

7 IMPLEMENTING THE URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

7.1 SCOPE OF THE CHALLENGE

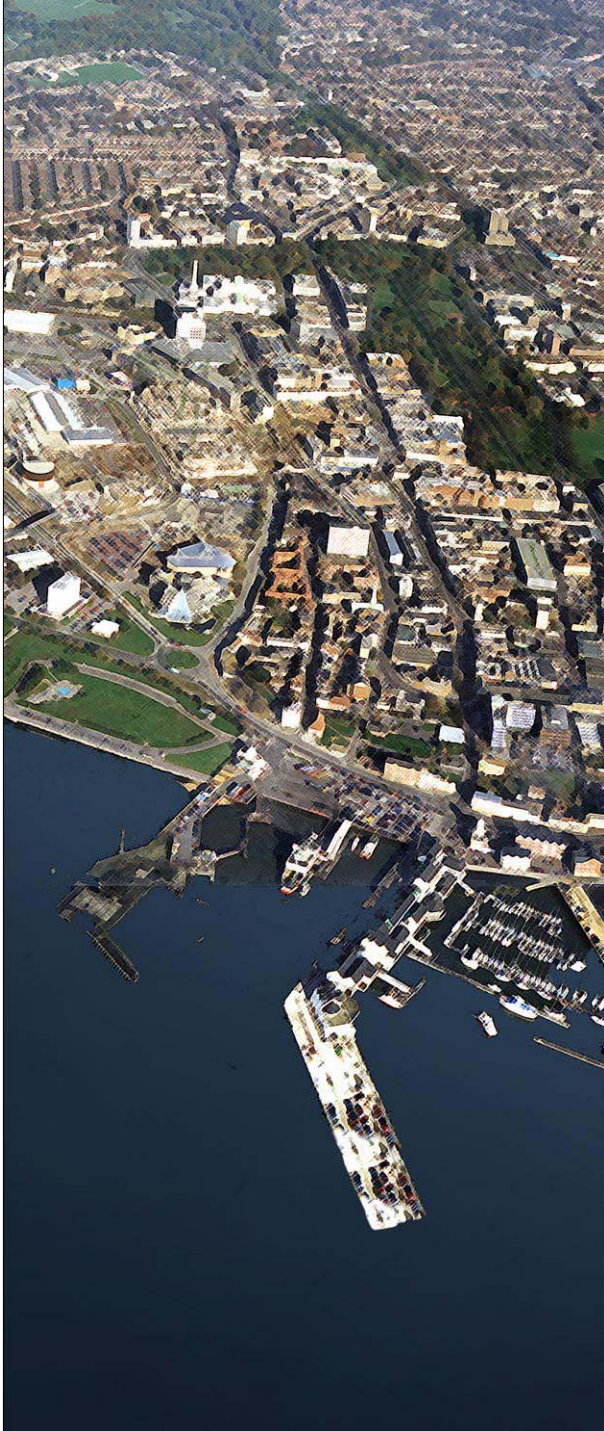
This urban design strategy for central Southampton promotes a long term, integrated approach to its future development. The long term perspective seeks to make positive linkages to the other related physical, environmental, transport and marketing projects. The strategy recognises that the future success and prosperity of central Southampton for both visitors and locals alike depends on a range of actions and activities. These include:

At strategic level

- Promotion and development of design aspirations and guidance
- Project planning, funding and resourcing
- Dialogue with designers, developers and businesses
- Integration with delivery of other Council and public services
- Community engagement and support

At implementation level

- Practical use of strategy in negotiations
- Operation of a design panel
- Enabling development of buildings, both new and refurbished
- Design, co-ordination and implementation of new and existing public spaces
- Implementation of keynote projects
- Co-ordination of public transport/access strategy
- The co-ordination with an arts, cultural and evening economy strategy
- The promotion of inward investment activity
- The implementation of a hotel, tourism and conference strategy
- Promotion and marketing of central Southampton and its image in various sectors and themes



- Securing grants, lottery funding for projects (eg from South East England Development Agency, English Partnerships & English Heritage)
- Administration of collective pool of funding and resources for design projects
- Integrated approaches to statutory services such as planning, environmental health, building control, transportation, leisure and housing consistent with the urban design strategy

7.2 A CO-ORDINATING MECHANISM

The urban design strategy and its component projects needs be implemented by a variety of public and private sector agencies, with acknowledgement that the main investment in development coming from the private sector. It is essential that the delivery is co-ordinated within the city council in such a way that it maximises the overall impact. In this way, for example, macro improvements to the fabric and streetscape will be complemented by micro-level actions by small businesses, entrepreneurs and residents.

At present the many functions which are required are undertaken by different bodies with different levels of co-ordination and linkage. In addition to a range of council departments are other key players including the transport providers and the great range of private businesses of all sizes and sectors who provide important investment and employment. In addition, developers and entrepreneurial operators who are not yet represented in Southampton will become crucial to the fulfilment of the strategy, as an earlier generation of participants move off the scene. What is required is a mechanism which cuts across the various arms of *sectoral delivery*.

Objectives

A partnership of participants is crucial to shape, influence and implement the necessary policy and projects and also act as an 'umbrella' clearing house to oversee co-ordinated (and hopefully non-contradictory) delivery of urban design projects by lead partners. Performance criteria will include:

- Capability to connect to the diversity of programmes and projects being promoted in central Southampton and therefore engage the lead implementation partners, including the Council
- Ability to engage and involve the private sector
- An action-orientated culture, focused on delivery of urban design quality

Recommendations

It is proposed that an individual or team, employed through the Council, leads the appropriate mechanisms for delivery. This allows connection to its various departments and statutory planning function, as well as a range of external relationships.

The function could be extended to create a stronger retail and commercial focus and build on the important work in town centre management. The function would need to expand in the conventional role to include more development and public realm dimensions. It would also require strong liaison with the Southampton business and retail communities, as well as developers and the community.

Priorities

The priority actions should include:

- Dissemination of the strategy for public comment
- Establishment of a design panel
- Formal launch to the development and design community
- Commencement of detailed design of keynote projects

7.3 PLANNING TOOLS

7.3.1 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

SPG offers an important tool to support the City of Southampton Local Plan (CSLP) in negotiating urban design and related dimensions of proposals. It should comprise many of the graphic, plan based dimensions of the strategy, including the various development proposals for sites and public realm recommendations. In many instances it is better that this information does not have full Current Statutory Local Plan status because that would become too prescriptive. It is the intention that the urban design principles and public realm treatments are adopted as baseline aspirations and exemplars of what the Council is seeking. They do not necessarily have to be followed in slavish detail if designers can come up with even better schemes.

7.3.2 Section 106 and other legal agreements

These agreements will often be necessary to secure contributions to public realm/public art or other measures such as traffic improvements around, for instance, green commuter plans. The reason for this is that not all such proposals are adequately guaranteed using conventional planning conditions, yet the contributions may be a critical dimension of securing consent. Therefore this mechanism provides an important legal route for reinforcing adequate positive shifts in design and policy. Importantly, they should positively help direct the actions and behaviour of the business and development community and their agents on occasions when this is needed.



7.4 MARKETING AND PROMOTION

7.4.1 The need and objectives

Southampton continues to suffer from elements of a negative image, expressed variously in feedback sessions as *dull, boring, lacking a strong identity and unexciting*.

The progressive implementation of the projects proposed in this strategy should address many of these perceptions.

It is important that this is supported by the marketing function of both the city and its key partners. Within the *wider place marketing strategy for Southampton*, a strong focus should be placed on the city centre and its improvements in its design. This would help achieve the twin aims of:

- building confidence in the city from a general image and reputation perspective
- focusing on businesses and activities which are capable of making a material difference in fulfilling the urban design strategy (e.g. a new wave of more innovative developers, niche retailers and their designers)



7.4.2 Key messages and targets

Within the overall marketing strategy for the City, there should be a clear marketing programme, focusing on a range of target audiences who can contribute to improving the design quality of Southampton city centre. It is suggested that this project should be focused on four key target markets, promoting central Southampton as a location for:

- quality specialist retail investment including fashion outlets, specialist cafes and restaurants, Target audience: retailers and their agents, property media
- investment in a wide range of contemporary, flexible offices and workspace provision. Target audience: the technology, cultural and professional services sectors (including insurance, digital media and design) and their agents
- quality urban living, with good transport connections, housing opportunities and cultural facilities, all at a reasonable cost. Target audiences: urban housebuilders, their architects and estate agents and occupiers
- new hotels and accommodation provision to meet a range of business and tourism needs. Target audiences: hotel operators, conference organisers, tour companies and businesses

By targeting these groups Southampton is more likely to capture the innovative end of building design and become more demanding in its requirements for a high quality public realm.

7.4.3 Strategy development & tools

It is anticipated that the City's overall marketing strategy will utilise the full range of marketing tools and promotional media to present a positive image of the city and of its quality urban design. This will necessitate close co-operation between the key public sector players (Council, SEEDA and Tourist Board) and clear involvement of private sector operators and investors. Amongst the tools that could contribute to an improved perception of Southampton and the quality of its overall design would be:

- development of a city branding which focuses on quality, design, diversity and contemporary character
- a specific media campaign focusing on the improvements to the city centre
- a specific range of promotional material about the nature of the emerging Southampton and the changes it accommodates.

7.5 FUNDING STRATEGY

Sources of public funding

Unlike many other urban areas which have undergone economic and physical re-structuring (such as Birmingham, Newcastle and Glasgow), Southampton has been eligible for very little indeed in the way of EU funding. The resources therefore have to be procured from a range of private sector investments and sponsorship, together with pump priming public sector resources. The major support from public sector funding could come from

- **English Partnerships or South East England Development Agency contribution**

English Partnerships (EP) and the regional development agency (SEEDA) represent potential partners in some of the projects being considered for central Southampton. They could get involved in certain pilot schemes for which there is a gap funding requirement which cannot be met from elsewhere. These must meet their sectoral and spatial criteria for investment. Ideally this will involve taking some equity role as a partner in a project or using repayable grants (see below). These could include leisure/arena based activity, new modes of office/workspace (e.g. touchdown centre) and even certain kinds of hotel/conference development.

- **Lottery contributions**

There is some scope for National Lottery Fund contributions to keynote projects across the strategy, given the thematic coverage of heritage, open space, arts and recreation. For instance, some outdoor spaces could be eligible for Arts Lottery for the public art elements. Heritage Lottery may be available for the Old Town, following on from the success of the Central Parks bid.

- **English Heritage**

English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund can provide some resources, e.g., Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) schemes and also advice for projects which fit their strategic criteria. Currently this has widened to embrace regeneration, sustainability and social inclusion dimensions. There is now an opportunity to engage these organisations in a range of the proposals in the urban design strategy.

- **Repayable grants**

This mechanism represents a form of discretionary gap funding which encourages both parties to work towards the success of a project. Grant support may be necessary as a catalytic measure to assist innovative ventures/uses/activities - (e.g. hotels, flexible workspace, innovative shop fronts) which the market is not ready to deliver. However, if and when a project is successful money comes back to the grant making body, who can then invest the sum in other projects.



7.6 NEXT STEPS

This programme relates to the early phase actions due to take place over the timescale 0-6 years. The tasks focus on the preparation by the lead public agency/joint venture vehicle, rather than the design and development phases by developers and investors.

Task		Key Actors	Timescale
1 Co-ordination & Organisation			(Years)
1.1	Agree basis for strategy delivery	SCC et al	0-1
1.2	Liaison/linkage with partners & developers	SCC / JV vehicle	0-1
1.3	Annual review of progress and outputs	Joint	Annually
2 Consultation & PR			
2.1	Consult with local community (exhibition, etc)	SCC / JV vehicle	0-1
2.2	Consult other interested parties (eg GOSE, EP, SEEDA, English Heritage, Tourist Board)	SCC / JV vehicle	0-1
2.3	Devise media strategy and protocol	SCC / JV vehicle	0-1
2.4	Devise programme of landmark events	SCC / JV vehicle	Ongoing
3 Policy, SPG & Development Briefs			
3.1	Confirm keynote projects and development strategy	Joint	0-1
3.2	Secure outstanding key sites & permissions	SCC / JV vehicle	0-3
3.3	Strengthen design issues in Local Plan	SCC	0-3
3.4	Publish SPG	SCC	1-2
3.5	Prepare detailed development guidance	SCC	1-2
3.6	Negotiate Section 106 agreements	SCC / JV vehicle	Ongoing
4 Environmental / Public Realm Projects			
4.1	Finalise public realm strategy & early designs	SCC / JV vehicle	0-2
	Above Bar Precinct	SCC / JV vehicle	0-1
	Bargate Square	SCC / JV vehicle	1-2
	Civic Centre Environs	SCC / JV vehicle	1-2
	Guildhall Square	SCC / JV vehicle	2-3
	West Quay Phase 3	SCC / JV vehicle	2-3
	Western Esplanade	SCC / JV vehicle	2-3
	Mayflower Park	SCC / JV vehicle	3-5
	Queens Park	SCC / JV vehicle	3-5
	Holyrood Square	SCC / JV vehicle	3-5
	Ocean Village	SCC / JV vehicle	5-8
4.2	Procure detailed design, costing and funding	SCC / JV vehicle	1-3
4.3	Prepare/finalise public art strategy	SCC / JV vehicle	1-2
4.4	Promote/secure public art funding	SCC / JV vehicle	2-5
5 Site Development Projects			
5.1	Progress development of early sites		
	West Quay Phase 3	SCC / JV vehicle / Private	1-3
	Royal Pier/Town Quay	SCC / JV vehicle / Private	1-3
	Andersons Road	SCC / JV vehicle / Private	2-4
	Tyrrell & Green/C & A	SCC / JV vehicle / Private	2-5
5.2	Undertake later development sites	SCC / JV vehicle / Private	
	Canute Pavillion, Ocean Village	SCC / JV vehicle / Private	2-5
	Central Station Environs	SCC / JV vehicle / Private	6-9
	Charlotte Place	SCC / JV vehicle / Private	6-9