

**Proposal to Cheshire West and Chester January 2011
Ellesmere Port Design Programme**

Programme Outline

1. Document Outline

The following proposal from Places Matter!, the Architecture Centre for the Northwest, is in response to an enquiry from Ellesmere Port EIP regarding working with schools in Ellesmere Port to engage teachers and students in the numerous physical improvements to their area.

The following outline proposal acts as a basis for developing a tailored programme of activity whilst allowing significant scope for the project to evolve to meet the needs and interests of the local authority, pupils and teachers involved.

2. Programme Aim

The programme aims to increase teacher and pupil understanding of design, equipping them with the language, confidence and understanding of key principles to enable them to positively engage with and inform design in the Ellesmere Port area. Additionally, it seeks to inspire teachers, students and their families about the built environment and raise their awareness of professional careers in the sector, ensuring they are properly informed of the opportunities available to them.

3. Programme Summary

The programme would involve a series of workshops in the Ellesmere Port area that include:

- a. Introducing year 9 students and their teachers from high school(s) to the design process increasing their understanding of where they live
- b. Undertaking a more detailed exploration of specific local developments
- c. Completing a design project supported by architects from the region
- d. Exhibition(s) of student work to inform and engage the wider community of local developments
- e. Continued Professional Development (CPD) workshops and supported delivery, giving teachers the skills and knowledge to utilise the built environment to deliver the curriculum

Emphasis will be on the development of transferable skills, raising of student aspirations and maximising the learning opportunities presented by the developments in the area. Examples of similar work undertaken by Places Matter! Education and client feedback can be found in an Appendix to this document.

4. Why use the Built Environment to support learning?

The built environment is a vast teaching resource and includes everything from buildings and streets, to parks and public squares. Yet whilst all of society comes into contact with and is impacted on by the quality of architecture and the built environment, the subject is not integrated into the school curriculum. As a result, many young people do not have the

opportunity to engage in, learn about or understand the built environment that surrounds them.

There are numerous opportunities for the built environment to support teaching, both inside and outside the classroom with benefits including:

- a. Excellent curriculum links across the curriculum from Maths and English to Geography and Design Technology, as well as scope for cross-curricular learning
- b. Development of transferable skills that can be gained through projects focusing on the built environment including design and presentation skills, negotiation techniques and team work – all of which are critical skills for design professionals
- c. Opportunities to demonstrate how a subject applies to a 'real life' situation, whether that be using trigonometry to calculate the size of a roof beam or map reading skills used by a planner exploring how to make transport links more sustainable
- d. Giving young people the skills and confidence to articulate their views now and in later life – whether as a designer, a client, a local authority officer or a member of the public – will help to ensure well designed towns and cities that reflect the needs of all users
- e. A better understanding of their built environment helps to generate greater respect of their surroundings and can help improve behaviour¹
- f. Opportunities for Learning Outside the Classroom and associated benefits²
- g. An increased awareness of the wide range of career opportunities available and the routes into them, therefore breaking down barriers and supporting greater diversity of those entering into the sector.

5. Project Objectives

The following objectives have been developed in consultation with Ellesmere Port EIP:

- a. Build the capacity of Ellesmere Port's young people to work with professionals, their peers, their teachers and their community to raise the profile of investment and inclusion through design of the built environment fit for the 21st century
- b. Maximise the learning opportunities offered by the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and additional developments, in particular the construction of the new Marks and Spencer store, to improve knowledge of design, sustainability and other relevant issues amongst teachers, students and the wider community
- c. Develop a wide range of transferable skills including design, research, leadership, negotiation and presentation skills, thereby supporting students in further learning, training and employment routes
- d. Enable students and teachers to better understand the design process, specifically the translation of concepts into reality

¹ Recent research undertaken by the Centre for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage reported that in a survey of 2,000 11-14 year olds, 4 out of 5 reported that knowing more about the buildings and places around them makes them and their peers behave better.

² The same research saw 9 out of 10 students reporting that they remembered more from a school outing than a classroom lesson.

- e. Breakdown preconceptions about who can succeed in the architecture and built environment professions and career paths available through a practitioner led programme, delivered by successful design professionals from the region
- f. Enable teachers and students to become stakeholders and ambassadors for good design in their own communities through sharing their new knowledge and project work to actively communicate to the rest of the school and wider community the current changes to the built environment
- g. Develop teacher capacity for using the built environment as a means of supporting delivery of the core curriculum, including Maths, English, Geography, Design Technology and cross curricular learning, ensuring a sustainable project outcome.

6. Target Groups

The aspiration is to work with three intakes of year 9 students from all four high schools in Ellesmere Port, coinciding with the delivery of the key developments in the area. The following have been identified as key target groups:

- a. Three intakes of year 9 students
- b. Teachers working directly and indirectly with these students across the four local schools
- c. The wider school, parents and the local community using mechanisms such as exhibitions and consultation.

The proposal includes project outlines and associated costs for a range of delivery options, including an option for delivery of a one year project.

Project Detail

The following is an outline only and the detail of delivery will be developed in full consultation with and agreed with individual schools including number of students, delivery time and number / date of sessions.

7. Ellesmere Port Design Programme

It is proposed that Places Matter! will lead on the delivery of a programme of learning through the built environment in Ellesmere Port with planning commencing in the summer term 2011 and delivery commencing September 2011.

Delivery will be supported by local design professionals who will be assigned to a participating school, bringing current industry experience and knowledge into the school environment for a sustained period of time. These individuals will seek to increase the confidence and knowledge of both pupils and teachers in order that they feel they can genuinely engage in the design process and comment on local design proposals.

The learning experience will be central to the project. Consequently the project will focus on the process rather than an end design solution. Stimulation of ideas, discussion about design and developing critical skills in commenting and questioning both their own and others' proposals will be themes throughout the project.

The following provides an outline of the Ellesmere Port Design Programme. The proposal is relatively broad to enable further development in discussion with the local authority and teachers, as well as input from the design professionals once recruited.

Option A: One Year Programme

The following proposal could be applied to one or all four schools in Ellesmere Port. Elements can be removed or expanded upon to ensure that the programme best meets the needs of stakeholders.

Part 1: Project Planning, Summer Term 2011 and school summer holiday

Once schools have been selected Places Matter! will lead on the development of the programme through meeting with participating schools, developers and local authority representatives to ensure that the programme delivers the desired objectives and has the appropriate focus. Sessions will be developed so that they can support the delivery of the core curriculum whilst developing a range of additional transferable skills.

It would be the aspiration that design professionals would be recruited by the beginning of July, enabling discussion with the schools to establish priorities and agree preferred approaches before the summer holiday. This would allow for more detailed development of the programme by Places Matter! and design professionals over the summer holiday.

Part 2: Autumn to Spring Term 2011/12

Design professionals will work with each school for the equivalent of 5 whole day / 10 half day sessions between September and March 2012. Activities that will be included the programme would include all or a combination of the following:

- Presentations / information from the design professionals of a selection of their projects, including information on their route into the profession
- Architectural exploration of the local area, exploring design features that have been used and understanding what the built environment can communicate about the history of an area

- Use of a range of skills and tools to undertake a site analysis, conducting research that will inform their design proposals
- Workshops specifically focusing on increasing understanding of the developments in the Ellesmere Port area³
- Architect led visits to developments that are considered to be exemplar developments within the region
- Working in groups to develop a design response to a specific brief, informed by previous sessions and relating to a specific development e.g. playground redesign⁴
- Internal presentations, both mid project and at the end of the project.

Part 3: Summer Term 2012

a. Exhibition:

A student led exhibition / presentation of their work. The exhibition would allow students to see work other schools have produced and present their own ideas. It would also enable them to share their work with the wider community, thereby providing an opportunity for the community to engage in the development of their area.

b. Teacher Training:

Places Matter! will draw on its' experience of delivering teacher CDP sessions to deliver workshops that enhance the learning experience for teachers. These sessions will focus on giving teachers the basic skills to engage pupils in the BSF process without external support. Sessions would bring teachers together from all schools to further develop teacher's confidence in using the built environment to support the delivery of the curriculum and cross curricular learning. Resources and tools that have been developed in Part 1 of the programme would be incorporated into the sessions.

c. Design Review:

Design Review is a national tool for improving the quality of design. It is delivered in the northwest by Places Matter! and sees new developments being reviewed by experts from the field. The approach could be adapted for a school 'Design Review' of the proposed school design or the Marks and Spencer development with pupils being supported by their design professionals. This would give students an opportunity to hear about the design development and comment / question decisions made to date. This would see them utilising the skills that they have gained through the programme hear about and comment on a live development.

d. End of year evaluation:

Places Matter! would undertake a full evaluation of the programme during the year. Smaller scale interim evaluations would also take place to ensure that all involved are satisfied with the project delivery and make any appropriate changes.

³ The nature of these sessions will depend on what stage the developments are at, the preference of the school and the ability of the developer to support the session. It could include a combination of site visits, presentations and discussion about designs, with the students being supported by the design professionals working with their school.

⁴ Pupil expectations will need to be managed to ensure that they are aware their proposals may not become a reality.

Option B: Comprehensive three year programme across four schools

This option aims to maximise the learning opportunities available, seeking to imbed the value of the built environment in schools in Ellesmere Port and create a legacy of the current developments in the area through the delivery of a three year programme.

The programme outlined above would be delivered with each year 9 intake for a three year period with a final exhibition date to be in line with the completion of the Marks and Spencer development. The teacher would be given an increasingly substantial role in the delivery of the programme, supported by the design professional and Places Matter! This would have the objective of increasing project ownership and imbedding the use of the built environment as a tool to support learning within the school.

The potential to continue to engage the previous cohort of students should also be explored for those with a particular interest. Potential methods could include the following, with other opportunities to be discussed and developed:

- a. Identification of potential work experience / volunteering roles in the local area, potentially working with the new business consortium for Ellesmere Port
- b. Development of an Ellesmere Port Youth Design Panel where a small number of students could continue to meet with developers / local authority representatives to discuss developments and feedback to the wider school (e.g. online or at school assemblies.) This group would need support and a very basic outline funding proposal for this is included, but would need to be developed further.

8. Delivery Mechanisms and Project Management

- a. Overarching Project Management:
Places Matter! Education Manager would lead on the delivery of this project. This will include development of the programme, management of design professionals, budget management and project evaluation. Additional information about the organisation can be found at the back of this document, including information about previous projects delivered by the Education Department.
- b. Ellesmere Port EIP
Ellesmere Port EIP will initiate discussions with the schools to ensure that there is appropriate support. Ellesmere Port EIP will also ensure that the project complements that of the significant investment taking place in the town over the next three years and will communicate with Simons, Marks and Spencer and other leaders of UCE Academy programme to establish professional links with the live teams on local sites.
- c. Ellesmere Port High Schools
Schools would need to be committed and capacity be made to run sessions. Curriculum links can be provided to support this. Teacher(s) should be present for the sessions, both to support the session delivery and to ensure they benefit from the learning experience. They should also be available for discussion following workshops to ensure that sessions continue to meet the needs of the school.

9. Funding

A range of options have been provided with associated costs to enable Cheshire West and Cheshire to identify which elements, if any, they would like implement and that they are able to fund. The project can be reduced or expanded in scale. Please note that the breakdown provided is draft only and would need further development if there is interest in delivering the programme.

Summary figures have been provided below. These include project development, project management, fees for one design professional⁵ per school, workshop materials and teacher training.

Option A: One year programme delivered in a single school

£13,915 per school

Option A: One year programme delivered in four schools

£37,210 (£9,302 per school)

Option B: Three year programme delivered in four schools

Approximately £100,000

(Based on 100% cost for year one with an envisaged discount of approximately 20% for years two and three as project management support and project planning reduces.)

⁵ Places Matter! are fortunate to have a network of design professionals developed over the duration of the programme who are keen to work with young people. As a result there fees are typically 30-40% below their standard rate.

Appendix 1: Background on Places Matter!

1. What is Places Matter?

Places Matter! is an organisation devoted to generating a strong sense of place in living, working and leisure environments throughout the Northwest. Places Matter! is an Architecture & Built Environment Centre that works across the public and private sectors to drive up the skills and knowledge of all those involved in new development, promoting good design and encouraging strong client leadership.

The Places Matter! remit is to understand the economic case for promoting good design, ensuring project developers and managers provide strong client leadership. There are four stands to the programme as follows:

- **Education:** Places Matter! Education seeks to engage young people aged 14 - 19 and teachers from across the Northwest in architecture and the built environment. The programme aims to offer more young people from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to learn about the value of good design and give them the skills to communicate their views so that they can demand better design for our region in the future. Helping to increase awareness of the opportunities available and break down the stereotypes around people who work in the sector is part of all our projects.
- **Design Review:** Design Review is a respected method of improving the quality of new development by offering constructive, impartial and expert advice. Monthly panel meetings allow local authorities, clients, developers and design teams to present their schemes at the pre-planning stage to a panel of experts from the built environment sector and benefit from the discussion and constructive advice of the panel.
- **Skills and Training:** A range of training programmes that develop the skills and knowledge of those working in the built environment sector in order to help develop a better quality of built environment in the region. Programmes include Manual for Streets, an Introduction to Urban Design and Building for Life.
- **Research:** Places Matter! undertakes research on the economic value of good design.

2. Who funds Places Matter?

Places Matter! is funded by the North West Development Agency in support of an objective in its Regional Economic Strategy (2006) that a good quality built environment contributes positively to the economy of the Northwest. We work closely with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

3. Key Places Matter! Education Projects 2010/11:

The following are some of the highlights from the Education Programme during the last 12 months. There have been full evaluations of all activities and feedback can be shared as evidence of our track record of delivery. The proposal sees the most successful elements of these activities being incorporated into comprehensive programme of activity.

Teacher Continued Professional Development

A core part of our activity is a programme of free CPD workshops for teachers and student teachers from across the Northwest. Sessions help teachers to enhance the curriculum using the built environment, a fantastic free and accessible resource. Sessions are hands-on and open to teachers from a wide range of curriculum areas. The training programme brings together teachers with design professionals in the sector, giving teachers an insight

into the way places are created and up to date information on design issues, along with practical ideas and resources for the teachers to take back and use in the classroom.

In addition to the core programme we deliver tailor made sessions and workshops for PGCE students.

Feedback has been excellent with 100% of attendees reporting that they would recommend a Place Matter! event to a colleague.

Architecture for Everyone

Places Matter! Education delivered two phases of the Northwest Architecture for Everyone (A4E) campaign during 2010. A4E is a three year, nationwide campaign, founded on the belief that built environment professionals who reflect the diversity of the society they serve have a better chance of creating a built environment that meets the needs of society. The campaign therefore aims to identify and support new and emerging architectural talent from amongst social groups that have been traditionally excluded from entering and sustaining a career in the profession.

80 participants' took part in the Northwest programme which aimed not only to increase their knowledge of the built environment but also develop a wide range of transferable skills. Our evaluations have shown that participants benefited greatly from the experience. A number of participants reported that their participation helped to confirm they want to pursue a career in the sector, with some reporting it has helped them to secure a place in university. Additional feedback included:

- 91% reported that they were a more confident person
- 84% felt a career in the built environment is more accessible
- 98% reported that they are more aware of their city and their community
- 93% felt that through participating they gained new skills & am more aware of my strengths and weaknesses

Go Places Conference

The Go Places Conference was held in March 2010 and saw over 220 Year 10 pupils from across the region joining leading architects, landscape architects, urban designers, planners and other professionals for a day of talks, hands-on activities and careers advice focussing on architecture and the built environment.

The aim of the conference was to inspire young people to be more aware of the environment in which they live and help them to find their voice in wider society, giving them an insight into working in design and the built environment. By giving pupils the opportunity to work alongside successful design professionals and students the conference aimed to help breakdown preconceptions about the type of people that are able to have successful careers in the sector. The conference also engaged school teachers, introducing them to the potential of the built environment as a teaching tool and providing them with up to date information about the educational routes into the sector.

The event was very well received with feedback including:

- 92% of pupils said they had a better understanding of the built environment
- 90% of pupils said they had a better understanding of careers in the built environment
- 100% of teachers who responded thought the day was useful and interesting
- When asked whether the event had affected their appreciation of the built environment as a tool for supporting the curriculum, 91% of teachers who responded said yes.