

SUSTAINABILITY BY DESIGN

Enhancing RIBA Plan of Work Stages for a
Climate-Resilient Future

Build Better, Use Less [White Paper 1]
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GRENADIER

Sustainability by Design:

Introduction

Decarbonisation of the built environment has become a critical consideration in the construction and design industry as the sector grapples with its significant contribution to the climate and biodiversity crisis.

As a forward-thinking and responsible real estate development company, Grenadier Estates recognises the urgent need for a paradigm shift in the way we develop. Our experiences tell us that we need to adopt a 'Sustainability by Design' approach.

This abridged white paper discusses the limitations of the current RIBA development stages, proposes new sections to address climate and sustainability, and recommends the appointment of a Principal Sustainability Designer to ensure that sustainability is a key consideration at every stage of development. By adopting these changes Grenadier believes we can all achieve Sustainability by Design.

Acknowledgements:

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SCOPE

This paper is not designed to be holistic or solve all the problems, it is designed to be a tool for action, to inspire further conversation and collaboration. It will be naïve to some and antagonistic to others. It reflects our experience, not advice. It is not a critique of the suppliers and professionals we have used.

We are happy for others to use and share this document and the ideas within it provided they acknowledge Grenadier Estates.

Current Limitations of RIBA Development Stages

The RIBA Plan of Work 2020 development stages are an essential framework for guiding the design and construction process. Arguably, they haven't kept pace with the changing world and their current structure lacks specific sections that explicitly address sustainability and climate issues. The absence of dedicated stages means that sustainability is often an afterthought, leading to missed opportunities and suboptimal climate and nature outcomes.

Additionally, the current RIBA stages rely heavily on professionals, such as architects and engineers, to bring sustainability issues to the forefront. However, in Grenadier's experience not all professionals have the necessary expertise or awareness to integrate sustainability effectively. This reliance on individual initiative can lead to inconsistencies and gaps in sustainable design practices across different projects.

Furthermore, whilst the formulaic nature of the RIBA stages gives much needed structure and scope to developments services it creates a set track and pathway for the professional teams to follow that can create tunnel vision when it comes to sustainability.

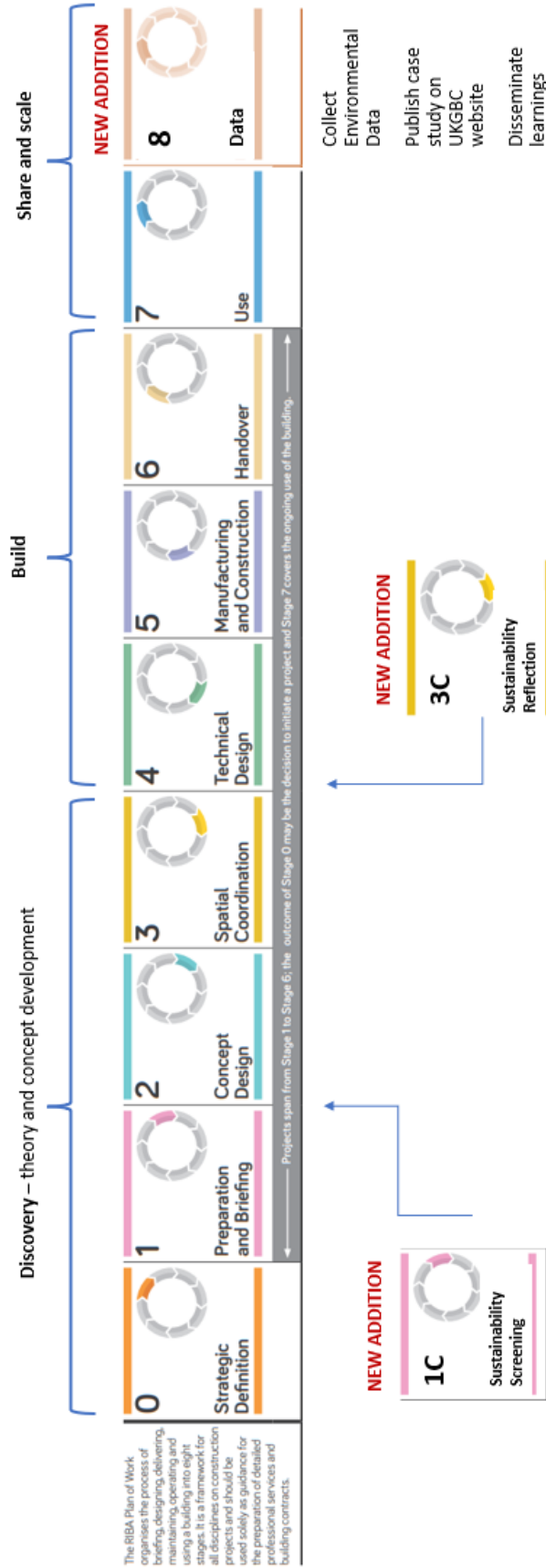
Three New RIBA Development Stages

To address the limitations of the current RIBA development stages and to ensure that sustainability is an integral part of every project, it is essential to introduce new sections that explicitly focus on sustainability and climate issues. These 'C'-sections (Climate) would act as dedicated checkpoints, ensuring that sustainability considerations are not overlooked or sidelined.

Grenadier has developed three new stages shown on the image overleaf:

1. **Stage 1.'C'** - a dedicated review and screening of the project's vision through the lens of climate and sustainability.
2. **Stage 3.'C'** - a dedicated reflection point ahead of Technical Design to set sustainability KPIs and identify opportunities for further climate mitigation and adaptation.
3. **Stage 8 - Data** - a dedicated stage of collecting data to be able to share learnings and know how on climate and nature approaches.

Grenadier's Sustainability by Design Approach to the RIBA Plan of Work



Original drawing adapted from the RIBA Plan of Work ©RIBA 2020

Original drawing adapted from the RIBA Plan of Work ©RIBA 2020

Appointment of a Principal Sustainability Designer

To strengthen the focus on sustainability within the RIBA stages, Grenadier Estates recommends the appointment of a 'Principal Sustainability Designer' (PSD) alongside the existing Principal Designer for CDM (Construction Design and Management).

Formally appointed and embedded in the contracts, The Principal Sustainability Designer would act as the employer's champion and representative, driving the golden thread of sustainability throughout the project's lifecycle. Whilst not every development will be able to afford a PSD, every developer can ensure Sustainability is 'owned'.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Grenadier Estates believes that the integration of sustainability and climate issues into the RIBA development stages is crucial to drive meaningful change in the construction and design industry. By introducing new sections to address sustainability explicitly and appointing a Principal Sustainability Designer, projects can be steered towards a more climate-resilient and sustainable future. This proactive approach ensures that sustainability is not an afterthought but an intrinsic part of every development, passing on essential knowledge and best practices to other stakeholders and projects to build a better and more sustainable world.

This is **Sustainability by Design**.

