

Green roofs, Tokyo

The project

Dense cities, such as Tokyo, suffer from the heat island effect, with ambient temperatures considerably higher than the surrounding countryside. The Tokyo government passed regulations in 2002 to 'green' buildings with trees, plants and grass. The regulations require '20% of every new, large private building and 30% of all public buildings' to be covered in greenery (McCurry, 2004). One such example is at Roppongi Hills, a new project by the Mori Corporation – which is also claimed to be Tokyo's (Figure C.30) example of compact city development (Yabe *et al.*, 2003).

Sustainability features

Green roofs, it is suggested, have numerous sustainability benefits. In addition to reducing the heat island effect,

they help to conserve energy and fuel because of their insulation value, and ameliorate storm water run-off through absorption. They enhance biodiversity and wildlife, and provide additional green space in crowded urban areas (Anon, 2004). Roppongi Hills provides 1300 m² of roof garden space. However, such 'sky gardens' tend to be for private use, and the public benefit may be slight.

References and links

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Figure C.30
A 'sky garden' at Roppongi Hills, Tokyo. (Source: Mori Building Co., Ltd.)

Index

- accessibility 80
 - intelligent city indicator 48
- adaptability 3
 - Darwinian concept 40–41
- Archigram 138
- architectural vision 272
- back-casting 365
- Bamboo Summit City 209–210
- Battery Park City 189
- blue banana 59
- bohemian index 50
- boulevard 180–182
- Bovenstad, upper city 208–211
- Bristol
 - political reality 108–110
 - Regional Chamber 109
 - public transport system, funds 109–110
- brownfield 69, 129, 238, 430, 436
- Brundtland Report 312
- bubble economy, Japan 63
- building integrated photovoltaic (BIPV) 382
 - overshadowing 386
- bye-law housing 289, 290
- Cambridge
 - past policies 115–118
 - public consultation 130–132
 - sub-region 114
 - knowledge-based industries 114
 - Silicon Fen 265
 - transport links 117–118
 - virtual highway 118
- Cambridge Futures Project 266
- Cambridge Futures 114
 - alternative options
 - assessment 125–130
 - densification 116–117
 - green swap 117
 - impact 118–121
 - minimum growth 116
 - necklace 117
 - new town 118
 - results 121–125
 - transport links 117–118
 - virtual highway 118
- Cambridge Highway Transport Model 120
- Cambridge Phenomenon 114
- Cambridge region, future 265–267
- Cambridge sub-region
 - knowledge-based industries 114
- Campaign of the Protection of Rural England 297
- Campus City 179–180
- carbon dioxide (CO₂) 355–356
 - reduction 360
- carbon emission 356, 357, 359
- central business district (CBD)
 - Singapore, functional divide 168–170
- charitable trust 264
- China 395
 - environmental issue 397
- cities 14, 15
 - air space, development 216
 - changing character 14
 - changing form 15–16
 - changing 385
 - commodifying 19–24
 - countryside 26
 - design elements
 - developing quarters 352
 - memorable events, places 351
 - physical accessibility 351
 - public and private boundaries 350
 - virtual accessibility 350
 - walkable zones 352–353
 - digital infrastructure 39
 - diversity indices 50
 - efficiency 76
 - fundamental role 35, 38
 - greening
 - Green roofs, Tokyo 438
 - Île-de-France 437
 - Oslo's Green Heart 436
 - hinterlands 41–42
 - intensification 44
 - in Japan 314, 316
 - physical hub 19
 - policy aim 20
 - size 75
 - social role 14–15
 - strengthening 26
 - sustaining 24–28
 - citizen participation 26–28