

see how the non-human scale of the major transportation and communication networks that pass between the sectors with dimensions of 1800 metres (5094 feet), are gradually yielding to minor communications networks entering the sectors without crossing them and in a way not attracting through-traffic, thus defining three or four human communities within each sector' (Doxiadis, 1968). Such districts may reach a population of 40 000 to 50 000 people, though Doxiadis suggests that the grouping of communities and their size should be proportional to the size of the settlement.

HARLOW AND THE QUARTER

The new town of Harlow, which has already been discussed earlier in the chapter, is divided into four quarters or districts. As mentioned earlier, landscape and topography are the key features in the location of the main town quarters, dividing one quarter from the next. Each quarter, which has a major centre, was designed to have a population of approximately 20 000 people. The quarter comprises a cluster of neighbourhoods which focus on a major centre of fifty shops, church, health centre, branch library and hall. One of the four quarters has for its focus the town centre itself.

Mark Hall, the quarter to the north-east of Harlow, is divided into three neighbourhoods separated from each other by main roads and landscaping. The neighbourhoods focus on the district centre at the crossing of the main roads serving the quarter. Each neighbourhood was designed to have its own primary schools located at

its centre which was also to contain four to six shops, a hall and a public house. Each neighbourhood is further divided into distinct housing units of 150 to 400 dwellings centred on a local play space and tenants' common room: 'There are thus four stages of community groupings in the town: the housing unit and its play space and common room; the neighbourhood with its primary school, shopping centres and hall; the neighbourhood cluster with its large shopping and community group; and the Town Centre' (Gibberd, 1955).

The housing units are linked to the centres and to the main roads by a system of spine or loop roads that run through each neighbourhood. Separate cycle and pedestrian routes were designed to link the neighbourhoods in Mark Hall with the industrial estates, town centre and the other districts of the city. Though the form of Mark Hall is quite different from the grid used by Doxiadis in Islamabad, Gibberd, the planner of Harlow, also uses the term organic to describe his design for the town: 'The resulting pattern is an organic system in which the roads increase in scale the farther they are from the heart of the housing groups' (Gibberd, 1955). The term 'organic' – when used by Doxiadis, Gibberd and other architects and planners – can result in a wide variety of forms. In the case of Harlow, the organic analogy refers to the concept of a hierarchy of facilities, centres and roads rather like the branching of a tree; it also refers to the grouping of cellular units to form larger components of the city. The arrangement of the local centre and primary school within walking distance of all homes in the catchment area is a feature of the Harlow plan which should be common practice in the planning of the sustainable city of the future. More problematic, for



8.26



8.27

Figure 8.26 Harlow, housing and landscape**Figure 8.27** Harlow, housing and landscape

sustainable development, is the low gross density in Harlow. This feature of the quarter increases distances between its different parts. One school of thought on sustainable development suggests a higher density regime in order to support public transport. Such an urban solution, however, would not accommodate the British suburban dream home – nor would a Harlow, with its effective and attractive landscaping, be possible under such a regime (Figures 8.26–8.29).

Figure 8.28 Harlow, housing and landscape**Figure 8.29** Harlow, housing and landscape

CLIFTON ESTATE IN NOTTINGHAM

New towns were not the only post-Second World War urban developments in Britain. Around most major cities in the country large urban extensions were built by the local authorities. These estates were built for those unable to secure a mortgage, or for those with a preference for renting a home. Estates like Croxteth and Kirby in Liverpool were built in the 1950s and 1960s throughout the country. Clifton in Nottingham is one such quarter. It was built beyond the River Trent to the south of the city. The new development, consisting mainly of

two-storey terraced and semi-detached housing is the bulk of the quarter. It is separated from the old village of Clifton by the A453, a trunk road carrying heavy traffic, which divides this residential quarter. The old village of Clifton sits on a ridge