

Question 13 (8 marks)

Many products are designed to have a limited 'lifespan' – that is, they are designed to be replaced rather than repaired.

- (a) Give reasons why designers develop new products with a limited 'lifespan'. 2

Giving a limited 'lifespan' to products results in huge financial gain to the designers as one single consumer may buy a product several times. Designing products with limited lifespans also allows the designer to learn from the products initial life and evaluate and improve on it.

- (b) Explain the effects on society and the environment of designing products with a limited lifespan. 6

The rate at which products are becoming 'obsolete' is becoming faster and faster, this is terrible for the environment as there are now pile ups of supposedly 'unsalvageable products'. However if the designer takes into consideration the state of the environment, then society and the environment will benefit. If a product is designed so that the old parts can be salvaged and re-used then ultimately it will be greater for society, despite the initial extra cost of 're-buying' products, as it will be our environment which will prosper from these actions. This being said, sustainable products ~~are~~ have the greatest impact upon society and the environment being economically and environmentally beneficial.