



NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGN VISION:

Based on the thoughts and ideas of local residents, groups
and business people representing the community of

SNEINTON

CONTEXT

Sneinton is an area of great potential. It has a dense centre which includes a thriving high street on Sneinton Dale. It has a number of significant public spaces including Hermitage Square, Greens Windmill and the recently redesigned Sneinton Market Square.

Sneinton has a number of developments taking place around its borders including proposals for large scale mixed use development at the Eastside and Riverside Regeneration Zones, regeneration of former light industrial sites along Carlton Road and further redevelopment of the Sneinton Market area.

Sneinton itself contains a number of prominent but smaller scale sites and two heritage conservation areas which have the potential to bring considerable benefit to the area. However in the past it has tended to be overlooked in regeneration plans, whether for reasons of physical complexity or a negative image connected to deprivation.

The neighbourhood is bounded by a combination of land uses and features including Colwick Woods and Country Park, Nottingham Riverside as well as a

large scale industrial area. It is bisected by a railway line and bypass style loop road, as a result the connections between the spaces, facilities and communities are extremely weak resulting in a fragmented neighbourhood.

In addition there are a number of significant buildings peppered throughout the area, for example Green's Windmill (a major Nottingham Landmark). A number of fine historical buildings have recently been lost and demolished, with the sites left vacant for development, for example the Dale Cinema (a 1930s cinema building on Sneinton Dale), The Earl Manvers Pub and Dale Farm buildings. The area is in danger of losing its character and heritage and has been disadvantaged by not having a clear development plan in place which would assist in identifying the heritage assets in the area and sites that are more readily suitable for development.

Sneinton is an area of deprivation with a diverse ethnic and cultural mix. It has a high churn rate of residents, including a high level of recently arrived immigrants. Sneinton is in the top 10% on the Indices of Deprivation with high levels of teenage pregnancy, long term limiting illnesses, high unemployment and low

levels of higher qualification.

Furthermore, the two Super Output Area's in the south of the area are in the top 5%. It is here that the lowest levels of home ownership are seen, with a high incidence of private landlords are situated rather than home owners or association housing. For this reason the most transient populations are concentrated here.

The population mix is approximately 50% Asian of which the largest group are Muslim Pakistani (now a settled group owning a large percentage of businesses). The new Census is likely to reveal larger numbers of African, and Eastern European migrants than hitherto, including a large Czech and Polish Roma community. Of the long established community, there are many elderly people, and some large families. In the northern SOA's in particular there are many young professionals, attracted by the Victorian terraces and proximity to the City. Quite a few of this group seek to stay when they start their own families but certain factors make this difficult – including the lack of suitable housing, weak connections between community facilities, underfunded leisure interests and access to services.

PRINCIPLES

During the Sneinton Vision project a set of clear and shared ideas about the future of the area emerged from the consultation with local people. These are set out in the Sneinton Vision that follows. The project team also went through a process of learning and building ideas with the enabling work done by OPUN, Design Centre CABE and Nottingham Trent University, during which a set of principles emerged that bring together the team's local knowledge and expertise with wider ideas on urban design, planning and architecture.

The follow is a summary of these principles, which should be seen as underpinning the Vision.

SNEINTON IS THE EXPERT

New developments should be designed around the principles in the Sneinton Vision and in genuine consultation with the local community. Sneinton people have a lot of knowledge and expertise to bring to the table which can help to ensure the success of development projects.

Consultation is not being asked to support or object to a proposal that is already fully formed. The question should not be 'do you like it?', but rather 'what could this be?'.

POSITIVE AND UPLIFTING

Sneinton people are passionate about their neighbourhood, and our visions for the future are full of ideas for a positive, exciting and happy place. In our ideas for places in Sneinton, we often talk about improvements that go beyond the physical facilities, to include activities, accessible services, and improvements to how the place looks and feels.

Sneinton is an enormously creative place, and we are keen to see that creativity expressed in our neighbourhood.

BEHAVIOUR AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Sneinton needs streets where people feel safe, but that safety comes through neighbourliness alongside enforcement and control. Encouraging connectivity, walkability and people on the streets and in our public spaces is the best way to achieve safety. The vast majority of people in Sneinton are

decent, law abiding people who want to live a peaceful life. Getting them out of their houses means local facilities and services which are within walkable distance.

And that walk must be pleasurable!

THIS IS NOT ABOUT GENTRIFICATION

Sneinton has for a long time been a place of diversity, with a community that is in a state of constant gradual change. Often people arrive here because of the area's affordable housing- but they need better facilities and an improved environment to welcome and nurture them. Some will move on, but the many who choose to stay appreciate the vibrancy that results from Sneinton's diversity.

SUPPORTING ENTERPRISE

This vision is not about being stuck in the past or limiting development, but appreciating the special things that we need to keep hold of in order to build for the future. Sneinton is an enterprising place- many small businesses are run from people's homes and more opportunities are needed to grow local enterprise at a

neighbourhood level. This small grain development brings much more local resilience than large generic projects whose ownership and benefits go out of the area.

BUILDINGS, SPACES AND PEOPLE WORK TOGETHER

Buildings and spaces must work and be developed together- new developments should not be seen as happening within the boundaries of the site but in relationship to the streets and spaces around. It is essential to understand how people use the surrounding area, or would like to use it, before making a building design proposal. It is also important to understand the value of groups of buildings within the streetscape and contours of the land, and not see buildings as stand-alone blocks. Good design can then bring activity to the building and the streets around, improving both.

QUICK WINS MUST BUILD TOWARDS A COHERENT RESULT.

Sneinton has had many many small attempts made to improve it. Sneinton Dale is a case in point, the many small and medium scale improvements have

not been thought of as a whole and despite its enormous potential the street does not work as well as it could for everyone. Small and achievable is best, but we need to build towards a shared vision so that all the quick wins add up to something more than the sum of their parts.

THIS WILL NEVER BE FINISHED.

This is not about creating a fixed design for Sneinton, but rather a evolving, shared vision. This principle means that the Vision should be seen as a live document that can change over time as Sneinton's needs change. Having come from the people of Sneinton, the Vision must continue to be shared amongst them, so that any changes are made using the same grass-roots approach that went into the making of the original document. Changes will be the responsibility of a Neighbourhood Design Forum made up predominantly of local residents, who will be charged with ensuring that that Vision protects the interests of the Sneinton community.

THE VISION

The following 7 pages contain the Sneinton Neighbourhood Design Vision.

Sneinton people have shared our thoughts and ideas about ***what we love around Sneinton***, and ***what we want to improve***.

We want a bigger say in what happens around here when new developments are proposed, or changes are made to our neighbourhood. So, we have been exploring our ***visions for the future***.

We have collected together ***six big ideas for the future of Sneinton***. Rather than objecting to planning applications after all the key decisions have been made, we want to work with people, using these six ideas, while they are putting their proposals together.

If planned developments measure up to these ideas, we will support them.

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Social and community aspects feature very heavily when locals talk about ***what makes Sneinton special.***

They also feature in the reasons why particular places are loved, and in our ***visions for the future.***

The need for a positive community feeling is particularly strong around our homes.

We want opportunities for neighbours to socialise and talk, and for our children to be able to play together.

COMMUNITY SOCIAL &

To ensure that the valuable sense of community is preserved in Sneinton: developments which provide opportunities for neighbours to socialise in the areas around their homes and workplaces will be supported.

1

Nature features strongly in local people's **visions of the future**: surrounding our homes, on our journeys through the area and at destinations.

Open green space, and in particular trees, are characteristic of the **places that we love in Sneinton**.

Sneinton has concentrated pockets of green space but also large areas of dense housing and industry without greenery; For many of us, nature is not something that currently makes Sneinton special, but it could be.

Many of our enterprise ideas relate to the development of urban food growing and selling initiatives.

FOOD, TREES & GREEN' SPACE

To encourage the spread of Sneinton's much loved green areas: developments that include the introduction of planting, and in particular trees and food growing, will be supported.

2

Sneinton people want to reduce the impact of car traffic passing our homes.

On journeys through the area, we want to improve the opportunities for alternatives to driving, like walking and cycling, as well as improving car parking.

When we talk about how particular places could be improved, many of us want better pedestrian and cycling links to surrounding areas, and within Sneinton.

CYCLING PARKING & WALKING

To make getting around Sneinton, and getting to and from neighbouring places easier: developments that deal effectively with cars and parking, and ones that improve the walkability and cyclability of the area, will be supported.

3

Local enterprise features in our ideas about *what makes Sneinton special*.

It is an important part of our *visions for the future*, particularly in relation to journeys through the area, and for making destinations unique.

Supporting local enterprises such as businesses, shops and markets is also a major way in which we think particular places could be improved.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE

To ensure the sustainability of local enterprise in Sneinton: developments which support and enhance the existing local and independent businesses, shops and markets, and provide new enterprise opportunities, will be supported.

4

Sneinton's existing spaces and places are held in high regard when we talk about *what makes Sneinton special*.

We talk about public space in Sneinton mainly for its potential- the structure of its streets and squares is strong, but improvements are needed to bring out these qualities.

We think that better use of public space is needed to support and develop our sense of community in Sneinton. It's all about supporting us in the way we want to live- people, spaces, the buildings and the landscape need to be thought about together to make decent places.

PUBLIC SPACES & PLACES

To build on Sneinton's strong structure of streets and public spaces: developments which enhance the public space and support community life will be supported.

5

Unlike many neighbourhoods in Nottingham, Sneinton has retained many of its heritage buildings - we often bring these up when describing the areas of Sneinton that we love and want to see improved.

We think that Sneinton has a unique character thanks to its heritage buildings. As a bold and creative place, Sneinton deserves good buildings in the future: mediocre and bland is not good enough!

Each proposal should consider of its surroundings, being respectful and striking as appropriate.

SPECIAL LOCAL BUILDINGS

To protect the heritage of Sneinton and build for the future: developments which retain and respond to the existing well regarded buildings, and build boldly where appropriate, will be supported.

6

NEXT STEPS

To ensure that the Sneinton Vision continues to work for the community and for positive development of the neighbourhood, a Sneinton Design Forum is proposed.

CONSTITUTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Making use of local knowledge and expertise, this Forum will have responsibility for the Sneinton Vision, in its application, interpretation and review in the future. The constitution of the Forum will ensure that it has a majority of local residents taking decisions, with representation from across the community and the Local Authority to ensure that those decisions carry weight.

APPLICATION

The Forum will be responsible for the application of the Sneinton Neighbourhood Design Vision, working in partnership with the Local Authority and other stakeholders to ensure its use and relevance in the planning and development process.

It is hoped that this will develop into a fully fledged Neighbourhood Development Plan and fully integrated into the planning system.

INTERPRETATION

Setting out the Vision in clear and every day language, free planning and development jargon, has been a difficult task but an essential one in collating a set of ideas that can be shared across the community. It must be acknowledged that this leaves the Vision vulnerable to misinterpretation (accidental or otherwise) by those who will use it as part of the planning and development process. So the Forum will play a vital role as a consulting body for developers who wish to claim compliance with the Vision as a supporting factor for their planning proposals. The Forum will be the arbiter in deciding whether a proposal complies with the Vision.

REVIEW

The Vision has been shaped by local people and it is vital that local people continue to see it as a reflection of their love, ideas and future aspirations for the area.

People and ideas change over time, so there must be a mechanism for the Vision to change accordingly. However, the inherent risk is that changes will be made in response to the needs or desires of those who don't have the interests of the Sneinton community at heart. The Forum will be responsible for safeguarding the Vision and the principles behind it, and guiding it through the process of change. Changes should be brought about as a result of a process that is at least as open and consultative as that which was used to make the Vision in the first place.