationship of public realm

- Considering the effect of density, mixed used and architectural characteristics on the quality of urban environment,

- Importance of environmental quality

Characteristics of this approach are as follow:

* The design led planning approach determines the elements, structure and hierarchy of planning based on the three dimensional environment and the image quality and considers the qualitative characteristics of the environment.

* The design led planning approach emphasizes less on the land use standards. In this approach the preferred form and the quality of the environment is more important.

* The design led planning approach determines the goals and design criteria. These goals and criteria must be considered in development and approval for plans and must be capable of introduction at large scales.

* The design led planning approach evaluates the situation and priorities. This evaluation is based on the judgmental abilities of the experts, who can predict the qualitative and spatial outcomes of the development, prior to occurrence.

The effect of this approach on the urban planning system of England is to the extent at which the qualitative urban environmental criteria are present in urban development plans at all levels, with more impact at lower levels. This article proposes some recommendations for introduction of this approach to Iranian urban planning system.

Keywords: Design Led Planning, Design Policy, Supplementary Planning Documents, Policy Oriented Urban Design, Urban Quality.