Duke Street / Bold Street

Liverpool's decaying Duke Street and Bold Street area originated in the early 18th Century as a popular district for commercial and residential use, located immediately beside the first dock which opened in 1715. By the 18th century Liverpool's trade was thriving and was aided considerably by the arrival of the railways. The first ocean steamship crossed the Atlantic in 1840 and the city became a major leaving point for emigrants, often escaping from oppression, seeking their fortunes and in the New World.

The decline of the Duke Street/ Bold Street area was inextricably linked to the decline of the economy of Liverpool and Merseyside as a whole. Today this is marked by widespread dereliction, population decline and social and economic exclusion. However, recent investment by pioneer businesses in the bar and club sector, coupled with English Partnership's vision for a vibrant area of new mixed uses, mark the beginning of a new era for the area.

English Partnerships

English Partnerships, which was created in 1993, is the nation's principal facilitator of urban regeneration programmes. By creating partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors the Agency has transformed areas of need into quality places for people to live and work. Job creation , inward investment and environmental improvement through reclamation of vacant, derelict and blighted land and buildings are the key aims of the Agency.

Local authorities are one of English Partnerships' most important partners and the Duke Street/Bold Street project, supported by Liverpool City Council, is a prime example of how the Agency works with authorities on major area-based regeneration programmes and environmental improvement.

During the next five years, it is anticipated that £120 million of investment will be ploughed into the Duke Street/Bold Street area. English Partnerships will provide £15 million, whilst a further £15 million will come from the European Union's Objective One Funds and the balance from Heritage/Lottery sources and the private sector.

"Once we have finalised the brief which is suitable for the area, we will bring together a team with a multitude of experience. Members of the public, local business people, traders, clubowners, housebuilders, investors, developers and everyone with an interest, all have a great deal to contribute. We want to know how we can help them and how they can help us."
Bill Skilki, Senior Development Executive, English Partnerships

Things people said...

"As far as I can see it's the most vibrant part of the city and it's being driven by pubs and nightclubs."

"Change is required but too much change could ruin it."

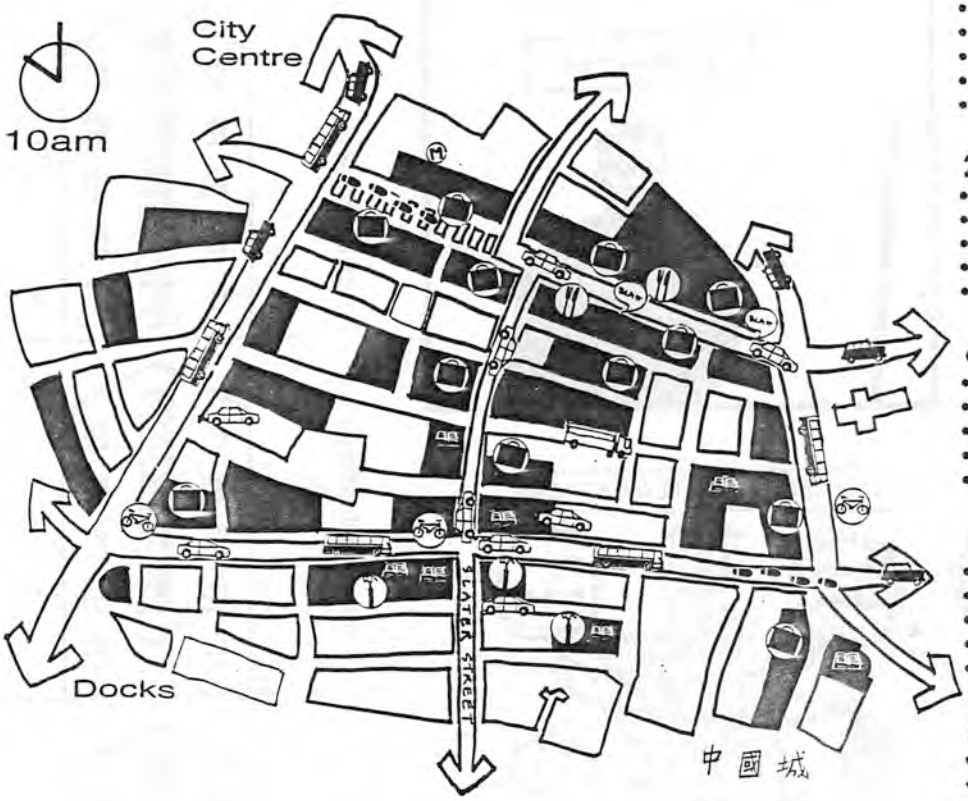
"It's about how much you want to keep and how much to get rid of."

"Because of the mix in the area, it's all things to all people."

"Give money to people with vision!"

"I like walking through the back streets: there's lots of small working companies and they make the place buzz."

24 hour city



10am Activities
- People arriving/at work
- Shops on Bold Street open
- Garage/Light Industrial activity
- Education at Community College etc.
- Export offices/other business activity

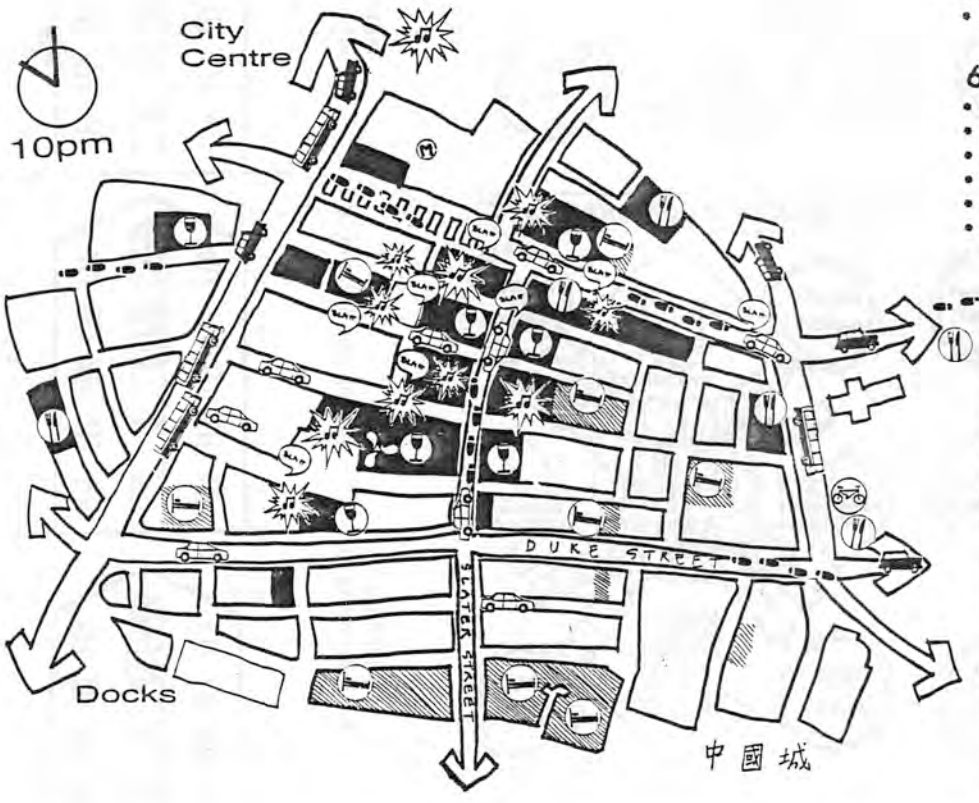
2pm Activities
- Lunchtime trade
- Cafes and restaurants busy on Bold St.
- Drinking in Pubs/bars.
- Shopping
- Returning to Work for afternoon.

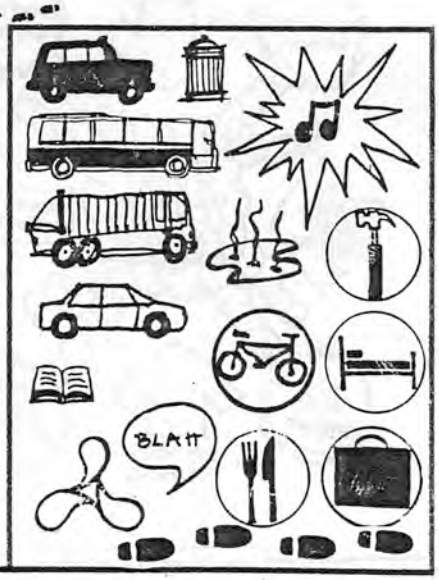
6pm Activities
- Shops/Offices close
- Commuters to Buses/Merseyrail
- First Restaurants open
- After work drinking in pubs/bars
- Art galleries private views etc.

10pm Activities
- Massive influx of people (many taxis)
- Bars/Pubs/Restaurants busy
- Music/entertainment starts
- Clubs start to open
- Students move to late license bars

2am Activities
- Pubs closed
- Clubs busy/loud
- Some Restaurants close (not fast food)
- Fast food busy (Slater/Bold St)
- Taxis busy taking people home.
- Residential community asleep
- Art galleries private views etc.

6am Activities
- Cream closes - last coaches leave (Sat)
- Last taxis taking clubbers home
- Deliveries to Shops in Bold Street
- Refuse Collection
- First buses taking people to work
- Deliveries to Shops in Bold Street





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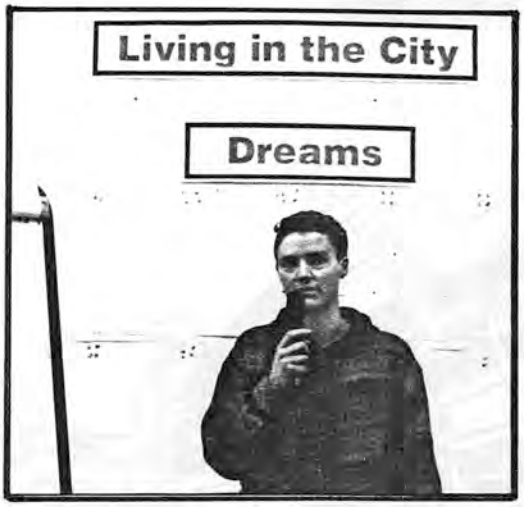
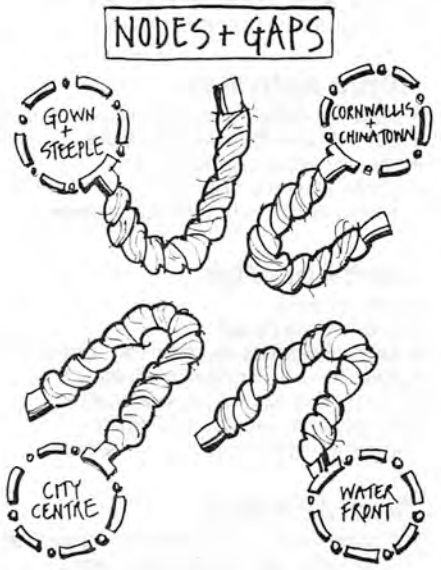
"Think local, buy local, sell international."

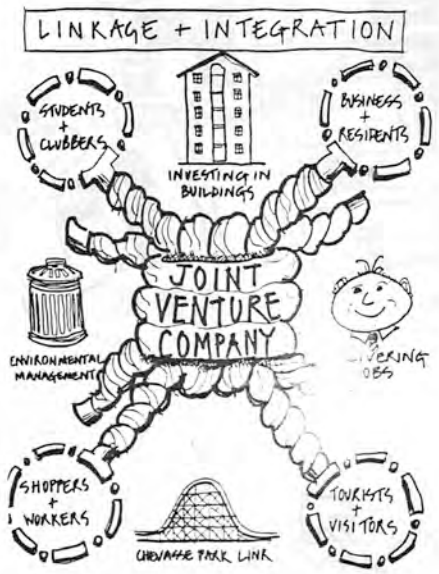
"If there is anything that distinguishes people in Liverpool from the rest of the universe, it is natural creativity!"

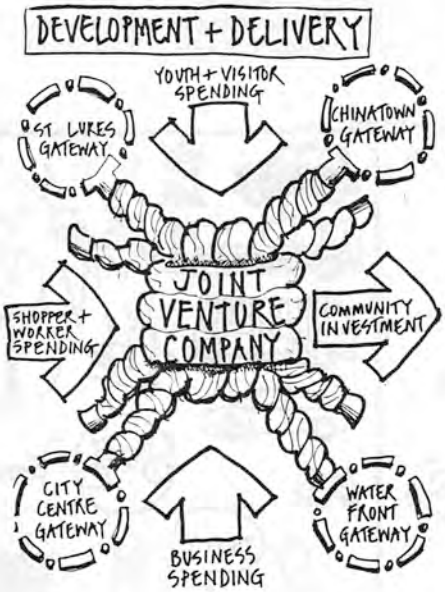
"I look at those photographs of decaying buildings and I see the potential and the beauty of them."

"We're saying: let's get adventurous with the area and we will look after the maintenance of it."

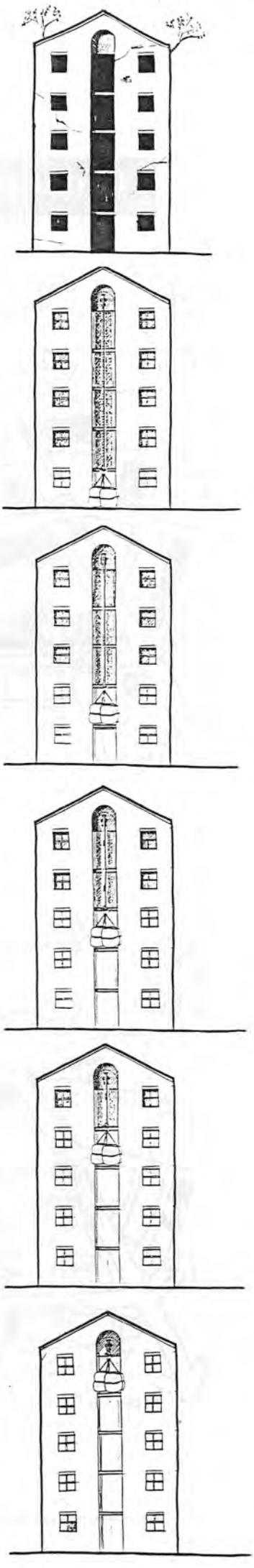








1. Dereliction and Decline
2. Pioneering Initiatives
3. Flagship Properties
4. Linkage and Consolidation
5. Synergy and Benefit
6. Realisation and Sustainability



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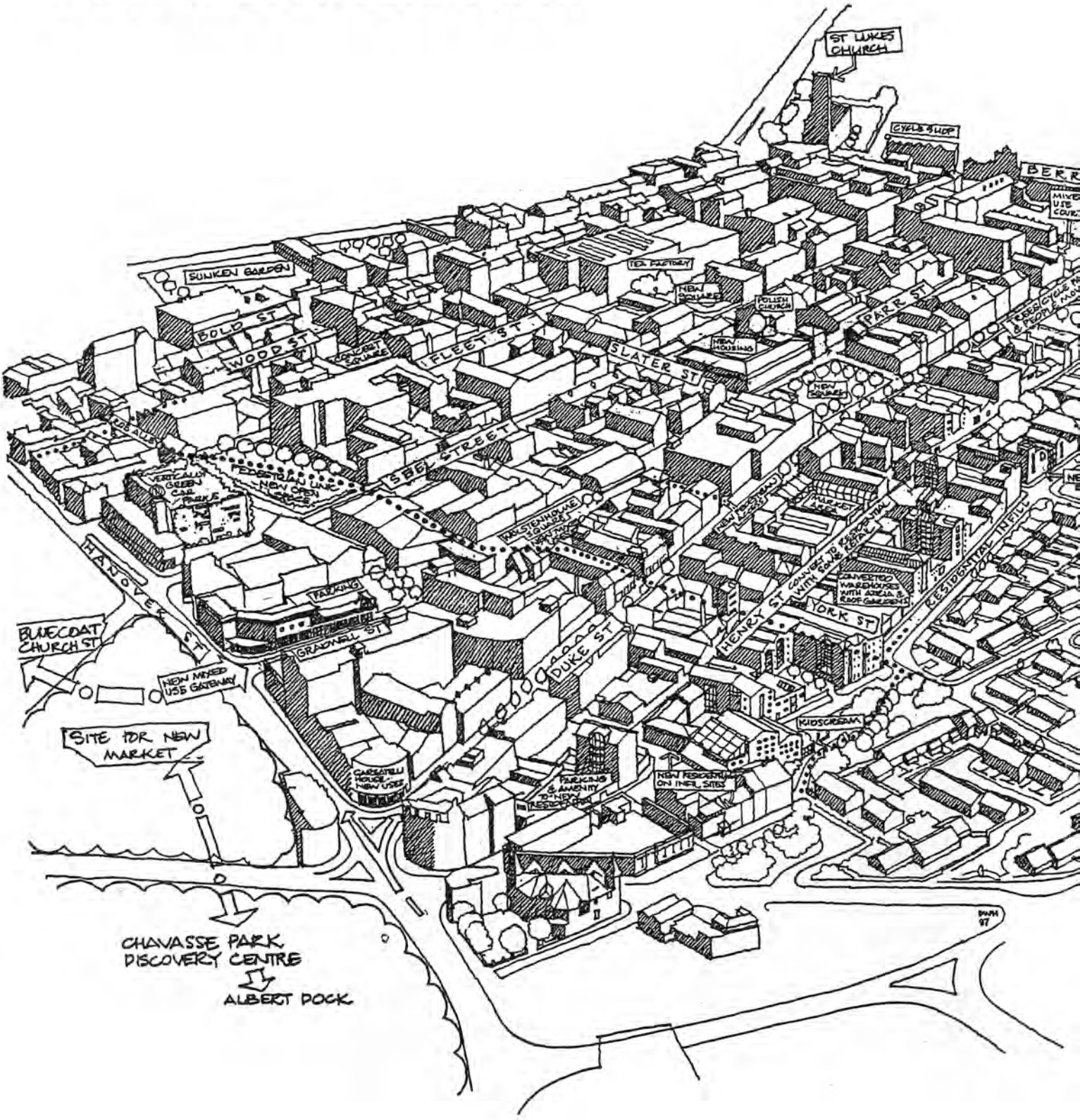
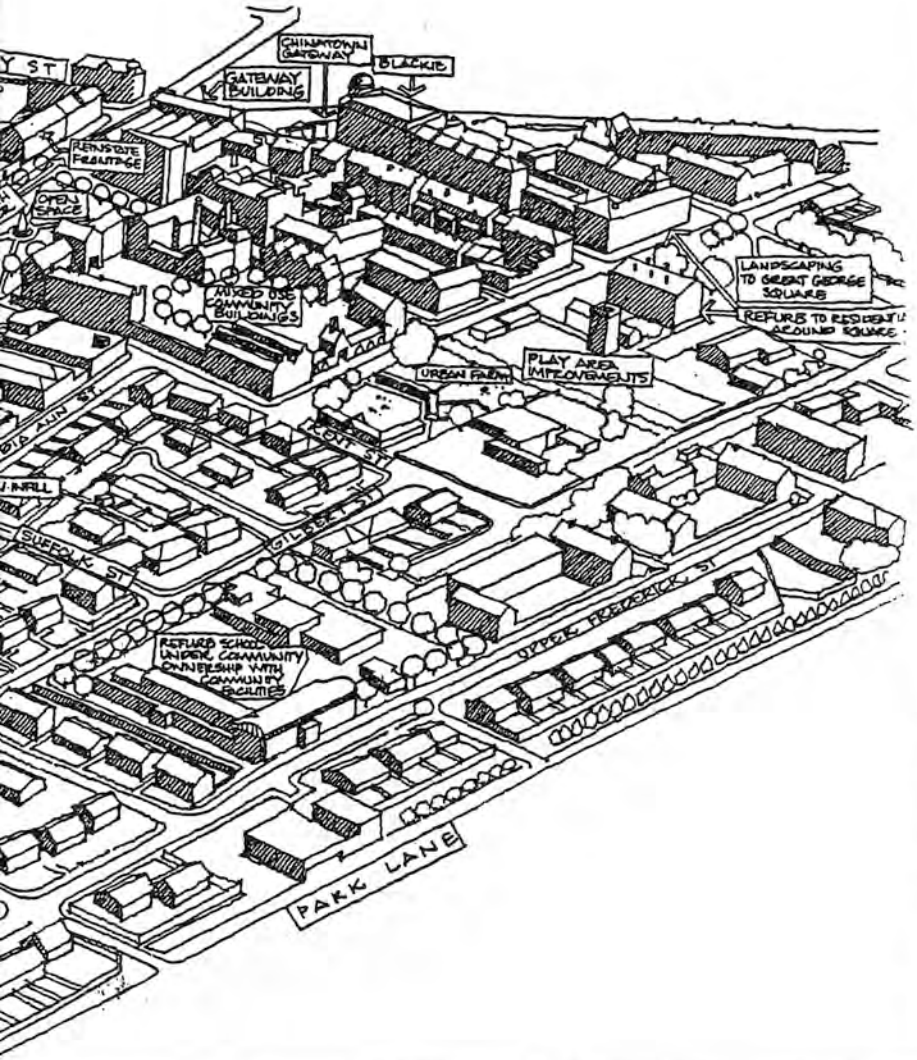
An Action Plan For Duke Street / Bold Street



Duke Street/Bold Street
Planning Weekend



Combating dereliction and arresting decline:

- **Pioneering initiatives**
  - communication cafe
  - environment trust
  - dereliction festival
  - dedicated project team
- **Flagship projects**
  - new gateways
  - new squares
  - drive investment southwards
- **Linkage and consolidation**
  - new housing
  - new warehousing
  - heritage, craft and construction attractions and opportunities
- **Synergy and sustainability**
  - creating vitality, mutuality, interdependence and respect for heritage
  - visitors, workers and residents collaborating to create a total quality experience and a growing economy

The Project

During the weekend of 14th to 17th March 1997 over 150 people gathered at Blackburne House on Hope Street to participate in a Planning Weekend which heralds the start of a new era for the Duke Street/Bold Street area. English Partnerships appointed John Thompson & Partners, one of the country's leading community planning and urban design practices, to facilitate two days of workshops and 'Planning for Real' sessions and help create a shared vision for the area's future.

Local residents, business people, traders, club managers, land owners and investors, members of Liverpool City Council and English Partnerships were all represented and together conceived an Environmental Development Trust which would initially be set up to manage the streets and buildings, and ensure the maximum involvement of business and the resident community. The Trust would be a highly visible communication vehicle and be able to deliver early gains. The early activity of the Trust would start the process of capacity building and ensure that the community at all levels is capable of joining with English Partnerships and the City Council to deliver the larger dream.

Duke Street/Bold Street

Planning Weekend Images

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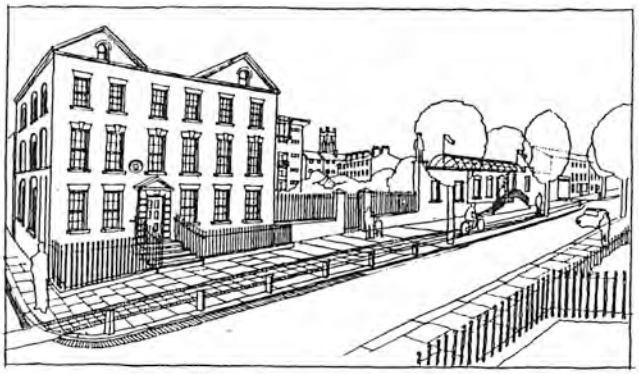

1. *Reconstructed 'Merchant's House' with heritage garden beyond containing reconstructed 'prison houses' / existing georgian wall retained to form access to information centre.*

2. *view along Lydia Ann Street showing warehouses converted into flats, mixed uses and infill houses.*

3. *New mixed use building at junction of Fleet Street and Concert Street seen from Concert Square*

4. *Duke Street/Slater Street junction - view into new square*

5. *View along Duke Street with new open space and mixed use community buildings*

6. *New residential and retail quarter in Henry Street.*

7. *Casartelli building converted to mixed uses forming landmark at junction of Duke Street and Hanover Street - new gateway to Wolstenholme Square, visible from Hanover Street.*

8. *Converted warehouse seen from York Street*