

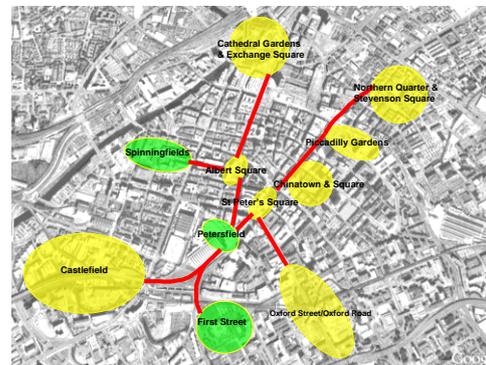
Project Profile: Manchester 3 Commissions

Client: Manchester City Council

Value: Programme - C£3.2M

Research, Stakeholder Consultation, Strategy Development and Project Brief

Duration: March 2008 – Ongoing



Project Aim

To establish the Scope for the Commissioning of Three Public Art Commissions related to the themes of

- The Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act
- Women's Suffrage and Emmeline Pankhurst
- The Peterloo Massacre

Objectives

- To consult with stakeholders and key interest groups for each subject
- To explore with developers and landowners the scope for sites to be offered
- To explore the scope for co funding from potential partners
- To establish precedents and demonstrate the impact of similarly ambitious projects
- To propose a delivery strategy and outline the resources that the City Council would need to deliver each project

Outcomes

- Council endorsement for the strategy
- Partnership across a whole range of organisations
- Full support and involvement from key issue focussed organisations across the city and region
- Acknowledgement of the impact that other precedents have achieved
- Funds and site agreed for the first project at St Peter's Square to commemorate the Peterloo massacre
- Recognition that Manchester's radical history could become a part of its visual character and thereby contribute to its offer
- A clear determination to pursue all three projects and agree locations with authentic connections to each issue and to progress in close collaboration with the key interest groups.

Project Overview

This is a potentially sensitive project and has been handled carefully by Geoff Wood and his team in order to ensure that it is being progressed with the active involvement of the people whose heartfelt passions it is addressing. The Pankhursts lived in Manchester but they were

only part of the story of the suffrage movement and we have secured agreement that any future work should also address the role of mill girls from the surrounding towns. We consulted with the Pankhurst Centre and with notable writers on women's issues to ensure appropriate and relevant recommendations were the focus of the work.

Regarding Peterloo we worked closely with relatives of victims, the Peterloo Memorial Campaign and with the Historical Society to ensure accuracy and relevance. We have co-written the brief for St Peter's Square and an international design competition is about to be launched which will see the Peterloo issue memorialised as a key part of making the square internationally recognisable. This will now become one of the signatures of Manchester.

A key part of the strategy has been promoting the idea that Manchester can be gradually transformed from a city to come and 'do' business, shopping and events into a city that you can also come and 'see', for its historical references, for its architecture and for what will become a striking public realm.

The Peterloo Memorial project will be a component of the regeneration the St Peter's Square complex of buildings and spaces. This will now be a major defining element of the city core, portraying Manchester's radical roots.

We have begun to implement the Anti Slavery Memorial, have agreed a location based around the Cathedral and given provenance by the 1787 mass meeting at the then Parish Church, led by anti-slavery campaigner Thomas Clarkson. We have formed a Steering Group and a fundraising strategy and are in the midst of raising funds to progress. The project is dedicated to the victims and relatives of the Transatlantic Slave Trade but is also to become a space to campaign against contemporary slavery and trafficking. The project will be a significant element of the new Cathedral Quarter Masterplan that underpins the regeneration of the area.