SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH DAY FOR DESIGN GUIDANCE

Early December heralded a successful set of Workshops held at the Salford Quays Watersports Centre. The day’s discussions saw a number of key issues and responsibilities come to the forefront, some of which have already been initiated.

These workshops kick-started the process for the production of the document, bringing together all those who will have a fundamental role in shaping the document. The event was considered to be a great beginning and has provided the perfect platform to stimulate debate on the future of the document. A full breakdown of the workshops and discussions can be found on Page 2 of this bulletin.

CONSULTATION STRATEGY AGREED WITH PLANNING AID AIMS FOR GOLD STANDARD

Planning Aid have been in recent talks with the production team to formulate a consultation strategy that seeks to incorporate input from the whole community. As well as the statutory consultation at the end of the process this guide will seek to establish the communities’ views and inputs at the beginning of the process.

The strategy includes street stalls, to be held in the entrances of supermarkets and local centres. These will be interactive stalls that will ask local shoppers to identify the character of their local area. There will also be a team filming public responses to consultation to allow a wider participation. This ‘talking heads’ approach can also be displayed on an interactive website when the design guide is published. Users of the website will see local people talk about their local area.

Another key component of the consultation strategy will be carried out through schools and youth groups. Already a number of schools and youth groups are signed up to the idea of producing work for a competition to be displayed and judged at a high profile consultation event in February.

The final part of the forward loading consultation process is to have a dialogue with professionals and developers involved in the built environment. This ‘primary users’ event will be held at the end of February and will seek to have a high media profile whilst obtaining a clear view of what those dealing with the built environment will expect the design guide to deliver.

OTHER NEWS
The Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal of the Design Guide is now near completion.
DECEMBER 4TH LAUNCH DAY

Summary of Workshops

Workshop 1 - Contents

Character
Should Salford be ‘stitched’ into Manchester or should we emphasize the differences between the twin cities? Use a model such as San Francisco and Oakland?

Continuity and Enclosure
How do we overcome the issues of land ownership and density to improve our built environment?

Thriving Public Realm
A thriving public space is created through continuing activity, cleanliness, design quality, good lighting and climate.

A safe place is made by much of the above, in addition to surveillance, ownership of a space by its users and good maintenance and management.

It can be delivered through robust UDP and SPD policies. It requires planning for future funding and maintenance.

A thriving public realm is one that is designed to fully integrate with the adjacent built form.

Connectivity and Permeability
Salford’s strengths are its network of open space including waterways, landscape, parks and open space.

Salford’s weaknesses are its links north-south, its congested routes and its isolated communities.

The opportunities for Salford are in the regeneration of its neighbourhoods, creative solutions to traffic management, the provision of new metro stops and the creation of activity around these interchanges.

The constraints are the existing infrastructure and the maintaining of security for pedestrian and cyclists.

Legibility
Should the distinctiveness of Salford’s neighbourhoods be reinforced to improve legibility?

Sustainability and Adaptability
We can create sustainable communities through providing a mix of dwellings and uses with neighbourhoods; through considering flexible design, sustainable construction and appropriate density; and allowing residents to personalise public space.

Workshop 2- Production issues

Themes of the SPD
The whole of Salford should be addressed equitably and the document should adopt a bold approach. Its contents should correlate with the accepted criteria for design and access statements.

New themes could include the design of neighbourhood centres.

Sustainability
One document combining the Design SPD with the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is appropriate because sustainable design is good design.

Maintaining two separate documents is appropriate because the level of detail needed in the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD is greater than in the Design SPD.

The remit of the Sustainable SPD should be environmental resource management.

Consultation
The people who live in Salford are the experts in describing its character, issues and aspirations.

The language used in public consultation must be accessible and democratic. We should seek to involve groups who are not normally reached through public consultation.

Should we consult beyond Salford to understand what it might require to attract people to the city?

Roles and Responsibilities of Each Group
The steering group should provide local knowledge, critical engagement, leadership and authorisation.

The officer group should provide specialist professional advice.

The delivery team should manage the process on a day-to-day basis and provide specialist design skills.

Information in the document
The document should be ‘personal’ to Salford. Pictures and illustrations can describe ideas far better than words. Interview residents and use quotes in the document to describe the city.

Organisation of the document
It should be visually dominant with less text. It could comprise two documents: one overview document and one detailed planning document.

It should be kept simple and have a clear style.
NEXT STEPS IN 2007
Character Area Appraisals

The new year will mark the commencement of work to appraise the character and quality of the built environment across Salford. This will be undertaken by the project's production team.

We can happily announce that the University of Manchester will run a client project from February 1st that will shadow the production team's Character Area Appraisal process. The students are this year's intake on the Masters of Planning course. Their project will feed into the forward loading informal consultation process.

Title of the Design SPD

It became apparent at the last meeting that many felt that the 'Design Supplementary Planning Document' was an uninspiring title and we agree. Whilst Design SPD will remain as the statutory title for the document, we would like you to come up with a more eye-catching and accessible title that appeals to all readers.

Send your suggestions to peter.ohare@salford.gov.uk and, who knows, your entry may make it onto the document. We will announce the winner next month.

What input would we like from you?
We suspect that the early months of 2007 will see rapid changes to the document and so we will attempt to keep you all regularly updated on project news and progress. Until then we ask that you consider what Salford should be doing to make an exemplary Design Guide.

KEY DATES
FOR 2007

Late Jan- Early Feb: Informal Consultation begins.

23rd Feb: Provisional date for ‘Primary User’/ Professional's Consultation event.

Steering Group Meetings to be confirmed:
Week of 5th Feb, Week of 5th March, Week of 14th May.
Week of 24th Sept.

We would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and look forward to working with you in the New Year.