



ASSET

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE REGENERATION



THE AUTHOR:

Karen is a Chartered Surveyor with over nineteen years property and regeneration experience in both the public and private sector. Previous roles include the Head of Infrastructure in North Wales at the Welsh Assembly Government (formerly Welsh Development Agency) where she undertook regeneration projects in Wrexham, Bangor and Caernarfon. Prior to that Karen was a Director of the Easter Group and managed and developed a multi-million pound property portfolio in North Wales and North West England.

At Central Salford URC Karen leads the Development team which facilitates and implements major physical development projects working in partnership with both the public and private sector. Working alongside the Chief Executive, the Team are progressing the delivery of a £4 billion regeneration programme in Central Salford.

CONTENTS:

CENTRAL SALFORD URC AND REGENERATION	62
CHAPEL STREET REGENERATION	63
GREENGATE REGENERATION	64
IRWELL RIVER PARK	64

ACES Spring Conference
Liverpool, May 2010

ACES Paper No 10.5/9 by

KAREN HIRST,

Development Director, Central Salford
Urban Regeneration Company

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE REGENERATION

Introduction

Regeneration is not easy; you have to be in it for the long term. It is about relationships and partnerships, and that is the main theme of this paper. We, the Central Salford Urban Regeneration Company, have worked a lot with Richard Wynne of Urban Vision and the Salford City Council in our Central Salford work. We could not have done it without them. Luckily Salford City Council is forward thinking, and brave, in terms of taking on challenges and making progress. Currently, in 2010, we are in very challenging times economically, financially and politically, and facing uncertain outcomes. For example the public sector is facing £6 billion cuts.

Urban Regeneration Companies

Central Salford URC has 3 founder members, the Homes and Communities Agency, Salford City Council and the Northwest Development Agency. We have a private sector led Board, chaired by Felicity Goodey. But we have two council leaders on the board, the leaders of both Salford City Council and Manchester City Council. We have come a long way and greatly benefit from their wealth of experience and advice.



We are a private not for profit company. We have no powers of any kind, we are not the planning authority, we do not hold

any assets and we have no money of our own but it is amazing what we do despite all of that. The key is bringing people along with you and not doing things to them. The Central Salford area is more than 2,000 hectares and is divided into priority areas for the purposes of the resourcing of people as well as money. The URC has an established vision and in all our project work we take the view that you have to hold on to that vision, and hold your nerve even in the tricky times, but still be realistic. That is the approach that we all take.

In this paper I intend to focus on three projects, Chapel Street and the A6 corridor into Manchester, Greengate (the area of Salford that pushes into Manchester opposite Manchester Cathedral) and Irwell River Park that links Salford Quays along the river through the City Centre to the University.



The A6 going into Manchester does not look pretty. There are many derelict buildings mainly due to the public sector disinvesting out of that part of Salford. For good reasons the hospital, the town hall, the police authority and the fire services all moved out and the only public organisations still there are Churches, the Cathedral, and schools. To make this regeneration work we began to look at site assembly just as the market was rising with speculators thinking they could make a quick buck, as development is so easy. This prevented a lot of development coming forward and it soon was apparent that this piecemeal approach would not work. Regeneration has to be done in a comprehensive way in the knowledge that not much will happen in the short term. It is essential to adopt a long-term view and a comprehensive approach.

I joined the URC in the September 2006, a month after it was legally formed, just as ideas for Chapel Street began to emerge with possible partners, English Cities Fund a joint venture company with the Homes and Communities Agency, Legal and General and Muse. The deal had to be signed by December 2006 before the Assisted Area status changed. I had never met Richard Wynne of Urban Vision before but we soon got to know each other well. We did not cut any corners with that time frame but we certainly worked closely with weekly, and sometimes daily, meetings. Salford City Council put its land asset into the Partnership. These were interesting times and we were trying to bring in other resources and work with funders such as North West Development Agency and working to get the planning framework right.

Chapel Street



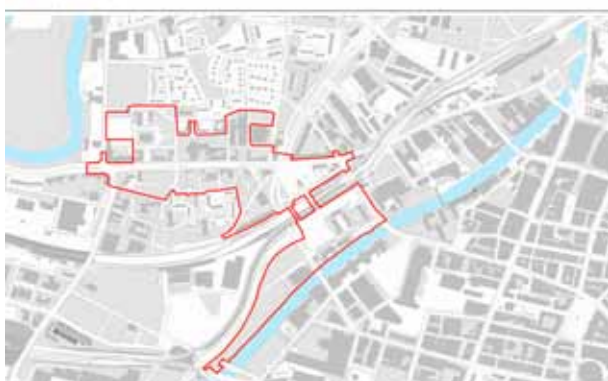
Background



Although the development agreement was signed there was little to see as we were working away behind the scenes within the unitary development plan, looking at planning guidance and the development framework. Part of the area was in a conservation area with listed buildings, looking at the public realm area, there was other documents such as integrated transport, signage and wayfinding a whole host of other things to get right. It is so important to get the basics right as this can carry more weight than you might think. For example one absent landowner put in a completely inappropriate planning application at about the time that all these documents were being worked up. Although the URC has no planning powers, it does comment on planning applications and obviously recommended refusal in view of the conflict with the comprehensive regeneration vision we had just produced. The applicant disagreed with us all and took it to appeal. On appeal we won including costs due to the principles of the framework and our comprehensive regeneration approach.

Chapel Street

application boundary



This is the red line boundary of their application submitted at the end of 2009. In scale it is bigger than MediaCityUK covering an area of about 18 hectares. It is a hybrid application an outline application for most of the area and the detailed part was the calming of the A6 Chapel Street, so pedestrians would actually want to go there and the environment would be much more appropriate for shops, restaurants and places to live, work and play. Along with that is the huge area of

commercial space where the natural expansion across from Spinningfields, the very successful Allied London Scheme by the River Irwell. The plan is for about 197,000 square metres of grade A office space and 860 new homes. A lot of people live in this area already; it is very popular, only about 10 or 15-minute walk into the City Centre of Manchester. There is a new primary school in the area as well. So again, we are looking at this comprehensively and providing all the amenities that people want in terms of living and working in an area. We will also bring in some retail and have a good mix of uses.

When the application went to the Planning Panel in January 2010 I was absolutely delighted that there was only one objector, which is quite amazing given with the amount of land holding included in the application not much of which is yet in the ownership of English Cities Fund or Salford City Council. There was unanimous support from the whole of the Planning Panel and the residents who came wanting to speak only wanted to say, "Why can't you just get on with it?"

We went through a lot of consultation. As far as the people who live and work here are concerned the Regeneration is happening now and we want them to be our ambassadors and our voice so that if there is someone with a complaint it is the locals who can say if you just be patient this is what is coming next. We also consult very closely on environmental improvements so if there are matters of concern, such as anti-social behaviour or whatever, we tackle it. The local people have now become our eyes and ears and we get daily photographs and e-mails if there is anything untoward happening within the area.



This is an impression of how hopefully it will look eventually, looking at the new corporate centre across from Spinningfields. At the moment if you go to Spinningfields and go down the main thoroughfare at the end there is some black hoarding. This will not be there forever and is to lead to the bridge link across from Spinningfields thanks to funding from the Northwest Development Agency and match funding from Allied London and Salford City Council, which was approved at the end of 2009.

It is also important to work with local people and we are working with the local primary school, St Philips School.

The school did a project with a local artist on what does regeneration mean to you along Chapel Street.



This is what it means to them. They have produced their lovely visual and where we have unattractive properties that we still want to retain we are putting these hoardings up and this is starting to lift the area. Note the area opposite Salford Cathedral and the challenge of fabulous listed buildings with adjoining dereliction. We still have a long way to go but we are already on track.

Greengate

This is another partnership approach with the Salford City Council, but this time with ASK and Network Rail as developers and landholders and with funding through Home and Communities Agency and the North West Development Agency.



This is an amazing site immediately adjoining Manchester, and opposite Manchester Cathedral, as the administrative boundary is the river. This is currently a big NCP car park right across from Harvey Nichols, and Marks and Spencer, so it is a bit of a hidden gem.

Collectively we worked on a master plan and planning guidance to open up this area and look at the linkage across to Manchester under an operational railway line and to open

up into a fabulous square where currently people are living but not in a particularly nice environment.

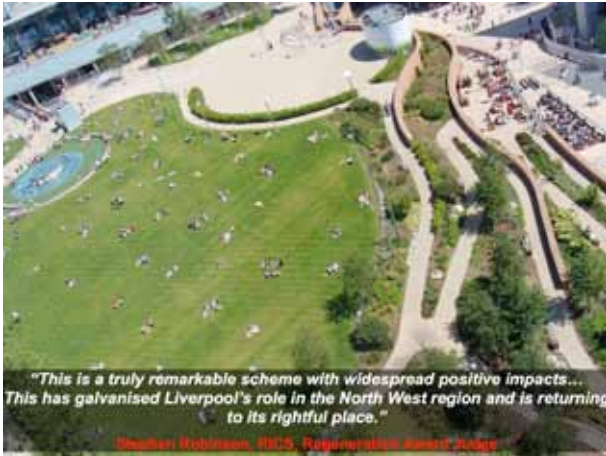


Greengate: The Cove

This is how we think it will look. We have secured funding of almost £13 million for the first phase of public realm and we are working hand-in-hand with the developer and the private sector to enter into a collaboration agreement so public sector funding runs alongside private sector investment. We hope to start this project later this year. This is a huge opportunity, which will bring forward a mixed-use scheme of commercial space, and you can start to understand why this £4 billion private sector investment is possible.



Irwell River Park is the 'zip' that links it all together. Most cities embrace their river and use it as an asset. But Manchester does not and many visitors to Manchester probably never even realise that it has a river. We went for a Big Lottery Living Land Mark bid but we did not win but we did create a great partnership in Salford, Manchester, Trafford and in March 2008 signed up to joint planning guidance for the area This will mean that developments do not turn their back on the river but use it as an asset and make it open and inviting and not create a 'canyon' effect. Developers have seen this as beneficial and have changed their schemes to accord with the planning guidance.



Irwell River Park is 8 kilometres long stretching from MediaCityUK and Salford Quays in the west through to the heart of the City Centre, and the Greengate scheme next to Manchester Cathedral, then loops back round to the University of Salford and The Meadows. It is a natural linkage and now people can walk along it, cycle along it, row along it, and even fish in it. We see it as a way to bring the communities together, whether you are living, working or playing in that area.

The URC took the lead; Salford City Council is the accountable body. There are no legal agreements, it is just about a partnership working, working with the funders who managed to secure funding to work up the designs, working with all the 20 to 30 developers along this stretch, although some have changed hands recently and we are keeping track of ownership to ensure we talk to the right people. We are working with the regulators, the environment agency and the Manchester Ship Canal Company/Peel. It is essential to work with the local communities and businesses. When we did the interview session with the Lottery the locals were there and emphasising how important the funding was to them. And we are really trying to see how we can make this work. Now we have secured £42 million. There is a lot happening around the Quays and MediaCityUK with a bridge link across and the promenade in front of the Imperial War Museum North. We are still considering how we improve the walkway and make it different so we have not given up yet on some future application, but getting back to being realistic, we are focussing on what can we deliver in the next 2 years, although we still have those future aspirations.



The soapworks is at the end of Ordsall Lane, near Exchange Quay, one of the early 80's office schemes just outside the Quays. This building is the old Colgate Palmolive factory. Many people were distraught when they heard it was going to close because of the number of jobs that would be lost. When the property was put on the market there was quite a lot of developer interest and two developers who were competing against each other joined forces, formed a joint venture company with Nikal and Abstract and funded by the Carlyle Group, who funded Piccadilly Place in Manchester.

Their scheme went to Planning Panel at Salford in May 2010 and it was recommended for approval, the refurbishment of the building and the new development around it. The developers could have just looked at their own demise but no they wanted to work with us to look at how can we open this up to the Metro link stop and the water to use the waterfront as an asset, and more importantly, how can we create lateral links from the riverside walkway. All this has been done by negotiation and the developers will look at contributing to the wider objectives through a Section 106 agreement and with us putting in match funding.



Chapel Wharf

This is Chapel Wharf, heading further in to the city centre, and shows The Lowry Hotel a 5 star Rocco Forte hotel, which came along after a lot of the public realm and infrastructure was put in pre-URC days. This site here is that scrubby bit of land, used for car parking. At the height of the market the owner put it to the market to see how much money he could make. This produced an inappropriate scheme of very high-rise residential that would have completely obliterated the view of the bridge and put the adjoining sunny area in shadow. We wondered what to do to stop this. The owner was the Guardian Media Group and after a great deal of negotiations with them, we offered to buy the site.

After working closely with Salford City Council and a nearby landowner, Bruntwood who own Riverside, we decided it would be even better to buy the site jointly with Bruntwood who had already thoroughly bought into the vision of Irwell River Park as Chris Oglesby, their Chief Executive, is on the Irwell River Park Strategic Steering Group. This would enable us to open up this walkway, which at the moment does not exist, improve the public realm, and potentially bring forward new development and enhance their Riverside scheme. After lots of further negotiations we formed a joint

venture with Bruntwood, signed a development agreement, secured funding from the Northwest Development Agency and, at no extra cost to the public purse, this walkway will be going in next year into the public realm. Now we are just in the process of finalising the plan. Despite this innovative approach, on reflection we considered whether the NWDA could just give the grant to Bruntwood. However we went back to the vision and decided this is not what the URC is all about; but it is about creating a more comprehensive approach and innovative ways to do things.



We still have some aspiration and visionary ideas for Irwell River Park. These include Cathedral Walk, not just as an important bridge link as this stretch of walkway is not DDA compliant, but also as an iconic feature that has already been included in a number of presentations. As yet we do not know how we will pay for it, but it will provide a great view of Manchester Cathedral. At the last strategic steering group meeting it was agreed that we would have to wait for the private sector to come forward with the schemes. There are two developers Dandara and West and with consented schemes, when the market picks up, as it will, then we can look again at this again, it is still in our vision, but not over the next 2 to 3 years.

Conclusions

This slide captures the theme of this paper.

Strong partnerships are about good relationships with partners



The key to success is good working relationships with partners, something you have to keep working on. The top picture is of a consultation event on the Chapel Street project where many people came along to develop the plans of what people wanted to see.

The bottom picture shows Felicity Goodey in the centre, myself on the right and the gentleman on the left is the BBC Director North Peter Salmon, at what is now an annual event, Investing in Regeneration, in September. This is where we talk to the business community, consultants, banks, public and private sector about what we are up to and where we are at and what next. It is essential to tell people about the fantastic ideas and projects being worked on and make sure that they understand why schemes do not always happen within months but can take years. As you can see we have made significant progress in making Central Salford beautiful, vibrant and prosperous but there is still a lot to do.

Karen Hirst,
Development Director, Central Salford Urban
Regeneration Company

This edition of ASSET has been published with sponsorship from:



The sponsor logos are arranged in two rows. The top row features the Cobbetts logo (a yellow circle with a red swoosh), the DVS Property Specialists for the Public Sector logo (purple text), and the JMU logo (a blue square with white text). The bottom row features the mouchel logo (green and blue text) and the Pugh logo (a blue oval with white text).

