“THE NEW NORMAL”

NILGA PLACEMAKING SEMINAR

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

25 November 2020

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The New Norm

1. COVID Lockdown – Response by Local Council Planning Departments
2. Pavement Café Licensing /New Interventions Response
4. DCSDC Local Development Plan – Placemaking Policy
5. Lessons Learned/Next Steps – City Deals
The New Norm

Challenges/ Adaptation

IT -/Homeworking
Restrictions on Admin teams
Site Visits/RAs
Virtual/Hybrid Planning Committees
Customer Engagement
The New Norm

Placemaking/ Revival Public Realm

What is Placemaking
Cultural Shift in lockdown
Public and Business Community Response
£1m Business Grant Scheme/ Business adaptation
Physical works, across District
Covid Recovery & Revitalisation:
Street Life + Vibrant Places
Derry | A Walkable City

Derry is a compact, historical and beautiful city to wander around and explore. Whilst noting the topography has challenges for some which need to be considered, few places within the core are more than a five or ten minute walk from each other.
- Seating Opportunity
  Existing paved areas in use by the Cathedral as car park.
  Potential for outdoor seating/coffee with view of the cathedral. It should be owned by property
  landlord. Discussions are being held between the Cathedral and a cafe owner to lease
  during a test period. The site has huge potential to draw engagement with the Cathedral and the
  wider part of the city particularly the walking loop around Pump Street, London Street, Foregate
  Street, Bishop Street and the Clwyd.

- Pump Street
  Potential for minor adjustments to link better to adjacent streets and increase
  footfall during recovery period.

- Foregate Street
  Single lane of traffic to allow for additional pavement widening and space for social
  distancing and businesses.

- The Basin
  Encourage better connection and encourage footfall within the city.
  Encouraging active use of the ground floor of the former Austin building will be key.

- Cathedral Quarter Loop
  Improving pedestrian experience and space for social distancing around the Cathedral Quarter (see diagram enclosed).

- Bin
  Potential for outdoor seating to be discussed with businesses on Bishop Street generally.
1. Level accessibility extension to pavement
2. Level accessibility extension to pavement
3. A lift is opened at ground floor during the trial
4. Planting planters and trees to road
5. Existing dropped kerbs provide access to pocket park expanded public realm and the central part of the Diamond
6. Placement of green spaces at ground level and seating provide an expanded public realm in the central part of Derry during the trial
7. Working with "nearly coffee" lounges/food providers, consider mobile pop-up outdoor coffee spaces to help activate the street level and encourage people to dwell at the Diamond
8. Better use of outdoor spaces in Richmond to support relevant businesses
9. Potential for more efficient use of existing width of Bishop Street to accommodate higher footfall and pavement seating for businesses
10. Proposal subject to technical design by DfI
Derry | Bishop Street

Bishop Street, a tree-lined boulevard [FCC11]. Could additional trees be reinstated to add to the atmosphere of the street?

Bishop Street is a grand street with beautiful proportions. Historically it was lined with trees. Over time, pavement widths have been eroded and the road and associated parking has become much more dominant despite not having heavy traffic. This has resulted in a reduction of the quality of pedestrian experience and footfall generally.

The recent refurbishment of the Bishop's Gate hotel has been an encouraging step to regenerate the area. Bishop Street (and the streets off it) have a varied, quirky mix of independent shops and cafes that should be supported and encouraged to develop with additional footfall over the next 12 months.

When considered in conjunction with the adjacent intimate streets, city walls and heritage buildings including the cathedral, it is a lovely part of the city to wander and discover on foot.

Proposals for Consideration:
- Widen pavement on one side of Bishop Street to provide more space for social distancing.
- Facilitate pedestrian and outdoor seating for businesses who would like it.
- Encourage people to stay in the area for longer.
- Return some of the roads planning to Bishop Street beside outdoor seating - see historic photos. This could be on a temporary basis with the trees moved around to change the nature of the street.
- Add additional places for cycle parking in sensible locations.
- Encourage walking around the intimate streets in and around Bishop’s Street and the city walls with appropriate marketing and events.
- Encourage people to think differently about this part of Derry and trial some small-scale events and pop-ups - to be discussed with local businesses and councils.
- Learning from existing events - be open to new ideas and new collaborations.
- Use of the street to promote events which have taken place on Bishop Street - discuss the potential for closing Bishop Street to cars on a couple of days to test how a socially distanced food market or pop-up events might work. As restrictions reduce, people will need to be attracted back into the city - this is an area of the city that could be utilised.
- Encourage footfall and street life as part of a city-wide strategy.
**Lighting**

Overhead pedestrian or fascia lighting generates warmth and makes the street more inviting at night.

**Covered Areas + Endzones**

On sunny days, the outdoor spaces will feel best when they have an open, permeable feel on upper and lower parts of the street. Some businesses may want to consider evening or heavy duty parasols. Planting, jardinières, benches, awnings of Ireland etc. will provide information on those to increase use of seating throughout the winter.

**Barriers, Planters or Screens**

Various options exist for barrier treatments which businesses could employ. The image shows how a small number of planters and outdoor seating could enliven the street and provide additional space for social distancing for beauty, food and beverage businesses. Research elsewhere would suggest this is good for business.

See also Movement Liberal Guidelines
Small number of temporary stalls to draw people into town. Positions and types to be confirmed with local businesses.

Outdoor seating to utilise space and encourage people to stay in Sandwell town centre for longer periods throughout the day.

Festival lighting to create atmosphere at night.

Some businesses may want to utilise outdoor space and provide covered seating or umbrellas.

Pedestrian access (business deliveries only)

On Street parking spaces on Castle Place and Main Street (30 second walk)

Over 200 parking spaces available within a three minute walk.
Seating | Parasols, Canopies and Covers

There are a vast array of options for covered spaces - the attached images will only provide a few of the options for discussion.

Parasols/ Umbrellas
Heavy duty parasols and umbrellas (which can deal with significant winds) come in a variety of sizes. These can be fixed to the ground or on movable bases. There are options to fit lights and heater inside.

Costs are calculated on the basis of the specification required and the various choices on size, material and fittings.

There are a multitude of companies who provide these such as Studley Awnings, Jassco Blinds, Awnings of Ireland, Breezefree among many others.

Sails
Tensioned ‘sails’ can be used to animate spaces and provide shade and shelter. Sails can be fixed via posts or on buildings. Appropriate permissions will need to be sought where these are in public space. Please discuss with the licensing team ahead of proposed locations in advance of discussions.

Awnings
Temporary awnings can be used for pop up eating and events. These are cost-effective but require management and may not be able to be left out at night.

In Cardiff outdoor eating event spaces have been created, and are shared between clusters of restaurants. This is a more controlled and managed approach.

Longer Term Approaches
There are opportunities to create outdoor eating and event spaces in the city longer term. Subject to relevant planning and building control requirements, robust and more permanent structures may be useful to some businesses - making outdoor spaces usable throughout the year. These are likely to require design and planning permission.

It is important that any of these spaces are associated with businesses or (when they are in public space) that they are programmed with regular events.

(Above + below) Simple, more permanent structures can add longer term value and are worth thinking about in some situations for businesses. Carefully considered, simple timber + metal structures could add longer term value [Ellen Chilton]
Local Development Plan 2032
Response to Placemaking
- Derry/ Londonderry
  the ‘planned town’

Plantation and the walled city

Victorian era expansion

Compact Urban form
5 study areas in City - defined by broad similarities in urban design, form and function

1. Riverfront
2. Inner Historic Core
3. Outer Historic Core
4. University / College
5. Outer Strand Road
6. Western Slopes
Influence of car centric development

Urban Sprawl

Dominant Road Infrastructure

Decrease in quality of public realm

City has become less ‘walkable’
Urban Block Perimeter

Permeability/evidence

Old Town Vs New Town
Place-making & Design Vision for District

5 PM & D Objectives (PDOs)

1) Enhance the value of the natural environment
2) Protect and promote heritage assets & townscape features
3) Implement a sustainable transport hierarchy
4) Sustain social and economic vitality
5) Deliver a consistently high design quality throughout
Enhance the value of the natural environment

Safeguard Human and Wildlife Habitats

Capitalise Upon Natural Assets

Improve Environmental Conditions
Protect and promote heritage assets & townscape features

Retain the Historic Fabric

Protect the Setting

Secure Sustainable New Uses
Implement a Sustainable Transport Hierarchy

Create Walkable Settlements

Make Places for People (not cars)
Place-making & Design Vision for Derry

11 Proposed Strategic Design Policies

• Based on 6 study areas, mainly around centre of city

Provide a framework for public and private investment

Cross-cutting with other policies in the LDP:

• Development Principles-Design Policies

• Historic Environment i.e. Conservation Areas, ATCs, Listed Building etc

• Natural Environment i.e. protection of landscapes, LLPAs etc

• Housing i.e. density, housing layouts, masterplans
Place-making & Design Vision for Derry

Arrival Points

• Various arrival points,
• Quality arrival experience
• High quality of design
• Avoid proliferation of signage, clutter
Place-making & Design Vision for Derry

Sustainable Connectivity for the City

• Alleviate City Centre Through Traffic
• Implement Network of Greenways
• Further Transverse the River
Chapter 28: Place-making & Design Vision for Derry

Manage the Visual Cityscape

- Plan for Sustainable Urban Densities
- Prepare a City Centre Building Heights and Townscape Strategy
Place-making & Design Vision for Derry

Riverfront

• Create a Fully Connected and Accessible Riverfront

• Joined up approach/Design Quality

• Establish a Consistent Quality of Public Realm

• Rationalise Dominant Transport Infrastructure

• Respect and Promote Riverfront Views

• Promote and Facilitate Increased Leisure Access to Riverfront
Place-making & Design Vision for Derry

Inner Historic Core

- Enhance Key Public Spaces
- Increase Dwell Time within the Walled City
- Enhance Permeability between Ebrington and the Walled City
Place-making & Design Vision for Derry

Outer Historic Core

• Conserve Mix of Architectural Styles
• Enhance use of City Walls Lawns
• Address Areas of Poor Quality Realm
• Formalise additional Public Event Spaces
Place-making & Design Vision for Derry

University & College

• Safeguard the Distinctive Landscape Setting of Magee Campus
• Strengthen the Civic Arrival Experience
• Enhanced Permeability and Legibility
1 FOYLE EMBANKMENT AND HARBOUR SQUARE

Site Overview
The site plays an important role in the relationship between the City and the River. It has the potential to integrate with other key sites and build on previous regeneration schemes to encourage a more comprehensive and sustainable transport offering on a city-wide scale.

Summary of Analysis Points
- The site is dominated by road infrastructure. Two large vehicular roundabouts mark opposing ends of the site while the eastern boundary is defined by the River Foyle.
- The A2 Foyle Embankment Road, which at its widest point is up to 5 lanes wide, combined with the poor quality connectivity through Foyle Street, severely impedes pedestrian movement to the river.
- Large sections of Foyle Street are comprised of non-active frontages, such as the area around Foyleside Shopping Centre, and vacant and derelict properties, such as the Commercial Building opposite the existing bus station.
- Some previous schemes have been successful in creating a high quality public realm, this has been the case around Shapway Place and Guildhall Square. This has created a more pedestrian-focused environment that encourages a longer dwell-time.
- Currently, the urban grain of the site is fractured with large plots of car parking that creates weak points of transition between the city centre streets and the river.
- Increase connectivity between city and river.
- Reduce the dominance of road infrastructure and increase the quality of public realm for the pedestrian experience.
- Integrate with wider plans of a community greenspace and more sustainable transport options along the riverfront.
- Create the setting for significant city centre development.
Foyle Embankment, Queens Quay and the RiverWalk have limited local scale connectivity due to the lack of connections to the city. The vehicle-oriented public realm further reduces accessibility and discourages active travel modes.
The provision of high quality pedestrian-led public realm design along Foyle Embankment will improve access to the riverfront, creating a better distributed movement pattern. The proposed frontage activation will further animate the public realm.

Spatial accessibility

- **High**
- **Low**

- Train station
- Walked City
The provision of direct visual and pedestrian links from the Peace Bridge to Victoria Market, the Walled City and Market Street/Orchard Street improve wayfinding from this key orientation point.

The provision of a generous public realm setting for Guildhall - by creating a set back of the proposed building to its south - the Peace Bridge and the Walled City is also recommended.
Key Urban Design and Placemaking Principles

A. Dual active frontage development along the riverfront will increase footfall but also retain a visual connection through to the Walled City.

B. Riverfront development should be at a density that creates a more pleasant environment for pedestrians sheltering from the environment and creating a legible route.

C. Destination and landmark buildings should be located adjacent to the proposed extended Guildhall Square. They should be of a larger grain to help define the space and create a sense of enclosure and identity. The role of the buildings adjacent to the Square would be crucial in creating the desired outcome of a safe and quality public square and must be active and permeable at ground floor level.

D. Increasing the vibrancy and vitality of Foyle Street. Currently, the developments along the southern section of Foyle Street turn their back on the street, while the northern section of Foyle Street lack continuous building lines and suffer from gap sites and surface level car parking.
2 PEACE BRIDGE TO BISHOP'S GATE

Site Overview

The route from the Peace Bridge to Bishop's Gate via the Diamond, forms an important 'spine' through the centre and Walled City.

Currently disconnected by the Foyle Embankment there is an opportunity to create a high-quality public realm that sets the tone for place-making in the city centre. Within the Walled City the current emphasis on vehicle movement detracts from the heritage setting.

Summary of Analysis Points

- The formal street pattern of the Walled City is intact with several examples of key architectural landmarks.
- There is a good level of accessibility to and permeability in the Walled City with small urban blocks and a finer grain.
- On-street parking and vehicle circulation detracts from the overall character and function of the Walled City. Parked and moving vehicles currently dominate the Diamond.

Key site brief

- Footfall has reduced, suggesting the impact of vacant units, business closures and changing retail practices. This presents a challenge to street activation, especially with the use of closed shutters.
- Pedestrian and cycle movement between Enniskillen and the Walled City is obstructed by the Foyle Embankment. The crossing point is not currently located on the main desire line between both locations.
- Reassert the role of Shipquay Street and the Diamond as a central spine of the city centre.
- Design the route to be easily navigated as one holistic movement corridor connected to the Peace Bridge and Waterside beyond.
- Address issues of vacancy and poor environmental quality.
- Increase usage of the Diamond as a multifunctional public space.
Guildhall Square

By reconfiguring the space around the Guildhall, a newly enlarged civic square is proposed.

Guildhall square will connect the Peace Bridge to the Diamond, and on to Bishop’s Gate. This route will produce a series of legible and attractive yet unique public spaces.

The remodelled Foyle Embankment will prioritise pedestrian movement and use design to manage vehicle interaction with the space. This will help to reduce the perceived barrier between the River Foyle and the Walled City.

High quality development on opposing sides of the square and will provide active groundfloor frontage to drive footfall and encourage spill-out uses onto the square. Such developments, alongside the heritage buildings and river views, will give the Guildhall square a feeling of destination arrival.

Landscape design, both formal and informal, will ensure the area is softened and also adaptable to a range of uses for the city.
The provision of a straight crossing between the Peace Bridge and Shipquay Street significantly increases the accessibility of the historic core and, specifically, of the key spine between the Peace Bridge and Bishops Gate. This should be supported by the provision of high-quality pedestrian-led public realm design along these streets.

Spatial accessibility

- High
- Low

Train station
Walled City
Proposal

While the current transport infrastructure of the Craigavon Bridge allows for the free movement of vehicles, it impacts the quality of place and experience of pedestrians in this part of the city.

A rationalisation of the road infrastructure will allow Duke Street to be narrowed, creating the opportunity for development.

To further transform connectivity, the proposal is for a new foot/cycle bridge across the River Foyle in the location of the former Wooden Bridge. This will connect the existing Transport Hub with a potentially relocated bus station on the opposite side as well as the surrounding neighbourhoods and communities.

The proposed bridge will be integrated with the Waterside and Walled City beyond, creating high quality public realm and civic spaces linked to green, walkable and cycleable routes.

Mixed-use development with active ground floor usage on Duke Street. This will create a strong building line and reshape the scale of Duke Street into a more pedestrian-friendly environment, directing movement flows and opening up the area up to commercial activity.
Next Steps/Challenges

Vision Strategic Growth Plan, Green Infrastructure Plan
Climate Change Strategy
LDP Planning Policy Context
Finance Delivery – City Deals
Timelines/Phasing Programmes
Integration of powers/roles/ LG and Central government
Leadership
Thank You