

Environment

The landscape character of the corridor has been assessed, and three broad landscape character areas identified, one area broadly covering the city centre waterfront, one to the west, and one to the east of the city centre.

Three key elements of character have also been identified upon which the identity of the Waterfront can be developed and reinforced. These are

- ◆ corridor boundary;
- ◆ visibility and gateway locations;
- ◆ island sites.

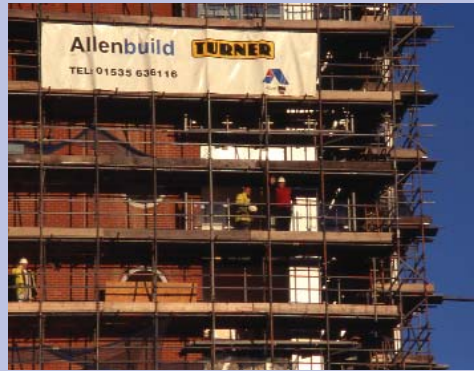
The principles of each are discussed in turn with opportunities to create landscape features or reinforce elements identified. For example, the Strategy highlights opportunities for creating and reinforcing planting along the boundary of the corridor to establish and emphasise its identity. The Strategy identifies a number of gateway sites and corridor crossing points where design features, public art, development or planting could act as markers into the Waterfront. It also highlights the string of 'island' sites between the river and canals, which create an unusual landscape element, and suggests how these can be treated in design terms.

Smaller scale landscape elements are also identified which will give local distinctiveness within the corridor including planting, focal points and spaces, materials and street furniture, and key buildings and their settings.

The principles and opportunities are indicated on plan, and with the help of a number of case studies covering different themes.

Development

A series of development nodes are identified each with their own character and range of uses. These will provide variety and activity. They will also help concentrate life and activity into a number of key areas to best advantage, rather than have ribbon development and activity dispersed over a wide area.



Design Guidance

Design guidance is incorporated in the Strategy. Issues covered include principles of good waterside design, heritage and conservation, design for planting and wildlife, waterside spaces, public art, access and safety, and water safety. Case studies are used to illustrate good practice.

Action Plan

The Action Plan is the means by which the Waterfront Strategy will be implemented. Relating to the Key Objectives of the Strategy and its Strategic Themes, the Action Plan contains a list of projects which will help meet these objectives and themes. They range from changes in policies and approaches by key players, through feasibility studies for major projects, to the implementation of smaller scale environmental schemes.

The Action Plan identifies priorities, suggests lead responsibilities and considers possible external funding sources where appropriate.

The key delivery mechanisms for progressing the strategy are :

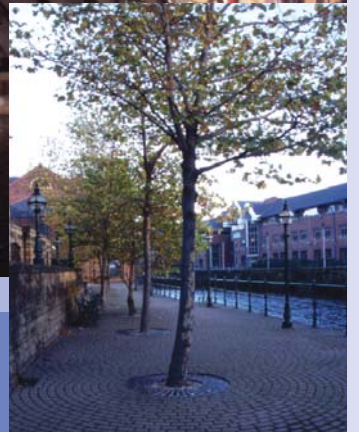
- ◆ The planning system
- ◆ Direct action by the partner organisations
- ◆ Commercial investment and partnership working
- ◆ External funding programmes
- ◆ Management and maintenance policies

The Action Plan distinguishes 3 broad project types.

The first group (ref. nos. 1-15) are policy or strategy development areas. Examples include the planning policy and UDP implications, the preparation of master plans and development briefs, and the production of waterspace strategies. The second group (ref. nos. 16 - 48) are comprehensive projects which could cover all or parts of the Waterfront. They are thematic and in many cases require further development, design or feasibility work to progress. Examples include the development of a waterbus service, access linkages and signposting.

The third group are smaller individual projects which are identified on a geographical basis. They could be undertaken as single projects where limited funding is available, or where a local group may have a specific interest; or they may be combined to form a package. These are contained in a separate table (ref. nos. 49 - 54). They include detailed environmental improvement and access projects.

Leeds Waterfront Strategy Executive Summary





Study Area

The Waterfront Strategy area covers approximately 6.5 km of the river and canal corridor running through central Leeds. The area stretches from Armley Mills in the west to Thwaite Mills in the east. The northern and southern boundaries are set close to the water bodies.

Strategy Ownership

The Waterfront Strategy has been produced by a number of partner organisations comprising British Waterways (NE and NW Regions), Eye on the Aire, Leeds City Council, Leeds Civic Trust and The Environment Agency, under the aegis of a Steering Group reporting to Leeds City Centre Management Initiative, and ultimately Leeds Initiative. It has been the subject of public consultation. The Strategy is a Leeds Initiative document, endorsed by all the Steering Group partners.

Implementation



Overall responsibility for implementation of the Strategy, and promotion of the Waterfront, lies with The Waterfront Sub Group of the Leeds City Centre Management Initiative. The Strategy includes an Action Plan which identifies a range of projects with priorities, timescales and lead responsibilities. Policy development, further research and monitoring, funding bids, channelling of resources, feasibility work and the

implementation of the wide range of projects will be undertaken by a variety of partners and stakeholders in a co-ordinated way consistent with the Strategy and action plan, overseen by the Waterfront Sub Group.

The Vision

'Adding **vitality** to Leeds' waterways and waterfront through **good planning and design**'

Aims

- ◆ Develop a strategic vision that identifies the key components for generating an attractive, vibrant, safe and sustainable waterway corridor;
- ◆ Provide a framework to inform, guide and assess new development, improvement or management proposals to ensure that these are appropriate;
- ◆ Develop a co-ordinated approach to development and marketing of the waterway that allows public, private and voluntary interests to work in a co-ordinated way to achieve the strategic vision.

Objectives

- ◆ Identify opportunities to improve pedestrian access to and along the waterway corridor;
- ◆ Identify opportunities for environmental improvements to the waterway corridor, to include the waterway, waterfront walkways and riparian properties;
- ◆ Provide achievable proposals for the creation of vital and viable development and activity on and along the waterway;
- ◆ Provide guidance on issues of waterside design and a vocabulary of street furniture and materials, to create a distinctive and co-ordinated identity for the waterfront area;
- ◆ Review the issues of flood defence that affect the riverside corridor;
- ◆ Promote the use of the waterspace for suitable leisure activities and navigation through a waterspace strategy;
- ◆ Safeguard the long-term future of areas of significant landscape, heritage, ecological and nature conservation value;
- ◆ Consider suitable delivery mechanisms and future actions needed to facilitate change.



Strategic Themes

Four strategic themes are identified :

- ◆ **USES** *Promote a diversity of land and water based uses.*
Encourage activity throughout the day for a broad cross-section of the public to create a vital and exciting environment.
- ◆ **LINKAGES** *Provide a network of pedestrian and cycle routes.*
Establish a hierarchy of paths, with primary links between key destinations and the surrounding areas, and secondary leisure routes within the corridor.
- ◆ **ENVIRONMENT** *Establish a landscape character framework.*
Describe key elements of the corridor character so that they can be protected and enhanced to allow a consistent approach to future change.
- ◆ **DEVELOPMENT** *Designate a series of destination nodes with distinctive character.*
Avoid unstructured ribbon development by providing an urban structure that concentrates development in identifiable areas, each with a mix of uses and developed on sustainable principles.

Uses

Issues considered are :

- ◆ Promoting a mix of uses;
- ◆ Promoting and making better use of existing facilities;
- ◆ Expanding the scope of existing facilities;
- ◆ Introducing new activity;
- ◆ Waterspace strategy



Links

A network of primary and secondary routes is proposed. The primary routes will connect key destinations along the corridor, provide links to and from the city centre, and access to local communities. They will be as direct as possible to facilitate easy and simple movement. The secondary routes will provide more leisure or recreational oriented routes and alternatives for those who know the area. There is less need for these to be direct.

Linkages will be created to other forms of transport eg to the bus and railway stations, and to car parks. The primary route can be developed for dual use by pedestrians and cyclists, and a cycling network is proposed.

Throughout the overall linkages network, principles of access for all will be applied.