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The Intelligent City: Ubiquitous Network or Humane Environment

Introduction

The ‘new’ (or knowledge) economy is redefining the city for the 21st century. This has significant implications for the way we live, work and move around our cities. In the pursuit of sustainable urban form, the notion of ‘the intelligent city’ is invaluable because it shares the theoretical foundations of sustainability. In this discussion, city intelligence refers to the capacity of the city to adequately serve the requirements of its inhabitants, matching its potential to their aspirations, which is not unlike the sustainable principle of fulfilling the needs of the present generation. The ‘intelligent city’ is not a new concept: in its broadest sense, city intelligence is something that is intrinsic to the *traditional* city form, which is derived from its physical context, the culture and habits of its citizens, and available technology. ‘Intelligence’ is not, nor should it be, simply a measure of the effectiveness of a communications network.

If the requirements of the intelligent city are changing, then we will need to reconsider how we (re)create our cities. This has implications both for urban policy and for the processes we undertake to develop urban accommodation. A shift in emphasis from quantitative to qualitative is needed; as well as a broader focus in the local planning system, changing from a