

Improving Quality of Place

Strategic Approaches in Germany and the UK



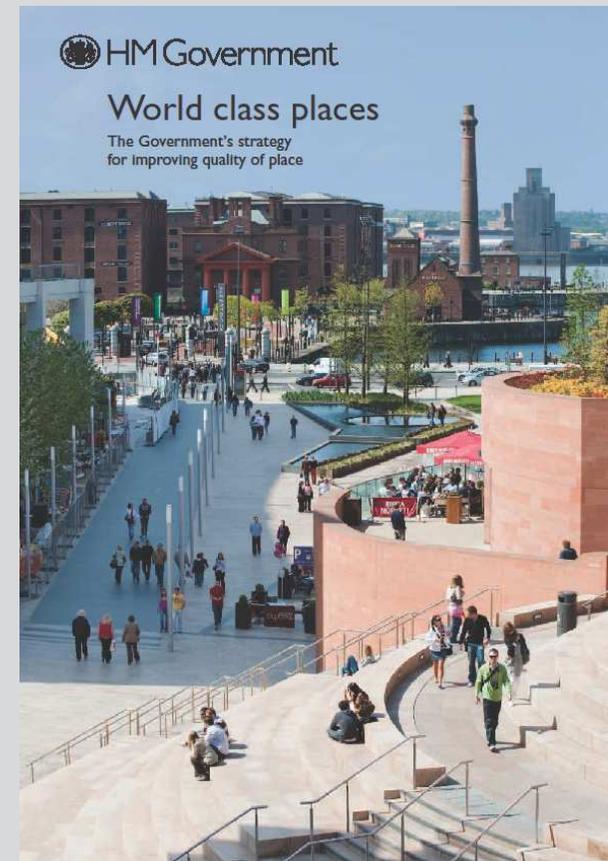
Quality of Place

- In the context of increased global competition, it has been assumed that cities need to exhibit distinctive qualities to attract new investors, businesses, skilled workers, and tourists
- Local 'soft' location factors have been considered important for the perception of quality of place



World Class Places (UK)

- In May 2009, the British government published a strategy paper on how to improve quality of place in the United Kingdom followed by an Action Plan in September 2009
- Supported by national surveys and local case studies, the publication identifies a number of social and environmental deficiencies related to poor quality of place



World Class Places (UK)

- The publication defines quality of place as *“the physical characteristics of a community – the way it is planned, designed, developed and maintained – that affect the quality of life of people living and working in it, and those visiting it, both now and into the future”*
- It identifies eleven place-related factors which contribute to a good quality of life in local areas



World Class Places (UK)

- The identified eleven factors have been organised in four categories - called 'elements' - of quality of place:

1. the “range and mix of homes, services and amenities”
2. the “design and upkeep of buildings and spaces”
3. the “provision of green space and green infrastructure”
4. the “treatment of historic buildings and places”



World Class Places (UK)

Action Plan / key areas of action:

1. creating an awareness for quality of place
2. providing knowledge, tools, guidance, and support on quality of place
3. encouraging public and community engagement for quality of place
4. implementing quality of place principles and objectives in practice



Baukultur (Germany)

- Since 2000, *Baukultur* has become subject of public discussion in Germany
- In 2002, the *Initiative Architektur und Baukultur* was launched
- In 2007, the *Stiftung Baukultur* became formally established



Baukultur (Germany)

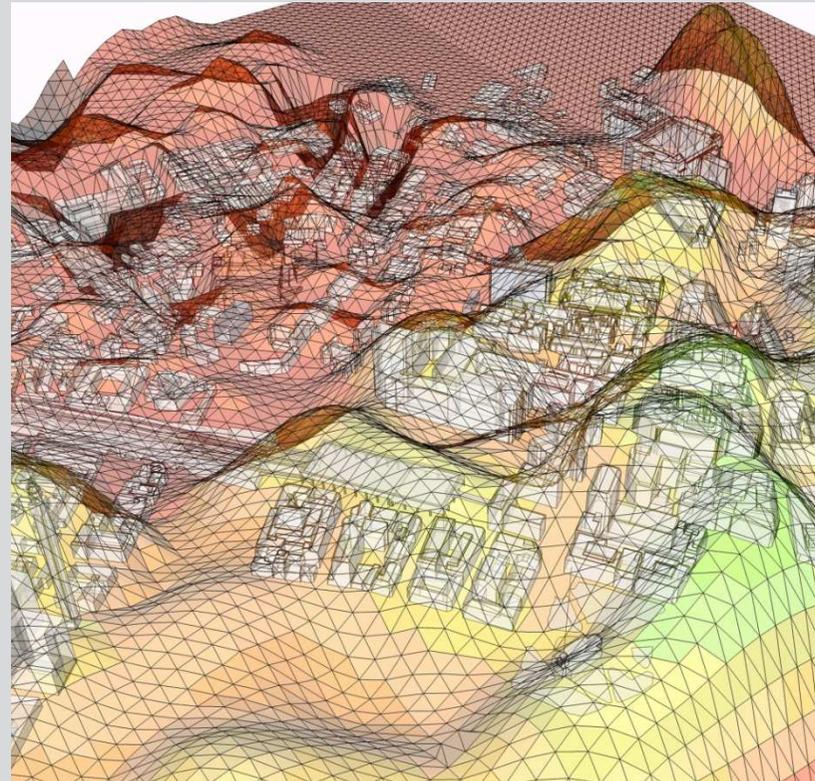
Four qualities of *Baukultur*:

1. the design and appearance of the built environment and its integration in space
2. the use of the built environment
3. its ecological, social, and economic sustainability
4. the operational processes during tendering and award procedures and construction



Baukultur (Germany)

- initial approaches encouraged a methodological discussion on quality of place,
- general suggestions for research and practice have been provided, but no detailed and time-bound action plan
- publications and initiatives following the first status report have mainly been focussing on best practice case studies, PR, and networking



'World Class Places' and *Baukultur* in comparison

Commonalities:

1. Intention to improve quality of place (physical characteristics of place)
2. Quality of the built environment is understood as affecting everybody's quality of life

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Differences:

1. Methodological approaches of how quality of place is defined / assessed
2. Use and considerations of research results
3. Political implementation

Conclusion

- Both concepts, 'World Class Places' and *Baukultur* assume that quality of place has an effect on everybody's quality of life
- *Baukultur* focuses on the production and operation of the built environment
- 'World Class Places' focuses also on physical aspects of place, but it considers the impact of subjective and emotional perceptions



Conclusion

- *Baukultur* provides a flexible framework to measure the quality of the built environment. What it lacks, however, is further specification
- ‘World Class Places’ is very specific in the way it identifies quality of space, but it seems overly prescriptive offering rather static solutions to a complex subject
- *Baukultur* is implemented as a political long-term goal. ‘World Class Places’ lacks political stability

