



Old Market Square NOTTINGHAM | 2007

Old Market Square in Nottingham is one of the oldest public squares in the UK with an 800 year history as a market place. At 11,500m², it is the second largest in Britain after London's Trafalgar Square. Its regeneration by Gustafson Porter + Bowman 2005-2007 involved the replacement of a design by T.C.Howitt, architect of the square and the adjacent Council House building. Both the square and building were completed in 1929, and the square was listed in 1994.

The new design incorporates the organic topography of the original medieval square, and accommodates existing falls by gradual level changes for wheelchair users and drainage. The predominant material is granite, to reflect the importance of the space and provide a long design life. Many UK public squares are dominated by road traffic, signage and street furniture; however collaboration with city planners has resulted in a clutter free, contemporary design.

The planting creates a sense of intimacy in the space; lines of plants create a layer of separation from the activity of Long Row and the tram stop. Planters lined with a box hedge are filled with 4,000 colourful flowering bulbs, perennials and 800 shrubs that provide a living frame to the square, changing constantly in accordance with the season. These are also designed to accommodate temporary planting schemes by the Nottingham in Bloom team.

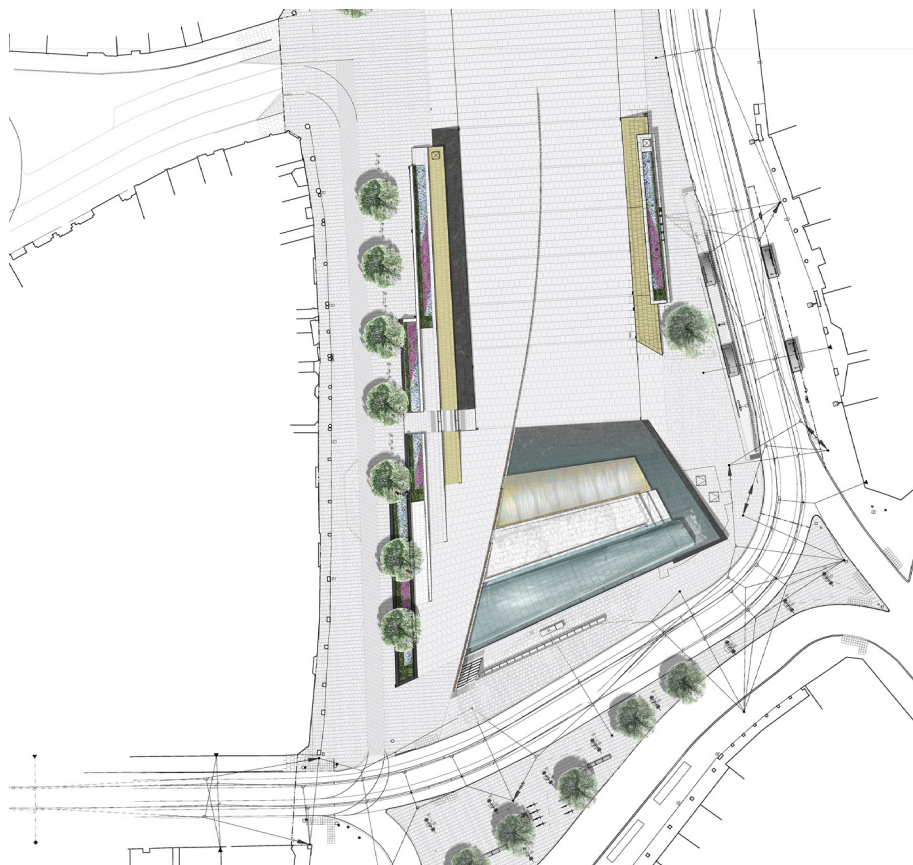
The 4,400m² water feature comprises a reflecting pool, a 1.8m waterfall, rills, 53 jets and a scrim, arranged as four terraces, which can be turned off when used as a stage or temporary viewing areas. At night the water feature is lit up to shimmer and sparkle with fibre optics inlaid into each individual water jet. Long Row has been transformed into an ambient boulevard with atmospheric lighting cast from the refurbished listed lanterns, complemented by up-lighters set in to the paving. To the south of the square, reflectors on the four lighting masts provide indirect background lighting to ensure that the Square feels safe and inviting. These are also capable of supporting temporary lighting trusses and banners, which transform the square into a stage for spectacular events.

"The project has been very well received by the citizens of Nottingham and the space is very well used both in attending events but also using the seating areas to relax and meet. Since its opening the space has been characterised by being a busy hub throughout the day and at night, previous issues associated with antisocial behaviour have effectively disappeared with the new design."

Steve Hunt, Nottingham City Council (Client)



VALUE
£8.8m
CLIENT
Nottingham City Council
PROJECT DURATION
2005-2007
SIZE
1.2ha
STATUS
Completed
TEAM
(Engineers) ARUP
(Main contractor) Balfour Beatty
(Water feature specialist) OCMIS
(Pedestrian study) Space Syntax



AWARDS
2011
Best British Buildings of the 21st Century /
Blueprint Magazine
2008
Winner, Natural Stone Awards
2008
RIBA Award, East Midlands
2008
Highly Commended, Civil Building of the Year
– SCALA
2008
RIBA CABE Award
2008
Commendation for Regeneration, RICS East
Midland Awards
2008
East Midlands Merit Awards, Institution of Civil
Engineers
2008
Outstanding Contribution to the Public Realm,
CentreVision Award, and Charcon Hard
2008
Landscaping Award, Civic Trust Awards
2007
Best Public Realm & Open Space Award and
Overall Winner, Lord Mayor's Awards
2007
Highly Commended, Urban Design Category,
Landscape Institute Awards
2007
Commendation for Water Feature, Nottingham
Civic Society
2007
Design Excellence Award, East Midlands
Property Awards