

BIRMINGHAM CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN: VISIONING STUDY

Professor Michael Parkinson CBE

European Institute Urban Affairs
Liverpool John Moores University

March 2007

What's my Report about?

- Why Birmingham matters
- What a Masterplan could do
- How well Birmingham has done
- How to make a serious city even more important

Answer 7 questions

1. Why do cities matter?
2. What sort Masterplan, why?
3. What achievements city centre?
4. Where does Birmingham stand?
5. What kind of city centre?
6. How deliver & pay for Masterplan?
7. Who does what, next?

1. WHY DO CITIES MATTER?

- Cities back
- Drive national & regional economies
- Government backing them
- Birmingham one biggest Europe
- City centres critical
- Great prize – early wins

2. WHY A MASTERPLAN?

- Time and place moved on
- Strategic, long-term development
- Review and link existing plans
- Benchmark progress
- Clarity, confidence investors
- Create value through certainty

What kind of Masterplan?

- Ambitious
- Long-term
- Strategic
- Sustainable
- City-wide
- Authentic
- Deliverable

- Not just pretty pictures
- Business plan
- Route map
- Influence strategic decisions
- Council, government, private sector - investment, land, infrastructure, transport, architecture, public realm

3. ACHIEVEMENTS CITY CENTRE

Massive since Highbury

- Set standards other cities
- New vision, role city centre
- Innovative public-private partnership
- Attracted huge resources
- BPFS
- Business tourism industry
- Huge improvement retail

- Improved hotel offer
- Created centre housing market
- Established Brindley Place
- Culture & leisure CBSO, ICC, NIA
- Removed concrete collar
- Bull Ring, Mailbox, Eastside
- Jewellery Quarter
- Pedestrianisation and public realm

Big achievements past - can do again

4. WHERE BIRMINGHAM STAND?

- Brilliant first act
- Restructuring to renaissance
- Realistic future challenges
- All cities upped game
- City needs second act

5. WHAT KIND CITY CENTRE?

- Punch economic weight
- Drive city and region
- Improve innovation, diversity, connectivity, strategic capacity, place quality
- Masterplan must deliver

1. Innovation and Skills

- More innovation, high value added manufacturing, skills
- Attract, retain mobile workforce
- Continue good work schools
- City innovation partnership

2. Economic & Cultural Diversity

- More high value added
- Any more potential BPS?
- Smaller, independent firms
- Creative, digital, environmental
- Beyond mainstream to grittiness
- Quarters – Learning, Cultural, Digbeth, Jewellery, Gay Village, Hippodrome

3. Connectivity

4 Gateways

- New Street
- Airport
- Metro
- Spaghetti Junction

- Buses
- Cars and people
- Legibility permeability mobility
- Digital
- Relationships London
- Internationalising Birmingham

4. Strategic Capacity

- Clarity and continuity
- Leadership & vision - story future
- Singing same hymn sheet
- Building partnerships
- Lobbying friends in high places
- Strategic not ad hoc

- Best value - long not short-term
- Creative use assets
- Spaces for independents
- Urban grain & Grands Projets
- Leading sustainable city
- Coherent focus centre
- Selling & swaggering

5. Place Quality

- Cities as consumption and theatre
- Make Birmingham different
- Greater authenticity
- Greater diversity
- More for young and ethnic minorities
- More hang out places
- Celebrate diversity

- More markets
- More animation – food, fashion, festivals
- No willing victim
- Better architecture
- Better shopping
- Better offices
- Better housing

- Value city's history
- Celebrate Quarters
- Back Eastside
- Exploit Wholesale Markets
- Capitalise Custard Factory
- Invest creativity & arts

- City centre as art gallery - photographic museum, modern art gallery, national museum, architectural exhibitions
- Encourage music
- Sports city
- Public realm
- Public squares
- Public art

- Water and lighting
- Connect city centre and neighbourhoods
- Align policies across city
- World class urban development
- Urbanise new city centre

Build on

- Architecture Selfridges, Mailbox
- Management Brindley Place
- Quality Colmore Plaza, Baskerville
- Creativity Custard Factory
- Potential Jewellery Quarter
- Regeneration Attwood Green
- Eastside – learning quarter
- Wholesale Markets

6. DELIVERING AND PAYING FOR THE MASTERPLAN

- Sustained focus city centre
- Delivery vehicle
- City Development Company
- Local Asset Based Vehicles
- Revolving fund now

7. WHAT NEXT FOR BIRMINGHAM?

- Big place
- Big achievements
- Big challenges
- Big opportunities
- Big leaders
- Big plans

- Capitalise assets, achievements
- Commission Masterplan
- Give national lead
- Be brave, confident, realistic
- Just do it!