

06 Castle Wharf: Mixed use regeneration scheme. Franklin Ellis Architects - winners of Master Plan Competition. (Photograph: Martine Hamilton Knight).

07 Jubilee Campus: Hopkins Architects - winners of International Competition. (Photograph: Martine Hamilton Knight).

08 Old Market Square (Nottingham City Council): Gustafson Porter - winners of International Design Competition.



06



07



08

LESSONS LEARNT CONTINUED

Consultation with planners. In Nottingham we encourage developers and designers to engage with us as early as possible. We wish to help with design guidance and site-specific planning advice. Experience suggests that the architect co-ordinator for the competition may wish to supplement this guidance with a more detailed brief, containing necessary technical information about the site.

Consultation with elected members.

In Nottingham, Councillors have welcomed the chance to view the shortlisted designs and to have a further briefing once the winning scheme had been chosen. The Council needs to be kept involved in the process to ensure the scheme attracts support once submitted formally for approval.

Consultation with others. Consultation with local amenity societies (e.g. the Nottingham Civic Society), English Heritage, neighbours and other consultees who may have an influence over the way in which the brief and the final designs emerge, is important. There is a case for wider consultation once a small number of practices have been shortlisted to compete for final design.

Timescale. Running a competition can take between three and six months (assembling the team, compiling the brief etc.) with a further 3 – 6 months to secure planning permission. This timescale is comparable

with the length of time which needs to be allowed for approval of a major scheme procured by other means. Early Member engagement in the competition process can increase confidence and ownership, giving the developer more certainty of a positive outcome, even with controversial developments. This can shorten the timescale for project approval. The EU Procurement process also imposes mandatory minimum time requirements.

Budget. The developer needs to invest early in the process to pay external jury members and to recompense the short listed design teams. Between £5-20,000 should provide the incentive for design teams to generate innovative solutions.

Choosing the winner. It is important that as the short listed designs are judged against the criteria set out in the Competition Brief, a record is kept of the judging panel's discussion and of their assessment. Feedback should be given to both the winners and those who are unsuccessful. Fee proposals should not form part of the assessment process, but be negotiated after the winner has been chosen. Some level of certainty could be achieved by specifying an indicative fee or acceptable range of fees within the competition brief.

MARRIAGE OF WINNING ARCHITECT TO CONTRACTOR

Run a parallel competition to select a contractor to build the development.

The chosen contractor costs each of the short listed designs and commits to constructing the winning scheme within budget. (This may require costs scrutiny by quantity surveyor and structure / services scrutiny by engineer)

'Marriage' contract to join winning designers to selected building contractor.

OTHER TYPES OF COMPETITION

There are other ways of introducing competition or selecting architects directly. These include:

1. Competitive interview
2. Invited competitions
3. One stage Design Competition
4. Two stage Design Competition

QUALITY DESIGN

There is plenty of guidance on how to commission good quality buildings and the essential ingredients of both good architecture and as importantly place making. CABE's website is an excellent starting point and City Development would be happy to offer further advice.

For further information contact
nigel.turpin@nottinghamcity.gov.uk



Regeneration
East Midlands



The University of
Nottingham



NOTTINGHAM
TRENT UNIVERSITY

blueprint NDE

Cover photography by: Martine Hamilton Knight
Graphic design by: twelveten.com

DESIGN06

DESIGN COMPETITIONS IN NOTTINGHAM



THE CITY COUNCIL AND ITS DESIGN PARTNERS ARE VERY KEEN TO PROMOTE THE GREATER USE OF ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS AS ONE FACET OF THE CITY'S DESIGN 06 PROGRAMME (SEE WEBSITE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT DESIGN 06).

THIS GUIDE SETS OUT SOME LESSONS GAINED FROM DEVELOPER-LED DESIGN COMPETITIONS THAT WILL HELP THOSE WHO ARE CONSIDERING COMMISSIONING A COMPETITION.

01, 02 The Pod (Bildurn): Benson + Forsyth Architects - winners of International Design Competition.

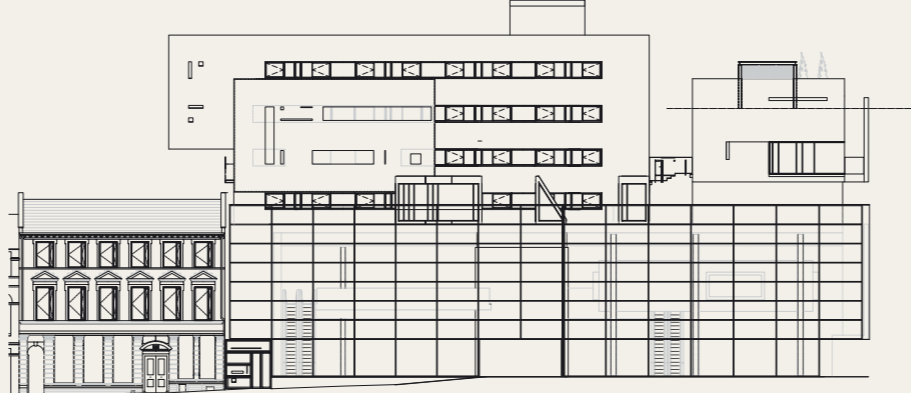
03 Inland Revenue: Hopkins Architects - winners of International Design Competition. (Photograph: Martine Hamilton Knight).

04 The Art Exchange, Hyson Green: Hawkins Brown Architects - winners of Invited Competition.

05 The Pod, Bottle Lane (Benson + Forsyth Architects): Front Elevation.



05



CABE

“Nottingham has secured some great buildings and spaces through design competitions. In our experience they are a creative and functional tool for producing exciting, distinctive designs.”

THE NOTTINGHAM EXPERIENCE

Nottingham City and its partners have had a number of successes over the last 10 years in progressing competitions, usually with dramatic and popular results. Many of the schemes have gone on to receive design awards. These have included the Inland Revenue new headquarters at Castle Meadow – designed by Michael Hopkins and Partners, internationally renowned architects who pioneered sustainable building techniques in the development, and the Jubilee Campus at Nottingham University, also by Michael Hopkins and Partners.

More recent examples include the improvement of Old Market Square at the heart of Nottingham city centre, which was the subject of an international design competition won by Gustafson Porter, high profile designers of the public realm and the Pod, a mixed use commercial redevelopment scheme on the edge of Nottingham’s Lace Market, designed by Benson Forsyth, architects of Edinburgh’s award winning Museum of Scotland.

THE BENEFITS OF COMPETITIONS

1. Dramatic improvement in the quality of architecture.
2. Potentially substantial improvements in commercial returns.
3. Potentially a more positive response from the stakeholders in the design process.
4. Value for money by challenging architects to produce their best designs for a site.
5. Access to a greater pool of designers than may otherwise have been considered.
6. Increased public awareness and interest in the scheme.
7. Marketing and PR value.

SEAN AKINS - DEVELOPER OF THE POD

“The Partnership with the City Council was an essential part of the process, in delivering what I believe will be a superb building. Although there were some additional ‘front end costs’ in running the competition, these were more than outweighed by consequential benefits, including reduced risks, expedited planning decisions and a more sustainable, flexible building.”

LESSONS LEARNT

Commitment. The developer should be enthusiastic about building the winning design.

Defining the vision. Agree a clear set of aims for the project, with high level commitment within the organisation – this becomes the Vision Statement. Use it to help forge consensus amongst stakeholders.

The competition brief. This should set out realistic commercial targets, design aspirations and constraints. These are the criteria against which the individual designs will be assessed. A clear brief helps competing practices produce practical solutions which deliver in architectural and commercial terms.

Project co-ordinator. Someone to assemble all of the important technical background information and bring together the following:

1. The Council’s planning / design guidance.
2. Line and level surveys.
3. Rights of light, building and ground condition appraisals, traffic and access surveys, site development potential, massing diagrams, structural analysis.
4. Various feasibility options to test issues that might be raised by competitors.

Getting noticed. Marketing / Invitation Packs – it is important that the scheme is marketed appropriately to ensure that a good range of high quality and competent practices are encouraged to compete. Expressions of interest will be influenced by the timetable, the quality of the briefing pack, the amount of the prize money and the commitment of the developer. Prizes – it is important that there should be an incentive for practices to compete.

THE POD: A CASE STUDY

This was run as an independent architectural competition to select the designers of the building whilst in parallel, a contractor was chosen to build the mixed use development.

30 architects expressed interest in the competition. They were asked not to present designs but to respond to the brief with their site analysis. Twelve practices were interviewed from which five were shortlisted and paid to work up their design.

Plus 4 weeks competition workshops held, allowing the entrants to discuss their initial ideas with the judging panel to ensure compliance with the brief, commercial viability and a ‘buildable’ design.

Plus 8 weeks final submissions were made and two were selected for costing by the contractors. The ‘winning’ contractor was then committed through a partnering contractor to the winning architect, Benson Forsyth, who worked up a planning application for detailed discussions with the City Council. The outcome for the client was:

1. A project on time and on budget; the creation of a significant new landmark for Nottingham.
2. A greater yield – better tenants than might otherwise have been secured and the innovative provision of space.
3. A smoother passage through the system (and the support of stakeholders) because of a commitment to secure higher design quality.