

Cumberland Street home zone, Portsmouth



Above: The playground has been relocated and is now overlooked by many of the flats. This, combined with the reduction in tree cover, means small children can be watched from newly formed rear gardens and existing balconies.

Far right: Feedback to the council suggests that the residents are very pleased with the finished scheme – the area has reportedly become more friendly and 'quieter' since it was completed and residents are using the new gardens.

Right: Planting was mostly confined mostly to low shrubs and groundcover; in order to ensure increased visibility and, therefore, security.

Cumberland Street is a predominantly council-owned residential area in North Portsea, next to the naval dockyards in central Portsmouth. The home zone project was developed following work by the Council Landscape Group and, in particular, a 'Planning for Real' community exercise in 1998.

Residents raised three key issues which were the need to: improve security and safety; improve the outside environment; and provide more options for young people. A home zone was proposed, with traffic calming and

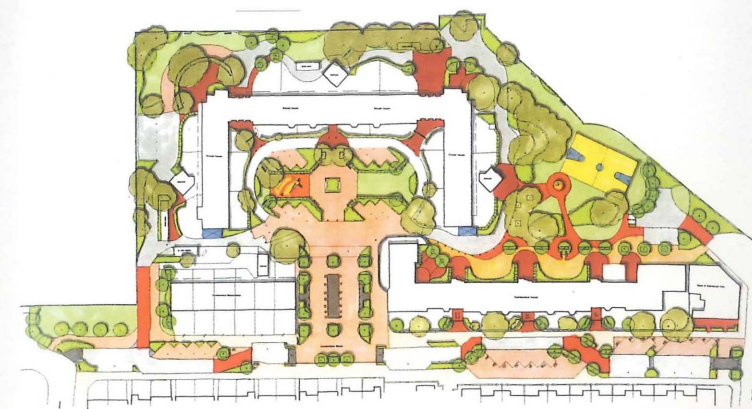
environmental improvement work to the street, in order to give pedestrians more priority and enhance the image of the area. Additional improvements include: a new play area; ball court; youth shelter; improved parking and soft landscape; enhanced lighting; improved security, including CCTV and gated access to certain areas; and a 'central square' space outside the community project shop.

Cumberland Street is a long, wide and straight, so one of the main problems was speeding. A 20mph speed limit was

introduced, along with traffic calming measures such as: pinch points, chicanes, ramped areas, and a reduction in road width. The scheme introduced marked parking bays and a number of crossing points at intervals along the street with tactile paving approaches and contrasting materials to the road surface. New signage was introduced; improved lighting installed; and tree and shrub planting softened the appearance of the street. Facilities for younger residents included a new ball court, youth shelter and younger children's play area.

The area outside the project shop, which is used on a regular basis for community meetings, was enhanced to form a focal point for the area. A notice board was erected outside the shop, and ram-raider barriers were removed and replaced with raised planters. The square was constructed as a raised table, bringing the road to the same level as the pavement and blurring the distinction between pedestrian and vehicular areas. The block paving materials run throughout this area and connect into the central pedestrian area of the adjoining Privett Courtyard. Around the edges of the square, raised beds planted with trees and shrubs double as informal seats.

The children's play area has been relocated to the sunnier half of the courtyard, with new fencing, safety surfacing,



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bench and play equipment. The youth shelter was designed in consultation with Hampshire Constabulary.

The Cumberland Area has had considerable trouble with anti-social behaviour and petty crime. Three additional CCTV cameras were included in the scheme and the lighting across the entire site has been upgraded. Planting to the majority of the scheme was confined to low shrubs and ground-

cover, along with some trees to ensure increased visibility, and therefore security, across the area.

Two disabled parking bays have been included and the Disabled Access Officer was consulted on the scheme's design and layout.

The scheme won the Home Zone category in the 2004 *Local Government News Street Design Awards*.

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FACTS AND FIGURES

Project manager:	Chief landscape architect, Portsmouth City Council
Client:	Client Housing Services, Portsmouth City Council
Landscape architect/designer:	The Terra Firma Consultancy
Engineer to the contract:	Highways infrastructure, Portsmouth City Council
Main contractor:	Graham Moyse Construction
Landscape contractor:	Scandor Landscape Contractors
Area of project:	1.5ha
Start and finish date on site:	October 2003 – May 2004
Project cost:	£742,100
Funding source:	Portsmouth City Council