

Project Mandate

Future Cities Standards



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What are you trying to do?

Produce case-studies, briefings and a report that outlines a standard for the governance and management systems that will be required for the city of the future.

How is it done today, and what are the limits of current practice?

Traditionally cities have been developed by councils deciding upon the needs of their locality and implementing their decision directly through officers who manage and implement the whole process. This continues to be common practice internationally.

More recently, in the UK, that changed to councillors approving the plans of others (including developers and land owners who wish to bring their land forward for development) in line with a Local Plan drawn up by professional officers, with the local authority managing the whole process, subject to national policies.

Current practice has increasingly been that local plans are being bypassed and major development is approved by inspectors deciding that a proposal meets national planning policy, the process being managed by professionals from a range of organisations. The resulting development, in the absence of adequate local authority maintenance funding, is often administered by a management company.

The outcome of this approach frequently results in significant challenge to the process, friction between residents, the developer and the governance system(s). The physical outcome can be a disjointed development pattern with isolated, car-dependent sites, and the absence of the robust infrastructure that is essential for a sustainable city. The focus of this approach is small scale and site-by-site, making it very difficult for cities to act in a strategic or sub-regional scale in an entrepreneurial way.

There is little clarity about which of all of these processes are good practice and should be encouraged, which require more refinement and those which can be abandoned because they have no purpose or meaning for the City of the Future.

What's new in your approach and why do you think it will be successful?

The current lack of clear definitions for SMART CITIES and the City of the Future needs to be addressed to enable informed and focused progression of what is required to make a difference when developing infrastructure.

Additionally, coordination is required with related professions and interest groups to provide coordinated guidance and standards in developing new or redeveloping existing urban areas.

Major issues that need examination are transport modes, energy demand and sources, re-evaluation of infrastructure networks in order to propose amendments to regulatory frameworks.

This project, through evaluating current initiatives and past practice could be influential in delivering thought leadership for SMART CITIES initiatives.

This project will approach future cities in two ways.

- 1 - identify what a future city could be, including its transitional stages
- 2 - give some insight into the barriers to change and opportunities to move forward.

The purpose of this project is to provide clarity of what is required to make meaningful progress in urban infrastructure development.

There is a current demand for knowledge, direction and guidance by councils, designers, developers and others to address major developments to enable informed decision making locally and nationally.

What are the risks and the payoffs?

Foreseeing the future is fraught with difficulty and, with hindsight, ridicule for the failed visions. So ICE could easily lose reputation in attempting the exercise. However, moving forward blind to the possibilities carries its own risks.

Identifying good practice and invest in good research informs the future. The benefits of delivering clear advice which is accepted by multi-professions is to the reputation of ICE and its members.

This is an international subject that impacts on key UN objectives and environmental goals.

Indeed the biggest risk to ICE is not addressing this issue in a meaningful manner which would impact negatively on its international and national relevance in civil engineering urban infrastructure.

How much will it cost?

The cost implications are unknown at this stage. The standards scope and output is yet to be fully determined.

Potential costs consist of:-

- fees for specific contributors (none identified as yet - contributions to date have not been an issue for members)
- Reimbursement of expenses associated with coordination meetings (est. £750)

- Printing and advertising costs (ICE decision)
- Overall, costs are considered minimal and borne in many cases by contributors.

How long will it take?

No firm standards framework is established as yet therefore output scale is unsure. However best estimates are as thus:-

Draft scoping paper, identify partner professional bodies and set out reports structure
- 2 months

Initial papers and briefing - **9 months**

More developed coordination paper - **1 year.**

Note - Target output should not exceed 2 years due to potential competition by other professional bodies.

What are the preliminary and final exams to check for success?

- Positive response from various professions regards intermediate papers
- Peer review from ICE members to confirm direction of work is appropriate based on above intermediate papers (needs defining and feedback reports)
- Integration with National Government goals would be a highly successful outcome
- International recognition through related professional bodies would be a highly successful outcome
- Members briefings or papers on subject headings
- Seminar and external body inclusion of work in presentations as examples of best practice

Our vision

Civil engineers at the heart of society, delivering sustainable development through knowledge, skills and professional expertise.

Core purpose

- To develop and qualify professionals engaged in civil engineering
- To exchange knowledge and best practice for the creation of a sustainable and built environment

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