



Similarities with Tallin in Estonia could be made along Western Esplanade and Cuckoo Lane by utilising the arcades as a feature to enhance the perception of the historical origins and enrich and enliven the area



In Winchester, modern, imaginative and appropriate methods, rather than using pastiche, have been found to rediscover and enhance the historic character of the city



The enclosed nature of the walled city of Rhodes and its proximity to the sea is clearly apparent; this must be retained in the Old Town

2. THE OLD TOWN VISION

Objective 1: A place that rediscovers, conserves, enhances and redefines the Old Town's historic character

- The Old Town's historic character was its enclosed, intimate, and built-up nature, resulting from its geography, events and medieval fortifications.
- This pre-war character should be re-established through re-instating the historic street pattern where possible, the built form's mass and scale, and encouraging the use of appropriate high quality materials.
- The character area would be redefined by recognising the line of the missing Town Walls, better definition of its gateways, and the realisation of an enhanced network of spaces linking the Central Parks, retail core and other sections of the city with its waterfront.
- The best of the Old Town successfully marries high density while maintaining a human and attractive environment.
- Historical associations could be imitated through a series of city-centre management initiatives and public art.
- New uses would restore access to underused historical assets, and development should build on the incremental/domestic style of the existing character of the Old Town that is part of its charm, in order to enhance the character of this specific quarter of the city.
- The Old Town's historic buildings and archaeology should be interpreted to help reinforce and promote its distinct identity.

Objective 2: An area connecting Above Bar and the Central Parks with the Waterfront

- Activity and movement should be concentrated along the North/South Spine of the High Street from the city’s hub of the Bargate and access improved from Above Bar, the Central Parks and the Waterfront into the character area.
- Connections between the Old Town and these areas could be denoted in many ways - building/street furniture design, landscaping, signage, banners, and maintaining and enhancing views.
- A spread of uses and activities throughout the Old Town that are well advertised would assist in connecting the character area’s extremities with its heart and its neighbouring character areas.



In the French town of Collioure, the town’s enclosed nature adjacent to the water’s edge is clearly apparent, with the streets and surrounding buildings creating a lively setting for activity by day and night



As in Poole, shown above, close and accessible links to the waterfront should be re-established



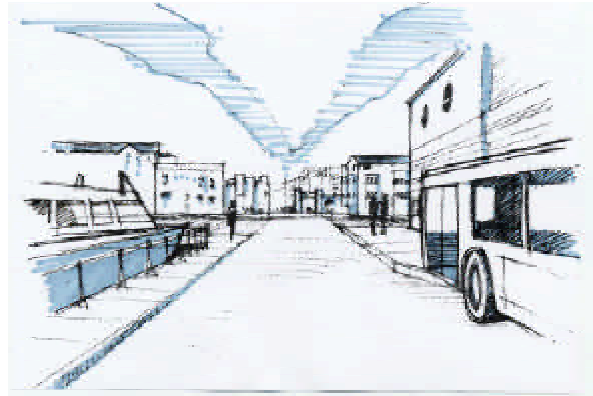
Houndwell Park, in the heart of the city centre



Fireworks at Mayflower Park to celebrate the maiden voyage of the QM2

Objective 3: A pedestrian and cycling priority location served by an integrated public transport network

- Visitors arriving from outside the city by 24-hour train, bus or river ferry services would either arrive at or have free and easy access to the Old Town, whilst those arriving by bicycle would find plenty of convenient places to park within the character area.
- Through-traffic should be minimised by using clear signing to newly improved car parks and a more efficient peripheral route with easy connections to the Old Town.
- Consistent signing would help improve pedestrian legibility, whilst traffic calming and the detailed design of the public realm with, for example, seating to help break up longer walks would encourage greater pedestrian movement throughout the Old Town.



An interchange between the river ferries and station buses close to The Watergate would improve the accessibility of the Old Town



Pedestrian and cyclist priorities in Gloucester



Pedestrian and cyclist priorities in the Old Town

Objective 4: A self-sustaining mix of uses

- The current mixed population structure would be strengthened with new residential development, encouraged and sustained through the provision of essential infrastructure and services.
- The Old Town’s attractiveness to residents and visitors alike should be enhanced through a variety of uses throughout the area including cafés, bars and restaurants, some major foci to the south and west, the utilisation of the many historic structures, provision of artists’ studios, heritage trails and children’s play areas near the retail core.
- Distinct sub-areas that maintain the calm and quiet characteristic of the quarter should be retained where people could sit and watch from a street café or square, this would help achieve a socially cohesive and sustainable community.



This continental square provides interest for children and adults alike, with options of sun or shade and formal or informal places to sit and enjoy the calm available



A mixture of uses: cafés, residential, offices and industrial alongside each other in different buildings in Gloucester Docks



Cafés, shops, and commerce can all sit comfortably with one another even in one building on different floors, providing life to the street and the services required to sustain adjacent city living, as in this example in Rhodes



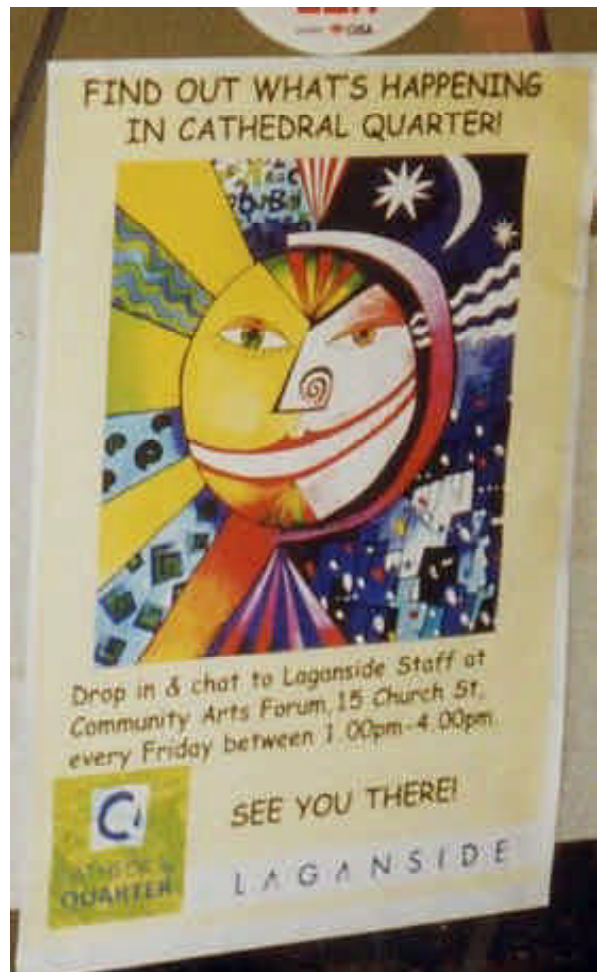
Narrow plots allow low rent uses in Gloucester and provide interest on connecting alleyways

Objective 5: An identifiable sense of place

- The Old Town should become an identifiable place, with its own newly formed and holistic “users’ group”, including residents, business interests and employees, promoting the area, its uses and events in tandem with the City Council to the rest of the city and further afield.
- As such, Southampton’s Old Town would once again become a place with its own distinct identity defined through its modern and historic built environment, public realm, distinctive materials, and the activities situated within the quarter, as well as the connections to its neighbouring character areas.
- There could be award winning contemporary schemes in keeping with the area’s character, raising the Old Town’s profile in international circles, coupled with nationally renowned events staged in and around the Old Town.



Belfast’s Cathedral Quarter has used place marketing as an important facet of its continuing regeneration, with events, murals, walks and talks and the Quarter’s name becoming widely publicised and recognised, as well as having its own distinctive street furniture detailing, as illustrated above



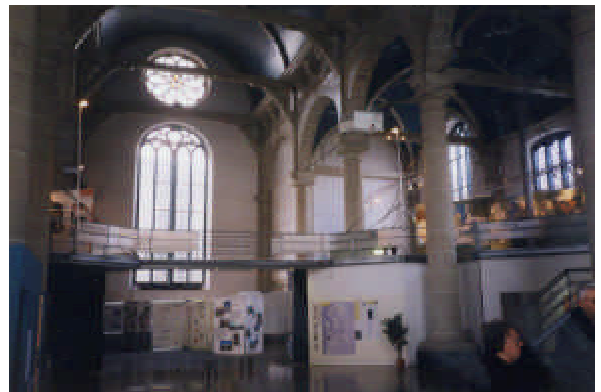
A vibrancy within a historical setting, with informal street events, could help achieve an identifiable sense of place, as here in Manchester

Objective 6: A distinct area that is part of the whole city experience

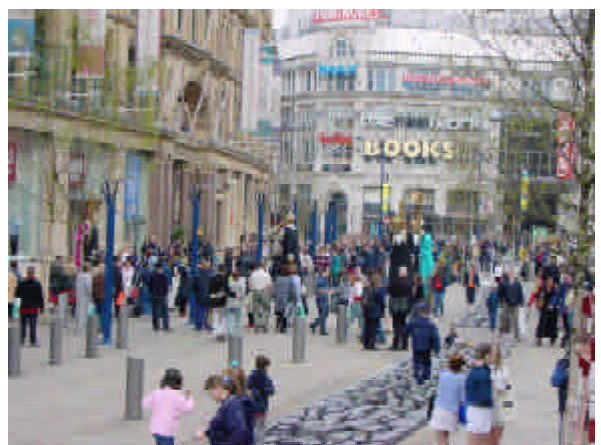
- The Old Town would be well connected internally and externally through well signed routes, heritage trails, maintained views and a fully integrated transport network. The internal connections could be further improved by the open space network, with the activities and uses within these and the Old Town itself encouraging people to explore further.
- The mixed-use base of the Old Town and its relationships to the rest of Southampton could possibly be highlighted and explored from a new Tourist Information Centre, perhaps located in The Bargate, emphasising its central location in the city. This would lead to the patronising of spin-off events and attractions, such as taking a river ferry across to Ocean Village or around the docks to view cruise ships currently in port.
- People would see the Old Town as offering complementary uses and activities to the rest of the city and ideally include it in sections of their daily activities. This could be by taking their children to a new play area in Albion Place to provide a break from shopping, visiting a new heritage attraction, witnessing an event in one of the town spaces over a lunchtime coffee, or even just being a place to come home to after a day at work.



Civic pride and public affinity for the Old Town could be encouraged through the use of spaces for traditional festivals, such as in this French example, Albion Place could become such a space



The imaginative re-use of a church in Amsterdam for the public display of development proposals retains and opens the building for public use, the Tudor Merchants' Hall could be similarly utilised



In Manchester, imaginative regeneration has helped one area of the city become an experience in itself as well as part of the whole city experience