Chapter 1

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'The mother art is
urban design. Without
an architecture of our
own we have no soul
of our own civilization'.
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

Plan 1.1. AREA COVERED BY THE GUIDE

1. Western Approach
2. Mayflower Park
3. Town Quay
4. Town Quay Road
5. Eastern Docks
6. Ocean Village
7. Itchen Bridge
8. High Street
9. Bargate
10. WestQuay Shopping Centre
11. Central Station
12. Civic Centre
13. Above Bar Street
14. New Road
15. Six Dials
16. Charlotte Place
17. London Road
18. Cumberland Place

Key:

CCUDS (City Centre Urban Design Strategy) boundary

Local Plan boundary (Local Plan policies for the City Centre only apply within this boundary)

Parks

0   500m

This guide covers all land within either the CCUDS or Local Plan City Centre boundaries

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the guide

The aim of this guide is to promote high design standards in the development of Southampton City Centre (as defined in Plan 1.1). It is aimed at developers and their professional advisors, Councillors, Council officers, and all those involved in development in the City Centre, together with city residents and other interested parties. **All planning applications in the City Centre will be considered in the context of this guide.**

The document will have a long-term lifespan with reviews being carried out every 10 years in tandem with the local plan review. It can be viewed at the following website:
www. southampton.gov.uk/environmentlocaldevelopmentplans
and will be issued to applicants for significant developments in the City Centre.

1.2 About urban design

In 2000 the Government published a guide towards better practice called "By Design: Urban design in the planning system" (DETR and CABE). It includes the following description of urban design:

"Urban design is the art of making places for people. It includes the way places work and matters such as community safety, as well as how they look. It concerns the connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric, and the processes for ensuring successful cities. It is a key to creating sustainable developments and the conditions for a flourishing economic life.

The best way to promote successful and sustainable regeneration is to think about urban design from the start of the development process. Leaving urban design until the end can make the planning process slow, and is unlikely to lead to the best outcome in terms of quality."

Refer also to the City Centre Urban Design strategy, Chapter 2: Aspirations.

1.3 Achieving planning permission

Urban design covers a complex series of widely different considerations. In reality it is likely that some design parameters may suggest conflicting design solutions on some sites. Good design requires designers to use imagination, sensitivity and common sense in the creative resolution of these potential conflicts. Planning applications that conflict with the objectives or design principles are likely to be rejected. It is not intended that this guide should stifle responsible innovation, originality or initiative. Good design is encouraged. The qualities of outstanding development proposals may exceptionally justify departing from the guide. Development Briefs or Quarter Strategies approved by the Council which address issues at a more detailed level than this guide will take precedence.

1.4 National planning context

The Government issues advice in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) - now to be reissued as Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), Design Bulletins, Traffic Advisory Unit Leaflets, etc. Generally, planning authorities are expected to ensure that development is:

- Environmentally sustainable
- Efficient and well located in its use of land
- Does not give rise to unnecessary use of motor vehicles
- Is energy-efficient
- Is safe to move about in
- Provides minimum opportunity for crime
- Does not disadvantage the disabled and,
- Is well designed in terms of its appearance.

PPG1 recognises that the appearance of a development is a material planning consideration and draws particular attention to the setting of buildings and the treatment of spaces between and around them. PPG13 recommends that, where possible, residential development should not be single-use but incorporate commercial and employment uses in order to create more self-contained communities and reduce the need to travel.

By Design' (2000) calls for planning authorities to use supplementary planning guidance such as this design guide as a tool to develop clear design ideas for particular areas (in this case the City Centre) and to help achieve the development plan's policy aims and ensure that the plan itself is not encumbered by too much detail.
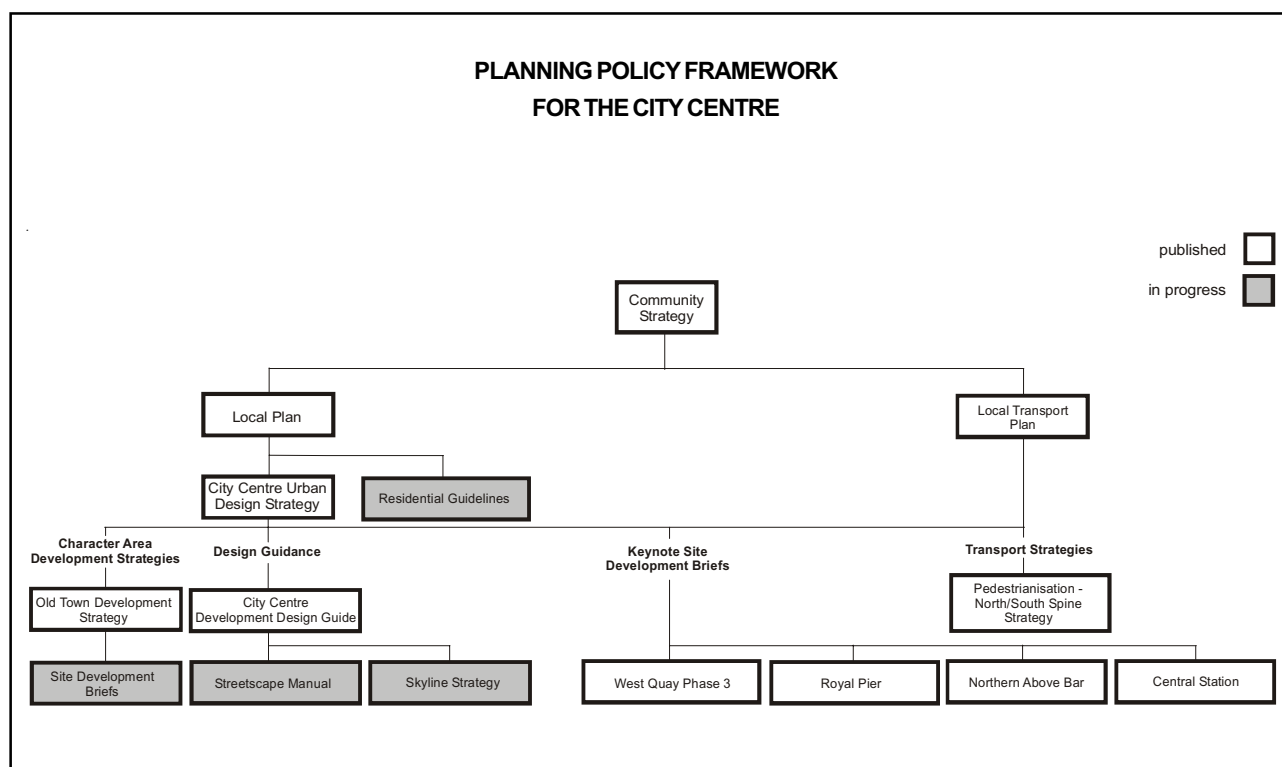
Later in 2000 the Government published the Urban White Paper 'Our Towns and Cities : The Future – Delivering an Urban Renaissance'. This document reinforces the urban design objectives in 'By Design' and gives a commitment that the public agencies will use the planning system to promote better quality and improve the design of urban areas. In particular the document stresses the need for higher density development in existing urban areas and the importance of the sustainability of new development.

In 2004 the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force. This Design Guide together with the City Centre Urban Design Strategy and other documents produced by the Council will form a detailed 'action plan' for the City Centre of the type called for in the Green Paper.

1.5 Local planning context

The Community Strategy describes how the city might change in the next 20 years, examining the type of city Southampton might become, covering all aspects of life, and how we can achieve higher quality for all. This provides an overarching framework for local policy development and resourcing.

The City of Southampton Local Plan is currently being reviewed and the final version is expected to be adopted in 2005. The Plan contains revised policies relating to urban design which

**PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK
FOR THE CITY CENTRE**

published ☐
in progress ▣

Community Strategy

Local Plan

Local Transport Plan

City Centre Urban Design Strategy

Residential Guidelines

Character Area Development Strategies

Design Guidance

Keynote Site Development Briefs

Transport Strategies

Old Town Development Strategy

City Centre Development Design Guide

Pedestrianisation - North/South Spine Strategy

Site Development Briefs

Streetscape Manual

Skyline Strategy

West Quay Phase 3

Royal Pier

Northern Above Bar

Central Station

Relevant Selected Strategies and Policies.

are called Sustainable Development Policies (SDP). Generally it is the SDP policies of the reviewed Local Plan that are referred to in the text of this document although occasional reference is also made to policies on the Natural Environment (NE), Historic Environment (HE), Homes and Housing (H), Retailing, Enterprises and Innovation (REI), Major Sites and Areas (MSA) and Implementation and Monitoring (IMP). This guide provides additional guidance on how development can conform to these policies. The guide will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the reviewed Local Plan.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) (2001/2-2005/6) outlines the City Council's transport strategy, policies and plans.

The City Centre Urban Design Strategy (CCUDS) was formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in November 2000. It outlines a 50-year vision for development, considering design issues on a series of levels, from an overall Urban Design Framework, down through guidance to the seven Character Areas (one of which is the Old Town), and finally to the illustration of six individual Keynote Projects.

The matters addressed by this guide will have a significant effect on the character and quality of the City Centre. The Council's approach of preparing CCUDS, these guidelines and future documents demonstrates that the City Centre has a recognised townscape value worthy of protection and enhancement.
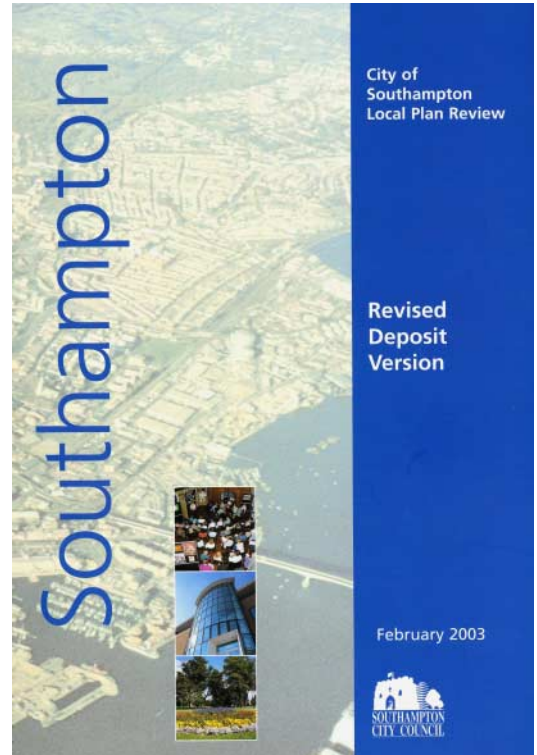
City of Southampton Local Plan Revised Deposit Version.
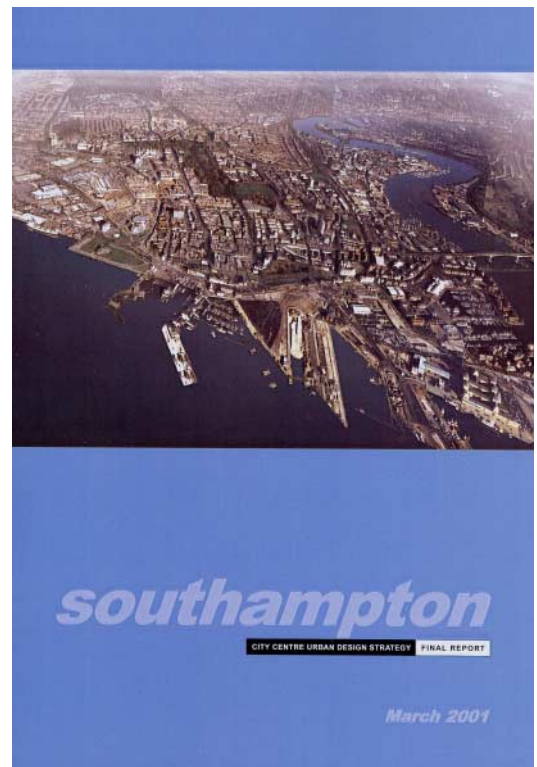
City Centre Urban Design Strategy (CCUDS).
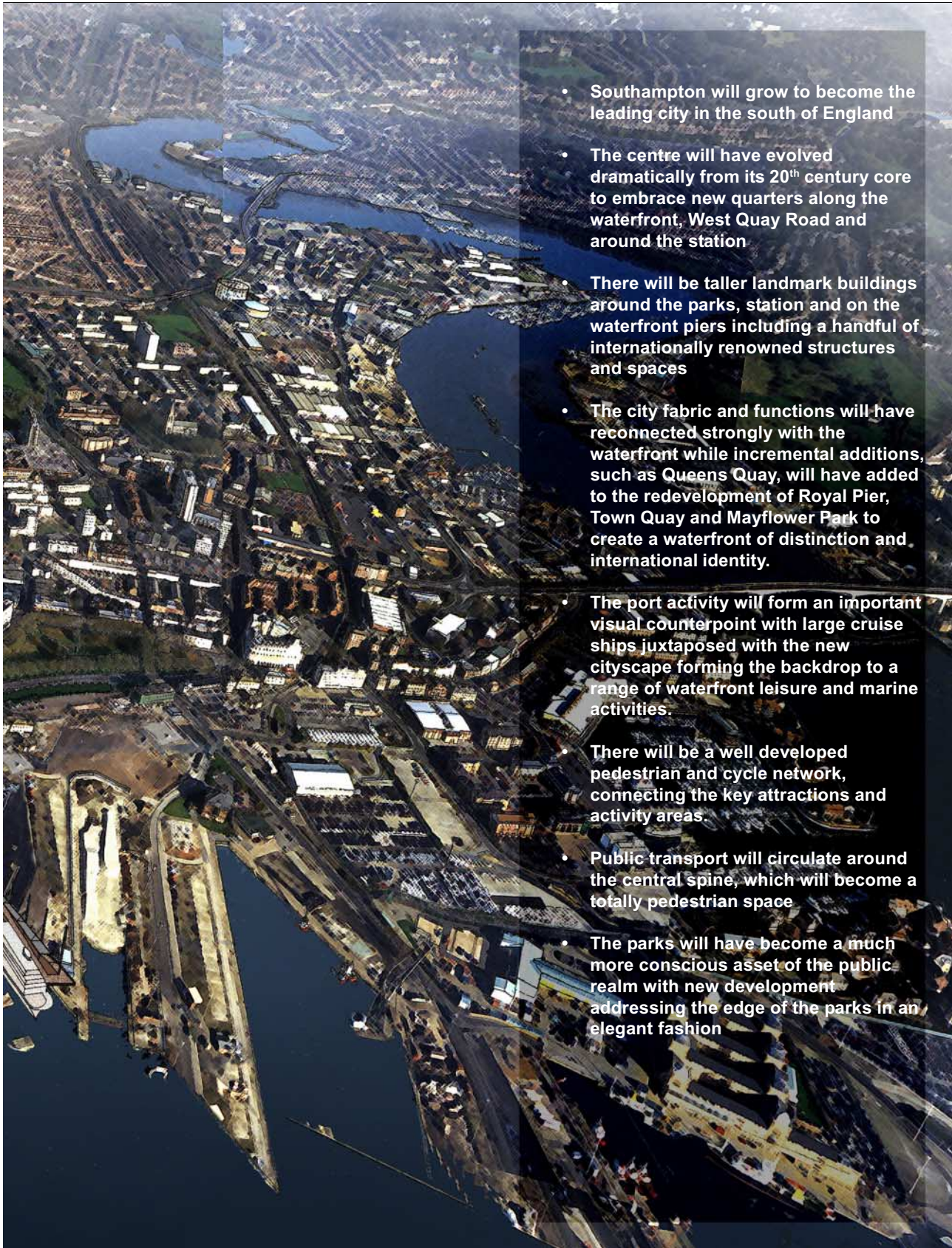
- **Southampton will grow to become the leading city in the south of England**

- **The centre will have evolved dramatically from its 20th century core to embrace new quarters along the waterfront, West Quay Road and around the station**

- **There will be taller landmark buildings around the parks, station and on the waterfront piers including a handful of internationally renowned structures and spaces**

- **The city fabric and functions will have reconnected strongly with the waterfront while incremental additions, such as Queens Quay, will have added to the redevelopment of Royal Pier, Town Quay and Mayflower Park to create a waterfront of distinction and international identity.**

- **The port activity will form an important visual counterpoint with large cruise ships juxtaposed with the new cityscape forming the backdrop to a range of waterfront leisure and marine activities.**

- **There will be a well developed pedestrian and cycle network, connecting the key attractions and activity areas.**

- **Public transport will circulate around the central spine, which will become a totally pedestrian space**

- **The parks will have become a much more conscious asset of the public realm with new development addressing the edge of the parks in an elegant fashion**

This page is from the City Centre Urban Design Strategy. It sets out the Council's 50-year vision for the City Centre. Refer to pages 12 -13 of the CCUDS for more detail.

1.6 Key urban design objectives

This guide is laid out to follow a series of **key objectives** (listed below) adapted from 'By Design' (DETR and CABE 2000) modified slightly to fit the Southampton context and purpose of this guide. The titles of the **key objectives** are used as chapter headings.

Most chapters contain a series of subsections dealing with different topics. In these chapters each sub-section is headed by additional **secondary objectives**. Following the objectives is a series of considerations and design measures. The most important considerations (which should be considered as prompts for best practice) are highlighted as **design principles**. These are included on the next page.

Chapter 2
CHARACTER AND CONTEXT
A place with its own identity
To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.

Chapter 3
CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE
A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public areas.

Chapter 4
EASE OF MOVEMENT
A place that is easy to get to and move through
To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.

Chapter 5
PUBLIC REALM QUALITY
A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.

Chapter 6
DIVERSITY AND CHOICE
A place with variety and choice
To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.

Chapter 7
LEGIBILITY
A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.

Chapter 8
ADAPTABILITY
A place that can change easily
To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

Chapter 9
DETAILED DESIGN OF BUILDINGS
Attractive and sustainable buildings.
To promote sustainability and high quality in the detailed design of buildings.

1.7 List of design principles

The following is a list of design principles for Southampton City Centre. These are elaborated in chapters 2 - 9.

Chapter 2
CHARACTER AND CONTEXT

The site and context
2.i   Designers should carry out a thorough site and context appraisal, which should be submitted as part of a Design Statement where necessary (see Appendix 1).

Design character
2.ii   Where an established appropriate character exists new buildings and landscape should complement and enhance this character in a high quality and contemporary manner.

2.iii   Where existing character is weak, development should seek to create a character identity. This should be high quality and contemporary.

Chapter 3
CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE

Building pattern
3.i   Development should contribute to or create perimeter block form.

3.ii   Buildings should where possible connect physically with neighbouring buildings.

3.iii   Buildings should be parallel to public streets and main entrances should front onto them.

3.iv   'Big-box' type developments should be integrated within perimeter blocks.

Scale and massing
3.v   Buildings of greater than 6 storeys or 18m height should meet the checklist of requirements for tall buildings.

3.vi   New buildings should relate well to the predominant scale and mass of existing buildings in the street.

3.vii   Proposals for major development should demonstrate that account has been taken of the need for variety of form and material to avoid the impression of monolithic, excessively large scale and uniform architecture.

3.viii   Building height and street width should lead to a degree and nature of enclosure appropriate to the importance of the street.

Chapter 4
EASE OF MOVEMENT

Street layout
4.i   The connected pattern should be used as the basis for new street layouts.

4.ii   New routes should link up with existing movement patterns and be structured to provide easy extension of the public transport network.

Parking and servicing
4.iii   Safe, secure, easily accessible and attractive to use cycle parking shall be provided for all developments in line with Appendix 2 of the Local Plan.

4.iv   Where appropriate the majority of parking spaces should be located within the centre of a perimeter block or in a basement. Active use units must wrap parking in the ground floor of a building.

4.v   Designers should consider the needs of different types of users in the following order: pedestrians and disabled people, cyclists, public transport, motorcyclists, taxis and private hire vehicles, freight and the private car.

4.vi   Car, motorcycle and bus parking should be integrated carefully into developments with consideration given to its effect on visual amenity, security and street vitality.

4.vii   Servicing and refuse collection arrangements for commercial property should be carried out from the inside of perimeter blocks, or be incorporated within the building.

4.viii   In residential areas communal bins and 'wheelie-bins' should be accommodated in suitable screened and ventilated enclosures.

Chapter 5
PUBLIC REALM QUALITY

<u>Building form and townscape character</u>
5.i   Buildings should be positioned at back of pavement except where an exception is specifically agreed.

5.ii   Building designs should emphasise external access points and provide for vehicle access to block centres. Disabled persons must be able to use main entrances. Ramps should be integrated within the building.

5.iii   Public streets and public spaces should be bounded by active building frontages, and overlooked from windows of habitable rooms in dwellings or commercial buildings.

5.iv   Designs for commercial buildings should maximise the opportunities for views into them from the street whilst providing building's occupants with appropriate privacy.

<u>Microclimate control</u>
5.v   New buildings should create or enhance shelter and not cause air movement strong enough to cause discomfort in the public realm or cause excessive shading.

<u>Street design details</u>
5.vi   Spaces should be defined by buildings; only then should roads be considered. The routes should be integrated into the new spaces and controlled by them.

5.vii   Street and path design should address safety and security considerations (see also 5iii).

5.viii   Roads and paths should contribute positively to the appearance of the streetscape. High quality materials should be used wherever possible and clutter minimised.

5.ix   New streets with two thirds or more of the units in residential use should be designed for a maximum limit of 20 mph or less.

5.x   Access to developments of up to 15 residential units should be by a shared surface street or Home Zone.

5.xi   Streets should be accessible and safe for all users.

5.xii   New place names should reflect local history or geography.

<u>Open space design details</u>
5.xiii   Hard landscapes should be easy to maintain, with non-slip and well-drained surfaces and structurally sound walls and features. All materials should be durable.

5.xiv   In general trees should be incorporated into the layout of new developments or adjacent streets.

5.xv   Designers should provide responsible on-site water management and design water-efficient, low-maintenance, safety-conscious soft landscape.

5.xvi   Design, materials, workmanship and maintenance of open spaces must be of high quality and must be functionally integrated into the development and support local distinctiveness.

Chapter 6
DIVERSITY AND CHOICE

<u>Uses</u>
6.i   Developers of large sites should address the need for appropriate infrastructure and service facilities.

6.ii   All schemes should retain or provide as great a sustainable mix of uses as is possible vertically within the building and horizontally within the block.

<u>Density</u>
6.iii   Planning permission for housing will only be granted for new development at a minimum net

density of 100 dwellings/ha, which is achieved without sacrificing public space. Densities for non-residential development will be set on a site-by-site basis.

Chapter 7
LEGIBILITY

Creating memorable streets

7.i   Developments should respect and make the most of existing major views of the City Centre (Plans 7.1a to c) and within and from the City Centre (Plan 7.2). Sections of views from the City highlighted with a red box on the view photographs are to be protected. These and other views that help define the relationships between the City Centre, historic townscape, and the active and dynamic port, are particularly important to the conservation of Southampton's character.

7.ii   The importance of gateway and other corner sites in the hierarchy of City Centre streets should be reflected in the design and scale of any redevelopment proposals on these sites (see Plans 7.4, 4.3 and 4.4).

7.iii   Major developments and, where applicable, individual buildings should utilise landmarks, marker features and other townscape measures to enhance the overall quality and legibility of the City's streets.

7.iv   The unique character/setting of the North/South spine, City Plaza the Central Parks , Queen's, Vokes and Mayflower Parks should be respected and enhanced through any development proposals which front onto them.

7.v   The lighting of a building should be appropriate to its relationship to the hierarchy of buildings in the townscape (as determined by the context appraisal).

Public art

7.vi   Major developments will be expected to include the provision of works of art integrated into architecture or in public places and this will be encouraged through the Percent for Art Scheme.

Chapter 8
ADAPTABILITY

Adaptable building form

8.i   Buildings should be long-life, flexible and capable of being adapted for a variety of other uses and needs with the minimum of disruption.

Chapter 9
DETAILED DESIGN OF BUILDINGS

To promote sustainability and high quality in the detailed design of buildings.

Sustainability aspects of detailed design

9.i   Every development of five or more units (or 500m^2 and above for commercial buildings) should submit a sustainability strategy covering a whole life cycle analysis, conservation and management of energy and water and the compliance of materials selected with sustainability principles. New buildings should meet or exceed the excellent or good standard contained in the BREAM guidelines for business developments and Eco-homes guidance for residential and other developments.