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RTPI SW

PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2011

(Sponsored by WYG Planning & Design)

J U D G E S ' R E P O R T

December 2011

JUDGES' REPORT

1. This year twenty entries to the RTPI National Awards (141) were forwarded to RTPI SW for regional judging. Following an initial Judging Panel meeting in July, and a series of site visits and discussions with the entrants, the judging process was completed at a meeting of the Panel held on 23rd November 2011. The judging panel comprised the following:

Jean Marshall	RTPI SW Chair 2011, a South Somerset District Council Planning Officer
Mike Oakley	RTPI SW Assistant Secretary 2011 (Panel Secretary) and former Avon County Planning Officer
Geoff Walker	RTPI SW Policy and Media Officer and former Senior Lecturer in Planning, UWE
Claire Alers-Hankey	A South Somerset District Council Planning Officer
Trevor Pilbeam	Planning Consultant
Marcel Venn	Planning Consultant
Patrick Power	Former Planning Director, Castlemore Securities
David Lowin	Director at WYG Planning & Design (Sponsor)

2. Judging Criteria

- 2.1 In assessing the submissions for a National Award the national 2011 judges set out a series of criteria:

- 2.1.1 "To merit a national award, entries must demonstrate outstanding achievement judged to have advanced significantly the science and art of town planning for the benefit of the community, or to provide an outstanding example of the beneficial impact of positive planning.

- 2.1.2 Your entry submission should assess the submission against all of the following criteria:

1. How the entry fits into the statutory planning context;
2. Whether the submission has led to an enhancement of the physical environment leading to recognisable social and economic benefits in terms of human happiness, greater safety and greater efficiency.
3. How the submission adapts to, or mitigates against the threats posed by climate change as raised in the RTPI's seven commitments on climate change – see <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/download/6440/Sevencommitments.pdf>
4. How the submission has addressed all aspects of sustainable development.
5. Originality of the achievement or approach and its applicability as a model for work elsewhere or as a basis for the development of further related schemes;
6. The key issues and problems that needed to be overcome, the solutions devised and the results achieved;
7. Quality of the professional work involved in project design, the development of planning concepts and the application of planning techniques.
8. The involvement of the community in the delivered project or scheme;
9. How the submission has addressed equality and diversity issues.

- 2.2 In assessing the entries relating to the South West, the RTPI SW Judges Panel is always concerned to see how the entrants have responded to these criteria. A key issue is also whether the submission relates to a scheme or project that can be seen as a "Significant Planning Achievement in the South West".

3. The South West Entries 2011

3.1 The twenty entries were judged in relation to the usual two RTPI SW categories:

- a) 'Schemes on the Ground' (7)
i.e. schemes that at Spring 2011 were totally or virtually complete.
- b) 'Other Planning Work' (13)
i.e. submissions relating to planning policies, strategies or visions, development briefs, processes, etc.

3.2 The submissions considered by the Judging Panel comprised:

A. 'Schemes on the Ground'

- A.1 Southgate, Bath – submitted by Drivers Jonas Deloitte and Chapman Taylor
- A.2 Gloucester City Centre, Kimbrose Triangle, Southgate Street and Gloucester Docks – submitted by LDA Design
- A.3 Weston Super Mare – Seafront Enhancements – submitted by North Somerset Council
- A.4 Kestle Barton, Manaccan, Helston, Cornwall – submitted by A J Bunning Architect
- A.5 High View Primary School, Plymouth – submitted by Plymouth City Council / ADG Architects
- A.6 St Aubyn's Church, Devonport, Plymouth – submitted by Plymouth City Council and Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership
- A.7 Peninsula Dental School, Derriford, Plymouth – submitted by Plymouth City Council / ADG Architects

. 'Other Planning Work'

- B.1 'Know your Place' website – submitted by Bristol City Council
- B.2 Active Planning Toolkit – submitted by NHS Gloucestershire
- B.3 Plymouth – Market Recovery Plan – submitted by Plymouth City Council
- B.4 Exeter – Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document – submitted by Exeter City Council
- B.5 Teignbridge – 'Routemap to Localism' – submitted by Teignbridge District Council
- B.6 Teignbridge – 'Learning and Planning Together' – submitted by Teignbridge District Council
- B.7 Plymouth – 'Building for Life' – submitted by Plymouth City Council
- B.8 Bath – Low Carbon Bath – submitted by The Centre for Sustainable Energy (Bristol) with Bath Preservation Trust
- B.9 Cornwall – Solar PV Planning Team – submitted by Cornwall Council

- B.10 Dorset Coast – Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment – submitted by LDA Design in association with Dorset Coast Forum
- B.11 Cornwall – Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity to on shore wind and large scale photovoltaic development – submitted by Land Use Consultants.
- B.12 Saltram Countryside Park – Masterplan and Delivery Plan – submitted by Land Use Consultants in association with Natural England, the National Trust and Plymouth City Council
- B.13 Trevenon Park South, Pool, Cornwall – submitted by Savills Planning and Alan Baxter & Associates

4. General Comments

The overall standard of the South West entries was very good, higher even than last year. The Judges Panel was thus faced with very difficult decisions. The submissions clearly showed that a great deal of good and varied planning work was being undertaken in the Region. The judges were pleased that this year all the submissions set out a clear, and in most cases, good response to the criteria (see 2.1.2 above). This was no doubt because of the submission format as laid down by the RTPi nationally. Although the submission summary, including reference to the criteria is a key document, so also are the supporting documents and again this year the standard of these varied. The presentations to, and the site visit with the judges (in all cases 3 or more), were generally very good. The important point that must be stressed is that if the original material submitted to the RTPi is thin/inadequate, the entry may not be shortlisted for a discussion/site visit with the judges either at national or regional level and the possibility of an Award or Commendation has fallen at the first hurdle. The standard and content of the submitted summary (inc response to the criteria) and supporting documents is a key factor in assessments by the RTPi SW judging panel.

5. Comments/Decisions on Submissions

A.1. BATH – SOUTHGATE DEVELOPMENT (submitted jointly by Drivers Jonas Deloitte and Chapman Taylor)

A.1.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

SouthGate is a development on a 5 hectare site in the heart of Bath. The £350m scheme is the first major urban regeneration of the City Centre in over 30 years. It replaces a failed shopping centre, bus station and derelict land with 7 blocks formed around new pedestrian streets and central square, extending the prime retail area to provide a new shopping quarter, apartments above the shops, enhancement to the Grade II* listed railway station, a new bus station and a plaza between the two stations. The two stations and the plaza form the 'transport interchange'. Construction commenced in 2007, the final phase of the shopping centre opened in 2010 and works are currently concluding at the railway station and plaza, with completion in 2012.

SouthGate is within a UNESCO World Heritage Site and conservation area. It had significant archaeological constraints and an extensive range of planning issues to address. The sensitive location meant the scheme was subject to several revisions throughout the project's evolution. Throughout there was extensive community/stakeholder consultation.

A.1.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The Submission document was supported by a good illustrated coloured brochure setting out brief details of the scheme's evolution, comparative photographs of the old and new developments and some details of the new buildings. The presentation by representatives

of Drivers Jonas/Deloittes and the principal architect from Chapman Taylor took Panel members through the long history of the scheme's development and gave details of the completed shopping centre. Emphasis was placed on the complicated evolving planning policy background relating to the site and the close interest in Southgate by the local community.

Following the presentation, Panel members were taken on a tour of the development including the shopping malls, the underground car park, the over shop apartments and the new bus station. Work currently under way to remove the former rail station car park in order to form the plaza was also inspected.

It is the view of the Panel that the success of the whole submitted scheme cannot be judged until the transport interchange has been completed, as the current links between the rail station and the bus station themselves and between the stations and the shopping centre area are far from satisfactory. The consultants are to be congratulated on the professional work in bringing the shopping and housing elements to completion under complex circumstances and in a highly sensitive World Heritage site. Although the completed shopping element is commendable and can be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West', the incomplete nature of the overall scheme, including the transport elements, preclude it being a candidate for an award in the category 'Schemes on the Ground'. Indeed its submission for an RTPI award could be seen as premature.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Schemes on the Ground'.

A.2 GLOUCESTER – CITY CENTRE, KIMBROSE TRIANGLE, SOUTHGATE STREET, DOCKS (submitted by LDA Design)

A.2.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

The scheme incorporates new areas of public realm and environmental enhancement, that have been designed to not only enhance the historic city and docks in an appropriate and sympathetic manner consistent with the area's conservation status but also, equally importantly, serve as a key link to facilitate pedestrian movement between the historic retail heart of the city and the new retail development at Gloucester Quays via the Docks, with the intention of knitting together three of the city's 'Magnificent Seven' redevelopment sites.

Gloucester Quays was given planning consent in June 2006. A key concern expressed at the Gloucester Quays Public Inquiry was the impact that the new centre would have on the historic shopping centre of Gloucester. It was recognised that for the city centre to capitalise fully from the increased footfall, a new clearly defined public realm that functioned as the pedestrian link between these important retail centres needed to be in place.

Clear pedestrian priority spaces and streets have now been introduced to entice and draw pedestrians along the route and through the new spaces. Major highway reconfiguration and landscape features including lighting, street furniture, public art, signage and wayfinding are included to announce, identify and define the new spaces and route.

A.2.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

When visiting the Gloucester Quays development, which was awarded a Commendation in the 2010 RTPI SW Planning Achievement Awards, the judges were somewhat concerned at the inadequacy of the pedestrian link between the new development and the existing main retail centre of Gloucester some 1/3 mile to the north. At that time pedestrians were directed along a somewhat circuitous route through a rather run-down area. This clearly was a deterrent for shoppers wishing to visit both areas. The judges were told that plans were well advanced for improving the route. This has now been completed and is the subject of this submission which included a good illustrated supporting brochure. Judges visiting the site saw that the link comprises a path between two office blocks, a set of steps and a parallel ramp and a wide paved area alongside one of the docks. Good quality street

furniture along the route includes seats, lamps and information boards, the last featuring walking times between the two retail areas. The Judges Panel concluded that the provision of the new link and the quality of the work is a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Schemes on the Ground'.

A.3 WESTON SUPER MARE – SEAFRONT ENHANCEMENTS

A.3.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

Weston-super-Mare's Seafront Enhancements started as a project to improve the resort's flood defences. But, as feasibility work progressed, it became clear synergies would be achieved by expanding the remit to incorporate highway and public realm improvements.

The project combined the requirements to:

- upgrade the town's sea defences to meet modern flood protection standards;
- improve traffic and pedestrian flows around the seafront of the resort; and
- undertake major refurbishment of the public realm.

The challenge was to devise a plan that was acceptable to all and to secure funding.

This was achieved through a development management approach using partnership working and community engagement. Careful consideration was given to the site's location, in the midst of a conservation area, and sympathy given to the town's Victorian heritage, while developing a public arena that would symbolise the town's regeneration.

In 2007 work started on site to transform the seafront. Public engagement throughout the process ensured work progressed smoothly. An emphasis on place shaping, quality, durability and integration of art into the design has delivered a unique, well loved and well used public space. The result is a scheme, which fully achieved its original vision and objectives.

A.3.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The very good supporting document, the presentation and the site visit (on a very windy day!) all emphasised the point made in the above (A.3.1) description that the seafront enhancements were planned and implemented as an integral part of a comprehensive approach to the regeneration of this part of the resort. Overseen by the development management team of the North Somerset Planning and Environment Department, this major scheme, completed in 4 years at a cost of some £31m, is a good example of partnership working (in particular the Council and the Environment Agency) with the catalyst being the urgent need to upgrade the resort's flood defences. During the presentation the issue of community consultation was raised by Panel members. The answers given indicated that, although serious concerns were expressed during the long construction period, the completed scheme was now judged to be successful by the residents, visitors and, most important, the business sector. The WSM Hotel and Catering Organisation was very prominent in monitoring progress on the scheme. The Council Officers stressed that the completion of the scheme had generated great interest in further regeneration projects in the town. Panel members were also impressed that the implementation of the scheme had been accomplished without serious delay despite the major disruption arising from the Grand Pier fire in July 2008.

Overall this submission is a good example that other coastal resorts should emulate both in the South West and nationally with flood prevention schemes being integrated with other regeneration programmes and not be simply seen as large engineering projects. Panel members were impressed with the quality of the completed scheme both in design and materials used, the role of the Public Art Advisor employed by the Council had been

important. It is clear that this submission sets out details of what must be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: AWARD for best entry in the category 'Schemes on the Ground' and OVERALL WINNER of the RTPI SW Planning Achievement Awards 2011.

A.4 KESTLE BARTON. MANACCAN, HELSTON (submitted by A J Bunning Architects)

A.4.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

Kestle Barton is a rare surviving example of an almost complete ancient Cornish farmstead, including a Grade II* 16th Century farmhouse as well as Grade II 18th Century farm buildings, situated above the Helford River. Five years ago, it was in a serious state of dilapidation. Now, it is a thriving arts venue, with a restored farmhouse, two holiday cottages, a gallery, apartment for artists-in-residence, a sculpture garden, and 50 acres of environmentally managed farmland, including newly planted orchards and a nuttery, all ensuring a long-term future for this important farmstead.

The aim of the project was to rescue the farmstead, providing a new economically viable use, whilst also housing a gallery to support local artists as part of the internationally important Cornish art market, maintaining the highest standards of sustainable design and construction and within the context of the local community. The aim is for Kestle Barton to be a self-sustaining venture that integrates arts, conservation and the farming history of the site into an inclusive model of community and artistic engagement, ensuring the survival of these significant buildings, retaining their unique character and the important historic features of the buildings within their landscape and the local community.

A.4.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The Panel agreed this is an excellent example of the conversion of farm buildings whilst retaining their character and integrity as historic structures. The setting is remote but recognises the legacy of previous farming activity and historic associations. The use of the gallery as an international centre for contemporary art has already commenced with use by both local and international artists and sculptors. It was opportune that during the site visit there was a visit by a local art group from the nearby village who are intending to use Kestle Barton for their own exhibition. This local use is also illustrated in the use by local children. Recognition is merited in order to give encouragement to the owner and professionals involved (including the planning consultant) on their achievement on behalf of the local community. In summary the Panel considers Kestle Barton to be an exemplar of the conversion of old farm buildings and thus can be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Schemes on the Ground'.

A.5 PLYMOUTH – HIGH VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL (submitted by Plymouth City Council and A.D.G. Architects)

A.5.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

High View School has been designed and built with and for the local community. Following the amalgamation of Highfield and Plym View Primary Schools, the new building brings together several community facilities under one roof. As well as accommodating 315 school children incorporated within a well designed, safe, modern educational environment, it includes dedicated community "Space for Sports and the Arts", a 36 place local Authority maintained nursery unit and Children's Centre facilities.

The external appearance of the development significantly improves the appearance and character of the site and locality and positively contributes to the regeneration of the area. The community use of the building further extends the benefits of the new facilities to the

wider community, which in turn is having a knock on impact on reducing previously experienced anti-social behaviour in the area.

The design process involved more than twenty workshop meetings with representatives from the local community, school teachers, governors and the design team. Public consultation and community participation days were held at the two schools, enabling the widest possible exposure of the project to the local community and in addition, the children at both schools were also invited to take part in the design through questionnaire responses, and by attending "Design Pods" to enable active involvement in the design process.

The development has several sustainable design features, including a full natural ventilation system; Ground Source Heat Pump; Solar Thermal Hot Water System; Use of Sunpipes ; A SUDs drainage system; The creation of a new wildlife pond and associated wildlife area, Bat and Bird Boxes delivering a net gain in Bio-diversity.

A.5.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The visit by members of the Panel clearly indicated that this is an important and significant scheme that has delivered a number of new and renovated facilities to the heart of this rather deprived area of Plymouth. An external inspection of the arc shaped building indicated a good design that fits in well to the sloping site. Below the building is a level playing field and large wooded nature area. Particularly striking was the high quality of the building itself and its surroundings (eg the paving). A slightly jarring effect was provided by the extensive high black metal security fencing, a necessary feature of today's new schools. The submission document and the officer conducting the site visit emphasised the close involvement of the local community in developing the building and overall site design, a significant side effect claimed being the lack of vandalism at the site and much reduced anti-social behaviour in the vicinity. It seems clear that this development has brought an enhanced air of confidence into this part of Plymouth and as such the Panel concluded that this is a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISOIN: COMMENDATION in the category 'Schemes on the Ground'.

A.6 ST AUBYN'S CHURCH, DEVONPORT (submitted by Plymouth City Council and Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership)

A.6.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

Devonport is a relatively poor deprived area of the City and the previous library was run on a part time basis from an old Mortuary within the Guildhall and was hardly used.

Funded by the Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership, this fully accessible conversion of the Grade II* listed church breathes new life into this rundown historic building (previously on the Council's Buildings at Risk Register), preserving and enhancing the appearance, character and setting of the only Grade II * Church in Devonport to survive the blitz and creates a high quality, state of the art, sustainable fulltime library and meeting facility in the heart of the community which has improved the library's footfall over 200%. This is the first such conversion in the country and will be a key catalyst in the wider regeneration of the area.

The new modern library is situated on the whole of the ground floor and a new church worship space is situated in the upper part of the chancel which has been designed as a flexible space that can also be used by the local community for cultural and educational performances. The local museum also displays works/archives and artifacts within the space. A new community IT suite is also located on a new mezzanine level.

A.6.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The visit by members of the Panel indicated that this is a good example of the conversion of an historic church into a significant community facility, it being claimed that this is the first such conversion into a library in the country. The quality of the work was evident including the relocation of the 1866 organ which it is hoped to renovate into working order in the future. An extension on one side is to incorporate a café, adding a further facility for the surrounding area for which, it is claimed, the restored church is now the focus and a catalyst for further redevelopment. In this context the panel members were a little concerned as to whether these claims were optimistic as, during the visit (on a Wednesday morning), there were virtually no library customers though the excellent IT facilities were in good use. The visiting Panel was told that a number of Devonport community groups use the building in the afternoons and evenings and this will increase when the vacant site opposite the church is developed. Despite these reservations the Panel concluded that this submission can be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Schemes on the Ground'.

A.7 PENINSULA DENTAL SCHOOL, PLYMOUTH (submitted by Plymouth City Council and A.D.G. Architects)

A.7.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

The submission relates to a new dental school within a highly sustainable green roofed building achieving a BREEAM "Excellent" rating.

The development delivers new and enhanced health care facilities in Derriford in a sustainable location well related to public transport infrastructure and provides high standards of accessibility to all sectors of the community including innovative special treatment and training areas created for those with special or learning difficulties which will be used as a template for future dental school development.

The scheme also supports the sub-region's long term economic and social well being through the provision of strategically important health and further education infrastructure, supported through its promotion of sustainable transportation options like cycling and the public transport network.

A.7.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

At the first Panel meeting in July members expressed the provisional view that this submission was probably more appropriate for a building design award competition, in particular because it was not providing a local community facility and local consultation was not a significant feature or indeed appropriate. Nevertheless it was felt that a site visit by members of the Panel should be undertaken whilst in Plymouth viewing other sites. The visit confirmed this initial view, the Dental School building being an addition to a number of other medical faculty buildings of a rather similar design and structure in the Tamar Science Park. The visiting Panel members were however impressed with the quality of the building itself and its surroundings, in particular the car park paving and walls. In comparison with the other two submissions in Plymouth (A.5 and A.6) there had, understandably, been less community involvement on the Dental School development, although it was now an important facility for the Plymouth area. Thus the Panel concluded that, although the building itself is of considerable merit, it could not be considered a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: No Award or Commendation in the category 'Schemes on the Ground'.

B. OTHER PLANNING WORK

B.1 BRISTOL – KNOW YOUR PLACE WEBSITE (submitted by Bristol City Council)

B.1.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

Know Your Place (www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace) is a highly innovative web-based tool to engage local communities in shaping neighbourhoods. Created by the City Council's City Design Group and Corporate GIS team in partnership with local communities and part funded by English Heritage, the aim of the tool is to enable communities to learn about the historic development of Bristol and use this knowledge to inform decisions about planning at the neighbourhood scale. The website encourages communities to upload locally sourced information and to identify heritage assets.

The City Design Group will be using 'Know Your Place' as part of a toolkit to create a city-wide context analysis involving local communities. The data collected through this process will be added to the website as an evidence base to support and inform the policies in the emerging Local Development Framework. Through the use of an intuitive interface Bristol City Council believes that a wider audience will be encouraged to engage with neighbourhood planning.

The website provides rapid access to accurate local authority historic environment data (Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas etc) and is in daily use by a range of teams including; Customer Services, Planning, Building Control, Engineering, Public Rights of Way and Pollution Control.

B.1.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

At its July meeting the Panel decided that the website should be viewed by all members individually to inform a decision at its final meeting in November. The overall reaction at this second meeting to this unique initiative was mixed. Some Panel members felt it to be a valuable resource for both neighbourhood planning and as an educational tool whilst others considered that much of the information was readily available from other sources. The view was also expressed that the scale of the web based maps was not of a sufficiently fine grain and thus difficult to interpret for the purposes of local planning. Also for some, the website itself was not that easy to manipulate. On balance the Panel concluded that this submission could not be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: No Award or Commendation in the category 'Other Planning Work'

B.2 NHS GLOUCESTERSHIRE 'ACTIVE PLANNING TOOLKIT' (submitted by NHS Gloucestershire)

B.2.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

Through a multi-agency partnership Programme Board – this was a 3 year project focusing on implementing the NICE Guidance on Promoting and Creating Built and Natural Environments that Encourage and Support Physical Activity. The Project concluded with the production of an Active Planning Toolkit (<http://www.glospct.nhs.uk/pdf/publications/2011/ActivePlanningToolkit.pdf>).

The Toolkit brings together information for health and planning professionals to prevent disease and promote good health. It is an evidence based approach and cites 5 areas where interventions to the physical environment can make a significant impact: strategies, plans and policies; buildings; open space; schools and transport. The Toolkit highlights case studies in both urban and rural settings from Gloucestershire and the UK to demonstrate how projects can be readily implemented that can have a significant influence in increasing physical activity. Framed in language and using terms appropriate to the audience, the Toolkit aims to provide a ready resource for years to come and is available readily as a PDF format to encourage wide dissemination and uptake.

B.2.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

A good presentation given to Panel members indicated that the Active Planning Toolkit, published in Spring 2011, was the result of a true partnership of a number of organisations under the auspices of the Gloucestershire Conference. This partnership is an excellent example of the coming together of planning and health officials. The Toolkit, the Panel was told, is used by a number of planning authorities in Gloucestershire and clearly there is scope for a wider use across the South West and other parts of the country. The document itself is well presented and illustrated in non-jargon language and has the potential of being of considerable value in bringing health and well being issues into the planning system, a priority which the RTPi nationally supports. Thus the Panel concluded that this submission is a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Other Planning work'.

B.3 PLYMOUTH – MARKET RECOVERY ACTION PLAN (submitted by Plymouth City Council)

B.3.1 The Submission

Plymouth's Market Recovery Action Plan initiated a series of actions and policy responses to maintain development momentum in the wake of 2008's sharp decline in credit conditions and development viability. What began as a ten-point plan to reduce bureaucracy around planning applications, incentivise the commencement of projects, and increase flexibility for developer contributions became the blueprint for revolutionising how the Planning Services work towards delivering the Council's growth agenda.

The Market Recovery Action Plan was the result of a running dialogue between Planning Services, developers and Council members. Through the Plymouth Regeneration Forum, the Services sought advice from the development community as to how it could maintain development momentum in the City. The Plan's operation was also carefully coordinated with Council members to ensure that its aims were understood and smoothly implemented. The Plan was initially officer-lead to ensure that the policy was sensitive to each application's unique planning context and the Council's commitment to sustainable development wasn't jeopardised.

The Plan is unique because of the range of planning tools it deploys to achieve delivery. The centrepiece of the Plan provides developers with greater flexibility in choosing how and when they realise their projects. They can opt to significantly reduce certain planning obligations in return for two-year permissions or to extend their permission for seven years for "oven-ready" schemes. Other elements include the opportunity to flexibly phase tariff payments in a manner sympathetic with financial viability; a reduction in fees; and a more focussed, partnership-based approach towards progressing permissions.

B.3.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

At its July meeting some Panel members felt that, although the submission had merit, a number of other local authorities in the South West were undertaking comparable actions to tackle the current difficult economic situation. It was however decided that the City Council should be invited to give a presentation to the Panel. At this an exposition was given on the evolving market and business context in Plymouth and the steps being taken jointly by the City Council and the business community that led to the adoption of the 'Market Recovery Action Plan'. In particular ten action points were detailed; a schedule was also tabled setting out the market recovery measures applicable to planning applications validly submitted between 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2012. The Panel was impressed that a number of these measures had now been incorporated into the City Council's standard approach to development management.

During the presentation a number of documents were circulated to the Panel that gave further details of the actions being taken. The lack of these supporting documents with the original submission was, without doubt a significant factor contributing to the Panel's initial doubts regarding its merit. After some discussion, the Panel concluded that the Market Recovery Action Plan could be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West' in particular because of its proactive approach to the difficult economic situation.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Other Planning Work'.

B.4 EXETER – RESIDENTIAL DESIGN – SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT
(submitted by Exeter City Council)

B.4.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

In order to ensure that the 12,000 new houses identified in Exeter's Core Strategy are built to a high standard, the City Council developed a Residential Design SPD. The SPD sets out the city's approach to creating high quality residential environments with a distinct sense of place that respond to their context and are built to the highest possible standards of amenity and environmental performance. The SPD was developed through a detailed consultation process with residents in recently completed housing developments in Exeter, local house builders and Exeter City Council's own planning officers.

The SPD sets out best practice for the design of new housing, starting with site and context appraisal and concept layouts, and then providing clear criteria for the design of new housing schemes in Exeter. Comprehensive guidance is provided on the approach to climate change, including not only the design of new buildings, but site layout, connections to neighbourhood facilities and promotion of sustainable transport modes. The SPD's criteria cover issues such as internal space standards, townscape and external amenity. Particular attention is paid to guidance aimed at ensuring that new development is adaptable; enabling people to live contentedly in one place as their circumstances change.

B.4.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The Panel was impressed with the comprehensive content of the document with an excellent series of illustrations in plans, sketches and coloured photographs. It is clearly a good example of a residential design guide of a standard to which other local authorities should aspire. The problem for the Panel members was that they were aware that other local authorities in the South West had issued similar guidance, though few were of this standard. It was thus difficult to conclude that this submission was particularly innovative and a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: No Award or Commendation in the category 'Other Planning Work'

B.5 TEIGNBRIDGE – ROUTEMAP TO LOCALISM (submitted by Teignbridge District Council)

B.5.1 The Submission (based on the submitted summary)

The Routemap to Localism is the District Council's neighbourhood planning process. This evolved from experience of working closely with communities in trialling a number of approaches to engagement and collaborative plan making. This includes approaches learned from the HCA's Advisory Team for Large Applications area planning workshops and in working with a CABE enabler on the Chudleigh rural masterplan which provided a number of tools and approaches.

Through this experience, the District's spatial planning and delivery team developed an inclusive approach to developing a community-owned spatial plan. This process, referred to as 'Routemap to Localism', embraces the principles and procedures of the Localism Bill, provides an effective means of community planning to support policy development and successful delivery. The Routemap has been applied in all of the Districts' major towns as well as rural focused events.

Features of the Routemap include:

- Bespoke arrangements for each community
- Harnessing local personalities and leadership
- Delivering real opportunity to residents and businesses to guide and manage change
- Capitalising on in-house skills and abilities
- Balance between engaging enough and consultation fatigue
- Simplified evidence base prepared to inform debate

The Routemap process is being used successfully in the neighbourhood front-runner town of Dawlish as well as in the towns, villages and rural parishes throughout the district. How the Routemap has been adapted in different communities can be viewed at www.teignbridge.gov.uk/places.

B.5.2 Comments on the Judging Panel

The supporting documents were of a high standard similar to those relating to the other Teignbridge DC submission 'Planning and Learning Together' (B6 below). (It was clear to the Panel that the school/college work is seen as a key element in the Council's overall approach to Localism). It was the Panel's view however that a number of other local planning authorities in the region are taking a not dissimilar approach to community involvement in planning and therefore the actions set out in this submission could not, in reality, be seen as particularly innovative and be judged as a "Significant Planning Achievement in the South West". Nevertheless the Panel praises the quality of the documents, in particular the jargon free text and excellent illustrations both of which provide lessons for other planning authorities seeking to engage with their communities.

DECISION: No Award or Commendation in the category 'Other Planning Work'.

B.6 TEIGNBRIDGE 'LEARNING AND PLANNING TOGETHER' (submitted by Teignbridge District Council)

B.6.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

Young people tend to be overlooked in community engagement and can provide valid and valuable opinions. Over the past year Teignbridge District Council has put in place a programme of student activities and consultations that spans infant schools to graduate planners. The results of this work have fed into emerging plans and policies and have raised the profile of the planning profession. The 'Learning and Planning Together' programme has included:

Primary Schools: Classroom discussions about built and natural features of the local environment to explore likes and dislikes and the concept of changes. Using a model of Dr Who's TARDIS children from 10 or 15 years are taken forward for visioning.

Secondary Schools: Working with local colleges to run KS3/KS4/A Level workshops on place making. The "Our Place" conference used a 'speed dating' approach to explore transport, housing, environment and economic development followed by mapping/spatial planning exercises.

Sixth Form: Modelled on the RICS sustainable planning competition we created a Student Planning Activity workshop for A-level students was created considering careers in planning. Students designed viable regeneration plans for a council-owned brownfield site.

University: Working with University of Plymouth MSc Planning students using town centre regeneration sites for a planning and delivery exercise.

More information is available in the supporting material and from our website www.teignbridge.gov.uk/places

B.6.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The submission document itself and supporting documents are good and the latter were supplemented at the presentation event at Newton Abbot. This took the form of a proactive programme involving planning staff from Teignbridge DC together with staff and pupils from schools in the area. The methods employed in the four activities set out above in para B.6.1 were demonstrated with the three visiting panel members taking an active part. The documents and the event served to well illustrate the wide ranging innovative approach being taken by Teignbridge in seeking to involve young people in the programme of community engagement, a key part of its localism agenda seen also in its other entry to this year's Awards (see B.5 'Routemap to Localism'). It was stressed that both the planning and education staff involved in this student programme were learning from each other regarding planning/environmental issues - there was mutual benefit and the enthusiasm on all sides was very evident. The whole programme is a model that other authorities in the South West could adopt as the localism work evolves and is clearly a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: Joint AWARD for best entry in the category 'Other Planning Work'.

B.7 PLYMOUTH 'BUILDING FOR LIFE' (submitted by Plymouth City Council)

B.7.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

Plymouth City Council's Planning Services has invested in an ongoing programme of embedding the Building for Life (BfL) standard within its planning policy and processes, to assist in delivering attractive, functional, sustainable homes and neighbourhoods. The Design SPD, for example, requires all relevant schemes aim for a BfL score of at least 14 out of 20. Through the planning application process BfL is used at the pre-application stage, providing an initial "health check" for schemes to and identifying opportunities for improvement. Applicants are encouraged to use BfL as a basis for their design and access statements. Assessments are then included in committee reports at the determination stage. A final assessment is undertaken post-completion and recorded in a LDF AMR. This enables the setting of targets to improve BfL performance.

Four staff have been supported to become accredited BfL assessors and further training is ongoing within the service and beyond - including for committee members, Design and Historic Environment Champions, clients and partners.

A key outcome of this programme was that in the BfL Awards 2010, five schemes in Plymouth achieved the BfL Gold Standard - more than any other planning authority in the UK. A further four schemes achieved Silver Standard.

B.7.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

No supporting documents were submitted for this entry. At the July meeting a number of Panel members reported that in their experience a number of planning authorities in the region incorporated Building for Life (BfL) standards within their planning policies and practices. They also encouraged applicants to use BfL as a basis for their design and access statements. The Panel noted, however, that in the submission Plymouth City Council said that in the BfL Awards 2010 five Plymouth schemes had achieved the gold standard, more than any other planning authority in the UK. It was also noted that four staff had been supported by the Council to become accredited BfL assessors and that further training is on-going. Following discussion the Panel concluded that, although the initiatives in Plymouth were good, they could not be considered innovative as other local planning authorities were embedding BfL in their actions. This led to the conclusion that the submission could not be regarded as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: No Award or Commendation in the category 'Other Planning work'.

B.8 BATH – LOW CARBON (WARMER) BATH (submitted by Centre for Sustainable Energy (Bristol) working with Bath Preservation Trust)

B.8.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

Low Carbon Bath is a project to explore and inform planning policy in relation to low carbon development in the historic city of Bath. The project was developed jointly by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and the Bath Preservation Trust (BPT).

The project has achieved a community-led consensus on permitted development of low carbon technologies in heritage buildings. Through a workshop series, a public meeting and an online survey, a breadth of local opinion has informed a detailed report on measures such as slimline double glazing, appropriate use of solar panels, draughtproofing and solid wall insulation in period properties. The study has enabled BPT to form a new, progressive position statement on low carbon development which challenged the lack of clear, detailed policy guidance provided by the Local Authority.

Bath and North East Somerset Council has now drafted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) using the results of the consultation and 'Warmer Bath' report; this will go out to formal consultation after the Core Strategy is adopted (expected in January 2012).

Low Carbon Bath is part of CSE's national PlanLoCaL programme (2009-present), which aims to give communities the skills, knowledge, confidence and ability to engage in low carbon planning and projects. PlanLoCaL is funded by an Empowerment Fund grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

B.8.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The summary paper was supported by an excellent well illustrated document 'Warmer Bath - a guide to improving the energy efficiency of traditional homes in the City of Bath'. The Panel noted that this incorporates sections on Bath's historic buildings, an assessment of a range of energy issues as they affect buildings and an extensive set of practical guidelines regarding works to improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings with examples from Bath. A very good presentation was given to some Panel members by the Chief Executive and the Conservation Officer of the Bath Preservation Trust and an officer from the Bristol based Centre for Sustainable Energy (a national organisation). Particular emphasis was made on the need for the Trust to tackle the growing disparity in the city between supporters of the green agenda and those whose prime intent is the conservation of the historic buildings. There was also a need to prompt Bath and North East Somerset into updating its policies on these issues, this was now being seen in the drafting of a Supplementary Planning Document which would be finalised when the Council's Core Strategy is adopted. The SPD is likely to draw heavily on the work set out in the Warmer Bath document. A particular feature of the presentation was the evidence provided on the involvement of community groups in the City. Following the presentation a site visit was made by Panel members to St John's Hospital where a Grade I listed building was undergoing renovation incorporating a number of the energy saving measures recommended in the Warmer Bath document. Overall the Panel members were impressed with the submission; a particular feature being the involvement of the community in its development. The work is clearly innovative and of relevance to other cities and towns with areas of historic buildings both in the region and nationally and thus can be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Other Planning Work'.

B.9 CORNWALL SOLAR PV PLANNING TEAM (submitted by Cornwall Council)

B.9.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

In April 2010 the Government introduced the Feed in Tariff (FiT), a financial mechanism aimed at incentivising the installation of a range of renewable energy technologies. The technologies incentivised by the scheme included solar photo voltaic (PV). This technology allows electricity to be generated from solar irradiation. The FiT for solar PV included a range of installation sizes, up to a maximum of 5MW field mounted systems.

Solar irradiation levels in mainland UK are at their highest in Cornwall and it soon became apparent that Cornwall would experience unprecedented interest in the development of 'solar farms' with a capacity of up to 5MW, each covering an area of up to 15ha.

Cornwall has a history of promoting and encouraging a diverse range of renewable energy projects, ranging from the 'hot rocks' geothermal energy project at Rosemanowes Quarry, near Penryn (1977); the UK's first commercial wind farm at Delabole, north Cornwall (1991) to the Wave Hub at Hayle (2010). However Cornwall remains heavily reliant upon the importation of electricity and fossil fuels to meet the majority of its energy needs, importing approximately £1.4bn of energy each year. This has serious implications for the Cornish economy as less than 4% of this revenue is subsequently retained within Cornwall. Cornwall also has renewable energy targets to achieve and the introduction of the FiT provided an opportunity for Cornwall to becoming increasingly self sufficient in electricity generation, while diversifying its energy mix and providing economic and environment benefits and opportunities.

The Cornwall solar PV planning team was developed as a rapid response to the introduction of the FiT and its implications and opportunities for Cornwall.

B.9.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The reaction of the Panel to this submission was mixed with some members of the view that the establishment of such a team is the kind of action that any good local planning authority should take responding to a significant major issue affecting its area. Another view was that this was an exceptional case with the work of the PV planning team being comprehensive and of merit, in particular the major involvement of the Cornish community in policy development and decision making. The Panel was also aware that the team was undertaking comparable action in Cornwall on other renewable energy initiatives. On balance therefore the Panel decided that the establishment and work of this team could be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Other Planning Work'.

B.10 DORSET COAST – LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (submitted by LDA Design in association with the Dorset Coast Forum)

B.10.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

The Dorset Coast Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment (DCLSCA) is one of a number of studies being undertaken to inform the C-SCOPE Project (Combining Sea and Coastal Planning in Europe) to develop a holistic approach to coastal and marine planning.

The key objectives of the DCLCSA are to:

- Establish a seamless and integrated approach to protection, management and planning in the land-sea interface;
- Extend character assessment coverage to coastal and marine areas, building on the existing County scale landscape character assessment;
- Classify and describe the character of coastal and marine environments as a basis for informed decision making;

- Identify forces for change acting on coastal and marine areas and propose management measures.

The methodology developed for this process was critical to delivering a fully integrated approach to assessing terrestrial and marine areas. The assessment describes and maps coastal and marine landscape character types (SCT), identifies key forces for change and their implications and proposes strategies to plan and manage change. The methodology developed during this study has been taken forward into new national guidance for Seascape Character Assessment and is cited as best practice in both the new SCA guidance and updated 2002 LCA guidance.

The coast of Dorset including marine areas off the Dorset coast to the limit of the international waters boundary with France, and inland (to an area defined by the extent of terrestrial landscape with a visual relation to the sea). The study area includes a section of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, the Dorset AONB, four RAMSAR sites, a number of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs and pSACs) as well as numerous other national and local designations which cover the majority of the coast.

B.10.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

A very good presentation was given to Panel members by representatives of LDA Design and the Dorset Coast Forum. The submission relates to the document 'Dorset Coast Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment' which brings together a very comprehensive range of information on the land area close to the Dorset coast (east of Weymouth) and the off-shore sea area up to 60 km from the coast. This has been brought together in a very comprehensive document of some 260 pages supplemented by a series of excellent coloured maps and diagrams. The land based features concentrate on geological/environmental features and designations whilst the seascape subjects include sea floor characteristics, sea currents and depths, wrecks and shipping lanes that are features that could be of relevance in assessing development both off-shore (eg wind farms) or on land close to the shore. The presentation emphasised the potential use of such assessments in the developing subject of marine planning. It was clear to the Panel that much of this Dorset based work is 'cutting edge' and 'ahead of the game' and will be of considerable value to other authorities becoming involved in this relatively new subject. The Panel concluded that this work is a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West' of considerable value to others in the region and beyond.

DECISION: Joint AWARD for best entry in the category 'Other Planning Work'.

B.11 CORNWALL – ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY TO ON SHORE WIND AND LARGE SCALE PHOTOVOLTAIC DEVELOPMENT IN CORNWALL (submitted by Land Use Consultants)

B.11.1 The Submission (based on submitted Summary)

The project's main aim was to help inform future planning decisions on the siting of renewables in Cornwall. This was the first study of its kind to develop a methodology for assessing a landscape's sensitivity to large solar photovoltaic (PV) installations (i.e. solar farms). The project was particularly timely, as Cornwall Council (and others in the South West) had been receiving a large number of planning applications for solar installations following the launch of the Feed-in Tariff in April 2010, which incentivises renewable energy development.

In 2010 Cornwall Council permitted the first ever large-scale solar scheme in the country, and also considered a number of other solar PV applications (as well as wind energy schemes). Land Use Consultants was commissioned to:

- Assess the sensitivity of the Cornish landscape to wind farms and solar PV developments within each of the county's 40 Landscape Character Areas.
- Develop a 'landscape strategy' for deployment of each technology in each LCA (to give an indication of the relative amounts of development that might be accommodated in different LCAs)
- Provide guidance on the appropriate siting and design of future schemes and on the cumulative assessment of wind energy and large scale solar PV (for use by both planners and developers).

Consultation with key stakeholders and community representatives was undertaken at key stages in the project to help shape the final study outputs and encourage early buy-in to the study.

B.11.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The Panel expressed considerable interest in this submission claiming as it did to be the first study in England to develop a methodology for assessing the sensitivity of the landscape to Solar Farms. A serious weakness of the submission, however, was the very limited scope of the supporting documents: an A3 sheet of coloured photographs of Cornwall's varied landscape, including one of a wind farm, together with two A3 scale maps one illustrating the assessed sensitivity of the landscape to Solar PV developments and the other setting out a strategy for the development of such solar energy installations relating to some 38 Landscape Character areas. No details were provided on the methodology used in making these judgements. The weakness of the supporting documents was without doubt a factor in the Panel's final decision.

The Panel's conclusion was that, although this was claimed to be the first such assessment in relation to solar PV schemes, the landscape character analysis approach to issues in rural areas is not new or innovative and thus the submission could not be regarded as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: No Award or Commendation.

B.12 SALTRAM COUNTRYSIDE PARK – MASTERPLAN AND DELIVERY PLAN (submitted by Land Use Consultants in association with Natural England, National Trust and Plymouth City Council)

B.12.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

The Masterplan for a Countryside Park at Saltram sets out a new vision and identity for the area '*to bring the best of the countryside to the city*'. It will ensure that the Countryside Park provides a regionally significant recreational resource on the edge of Plymouth in ways that are sensitive to, and enhance, the area's exceptional biodiversity, landscape, historic assets and productive farmland.

The Masterplan establishes a strong sense of place to a varied landscape that is facing diverging pressures for change. It provides the route map for co-ordinated action by a partnership of national and local public bodies, third sector organisations, and private businesses.

The Masterplan includes eight detailed projects which are accompanied by a technical Delivery Plan with full costings and information on the works that are necessary to implement the Masterplan and enable funding to be sought to take forward each project.

The area covered by the Masterplan is currently, and will increasingly be, under pressure from recreational and other uses generated by the existing urban areas of Plymouth, Plympton, Plymstock and the proposed Sherford new town. The Plan boundary extends to the edge of these existing and proposed settlements. Within the overall context of the Plymouth area Green Infrastructure Strategy, the three organisations of Plymouth City

Council, Natural England and the National Trust engaged Land Use Consultants to prepare a Countryside Park (not Country as this implies only recreation uses) Masterplan and Delivery Plan for this large area including a large area owned by the National Trust and a number of other land owners. The idea was to have a Master Plan and costed Delivery Plan in place *before* significant new development was agreed and implemented and not prepare them as a 'Green Afterthought'. Having the Delivery Plan in place means that Section 106 type agreements associated with proposed development can relate to projects in the Countryside Park that have been agreed and costed following community consultation

B.12.2 Draft Assessment of Submission

The submission document itself and the supporting document 'Masterplan Report May 2011' are good. At the presentation, Panel members were given copies of an enlarged version of the Masterplan, the Delivery Plan May 2011 and copies of 5 Masterplan 'Topic Papers' relating to 'Biodiversity', 'Farming and Land Ownership', 'Landscape Character', 'Recreation and Access' and 'Historic Landscape'.

Panel members were generally impressed with the submission, though having some doubts concerning the deliverability of some of the projects (eg Restoration and re-use of the large former landfill site at Chelson Meadow). Particularly impressive was the partnership approach and the detailed work undertaken in developing the Masterplan and the fully costed Delivery Plan prepared with input from landowners and local stakeholders. In a number of ways the overall approach to the issues is an example that could be followed in other green areas of the region under pressure from existing and future development, such work being done in advance rather than as an afterthought. In this context the Panel concluded that the submission could be seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'.

DECISION: COMMENDATION in the category 'Other Planning Work'.

B.13 TREVENSON PARK SOUTH, POOL, CORNWALL (submitted by Savills Planning and Regeneration and Alan Baxter & Associates)

B.13.1 The Submission (based on submitted summary)

In May 2010, planning consent was granted by Cornwall Council for the Trevenson Park South regeneration scheme, a development of up to 301 townhouses and apartments, 22 live/work units, landscaping and open spaces as part of the European Regional Development Fund Convergence Programme for the regeneration of a former tin mining area in the heart of Cornwall (i.e. the Heartlands Project).

Construction of a new access road and boulevard between Dudnace Lane and Trevenson Road will open up a key vista to Robinson's Shaft which is at the core of the Big Lottery funded Heartlands project, of which the TPS scheme is a key element. Offices and mixed-use development is also distributed across the two parcels of land (included in the TPS scheme).

Ground remediation and improvements in surface water drainage will bring key sustainable benefits to an area of contaminated land, formerly used by the mining industry. Phase 1 of the housing in Trevenson Park South is now being pursued through the HCA's public land initiative.

B.13.2 Comments of the Judging Panel

The Camborne/Redruth area is in urgent need of significant high class regeneration and, in this context, the judges were interested to receive a submission that sets out proposals for a large area for housing, employment, open spaces and landscaping. The variety of the proposed development and the apparent scale of community involvement were good features in the submission but assessment by the Panel was seriously handicapped by the

inadequacy of the supporting documents which comprised only an A3 Proposals map and coloured aerial photos with images of the proposed development superimposed. Particularly lacking was a diagram/map illustrating the relationship of the proposals to the historic features of the site itself and the surrounding area. Also absent were elevation and height details, important in assessing schemes of this nature. A site visit indicated that the only elements so far under construction were two sections of the access road and the boulevard.

The Panel concluded that the submission did not incorporate features that merited it being seen as a 'Significant Planning Achievement in the South West'. The assessment was not helped by the lack of detail on certain key issues. It seems very likely that when the comprehensive Heartlands Project has been completed it will be a candidate for future assessment in the RTPI South West's category of 'Schemes on the Ground'.

DECISION: No Award or Commendation in the category 'Other Planning Work'.

Finally the Judges Panel, on behalf of RTPI SW, would like to thank all those in the South West who submitted entries for their help and cooperation, in particular in setting up the site visits and discussions.