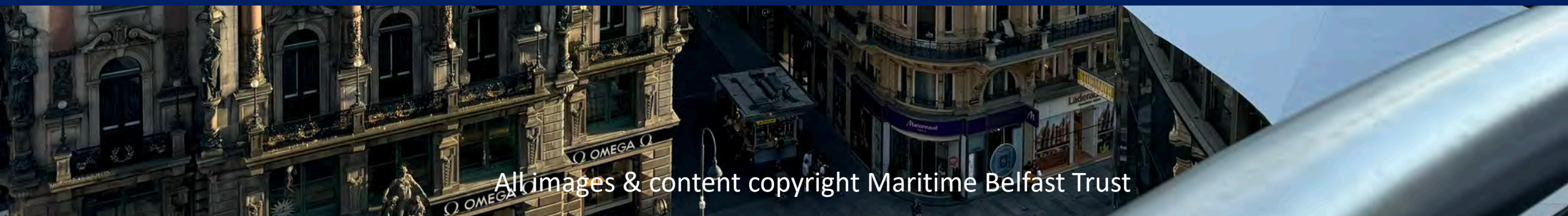




# Vienna Study Trip June 2024



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# Vienna Study Trip – June 2024

## Objectives

- To undertake benchmarking / best practice visit to inform the vision for Belfast's waterfront
- To further consolidate the Waterfront Promenade Framework and help inform Maritime Belfast's role in terms of delivery
- To understand how to deliver high quality across large development sites
- To look at how design panels and quality boards work in practice
- To better understand the successful linkages between public realm, public art, interpretation, heritage, animation and ground floor uses
- To identify different approaches to the water's edge
- To further develop the Board and staff as an effective team

## Why Vienna?

- Water / Riverfront developments
- UNESCO world heritage site
- Museums Quarter
- Architecture





# Vienna is the most liveable city in the world

The Economist ranks Vienna first in the world  
for quality of life again in 2023.

## Itinerary - 72 hrs in Vienna

Guided tours from Claudia  
Nutz, Nutzeffekt  
Oliver, Schulze + Grassov

**Accommodation:**  
Hotel Schani Wien

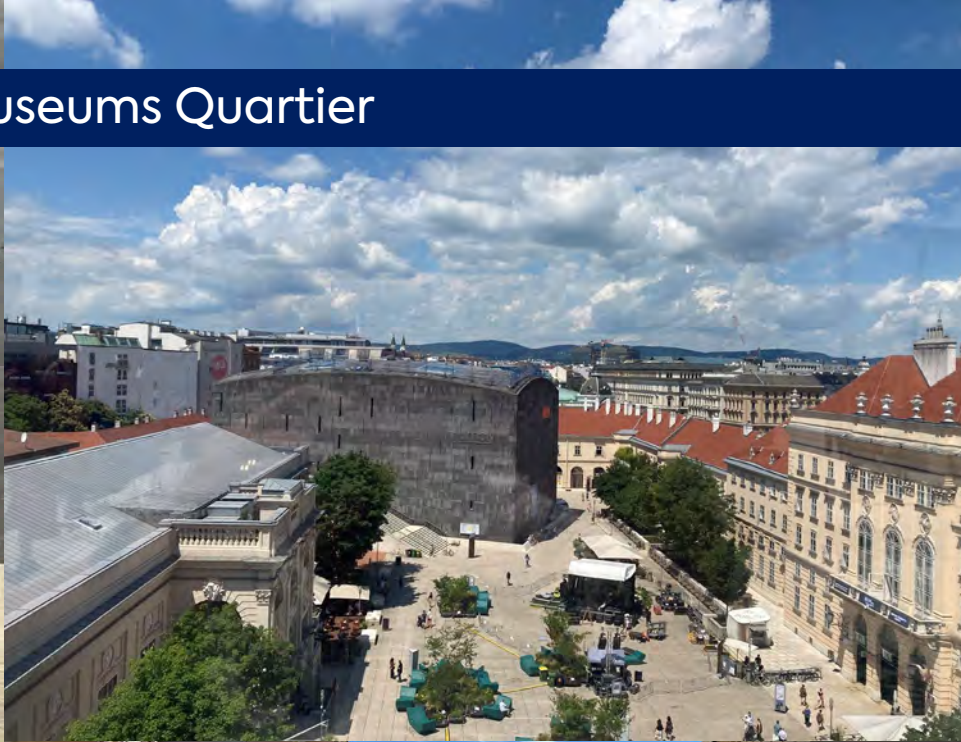
Vienna's historical centre  
– Stefansplatz,  
Museums Quartier,  
Donau City, Klima  
Biennale

Sonnwendviertel,  
Erste Campus, Viertel  
Zwei, the Prater,  
Aspern Seestadt

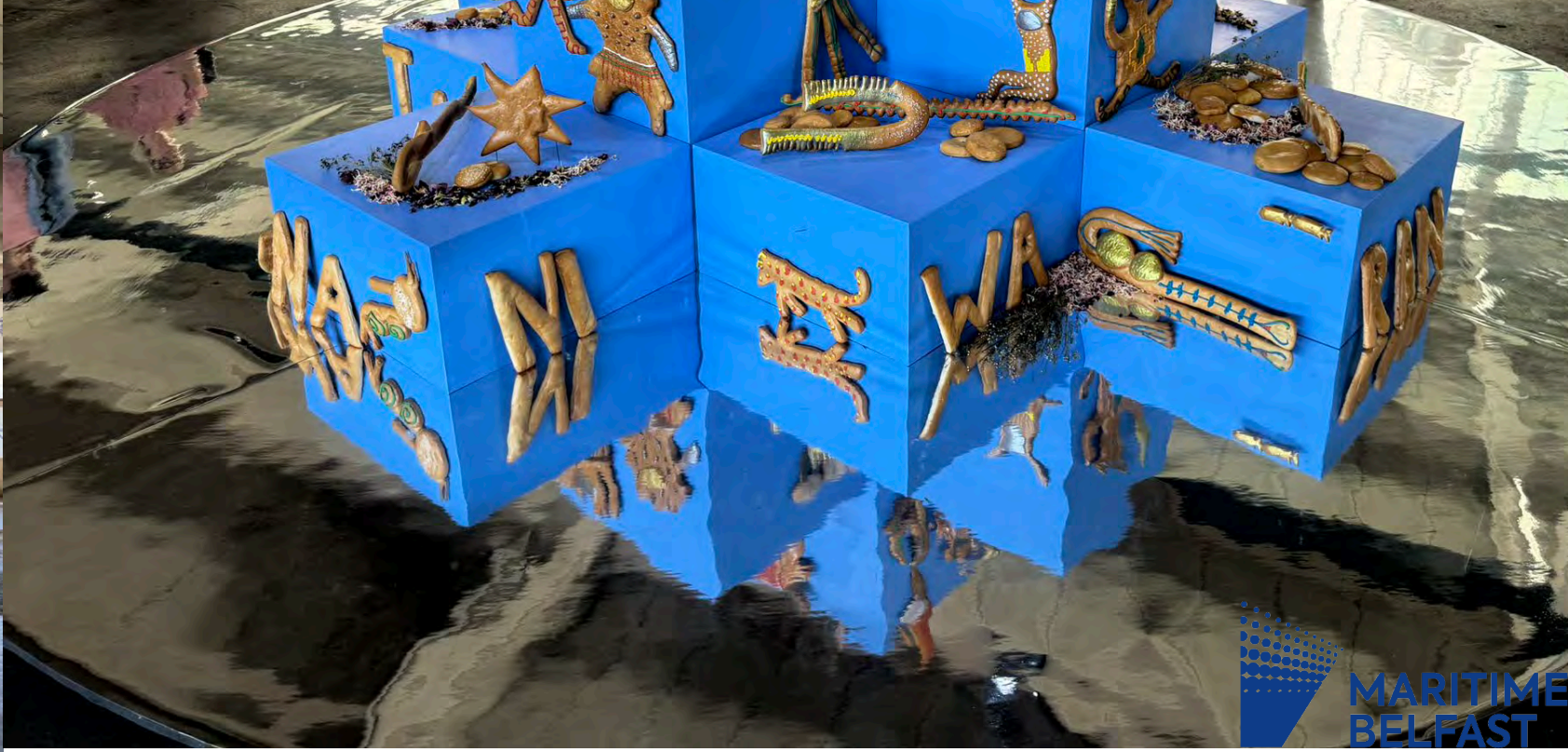




# Museums Quartier













# Blend of old & new and public realm

The blend of old and new can actually work i.e the Do&Co Hotel within Hass House hotel in Stephansplatz

Temporary internal structures into listed buildings provided for many alternative uses and did not intrude on the structure of the building.

Permeable public realm – seats, access roads, pedestrians – all using this space yet not covered in barriers or restrictions – free flowing and gave the impression that pedestrians come first

Clustering attractions – shared public spaces – this is what our slipways should look like – or around Hamilton Dock/Queen's Quay – we need more attractions and large civic spaces connecting buildings

Variety of interesting buildings set within large areas of public realm (quality) and interesting features eg water features.

In public spaces there is huge investment in public seating even in really expensive areas – space for people to sit and just linger.

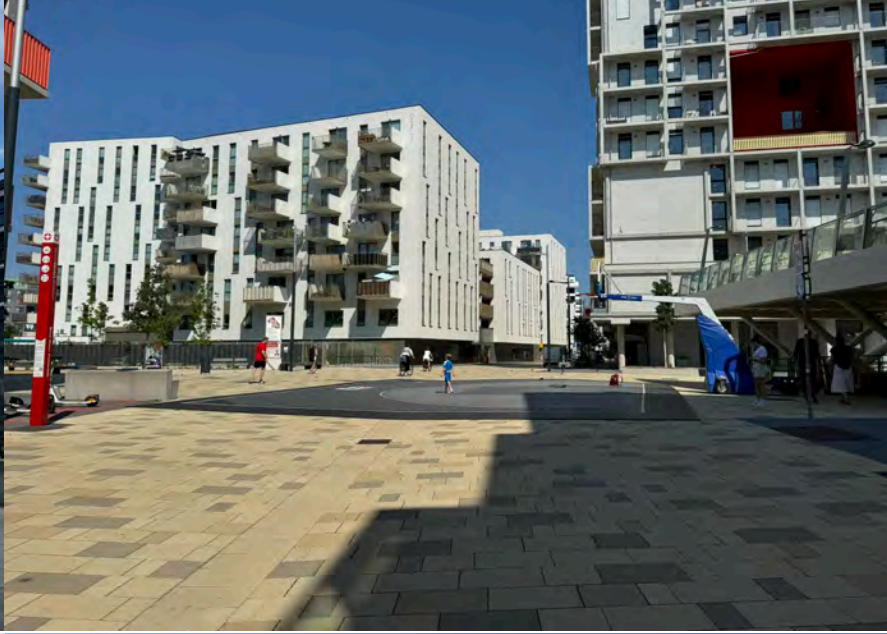
Seating that attracts and adds interest

Large scale features – large seating areas, benches, signage etc were easily facilitated in the space





# Examples of city architecture





# Examples of city architecture





# Examples of city architecture





# Aspern Seesdtadt





# Viertel Zwei – the green district





## Built Environment / Architecture

The difference in the building designs at the university which gave each faculty a personality and identity

University Area and use of multiple architects so you don't get lots of little 'boxes' with no personality. The Library was amazing

I also liked the variation and quality of the university buildings - it was very striking to see a group of interesting buildings rather than one homogenous group

The general design quality of the buildings in the new developments where different styles blended so well.

The placemaking power of more human scale mid-rise buildings, simple block form, lining public spaces and streets and variety of design due to separate architects

The approach of partnership on major schemes - landowner, council and different developers, the formation of a coherent and agreed masterplan that allows flexibility of interpretation against a series of framing principles.

Variety of materials and design add interest.

The concept of social housing is very wide with 65% of housing owned by the city and all of it controlled in some way.

Use of different architects for different plots



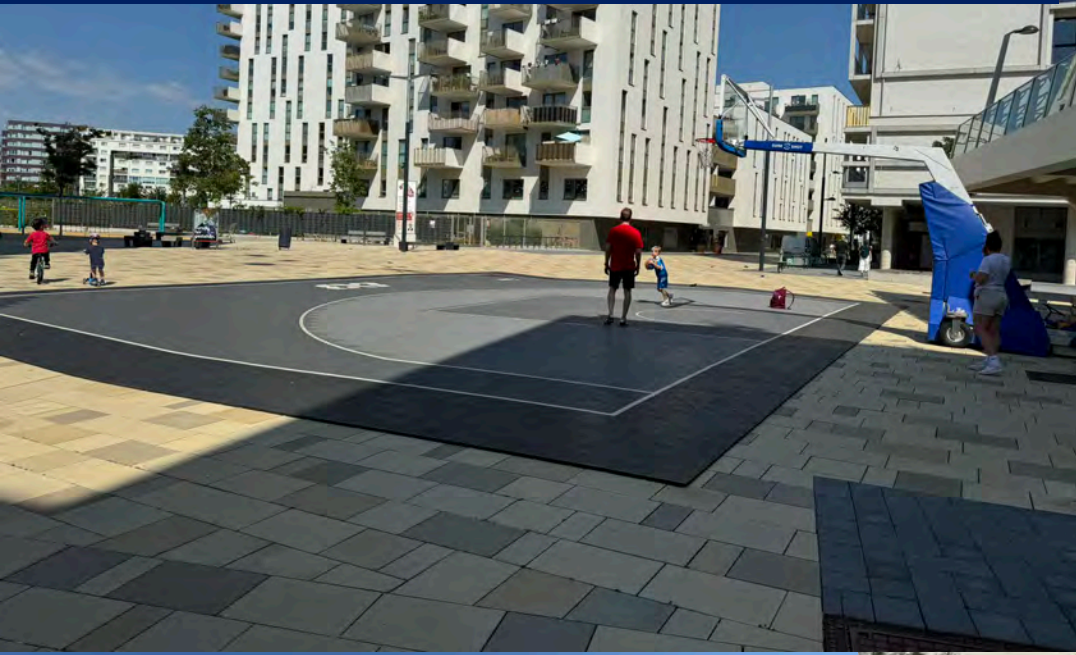


# Play





# Play





# Play / under the bridge





## Play areas and Under the Bridges

There were play opportunities EVERYWHERE!

The use of the area beneath the rail infrastructure, it was extensive, different activities, even skate part, it was for families/ different age groups, it was well maintained and lit. It was welcoming.

Children's play areas are many, varied and interesting.

A little bit of paint under the flyover and some basic play equipment transformed what we would have as dead space and made a difference in creating living space.

I liked the grouping of the housing around usable public realm such as the basketball pitch

The use of quality play areas integrated into new developments, in particular the underpass of the railway

So many from very small to extensive (including under the bridge) – consideration given to these areas, including landscaping/greening, seating and bike racks – creating a lovely environment for all to enjoy

It's really refreshing to see childrens' play areas everywhere. It's as if they treat children like actual people who need to be entertained as opposed to being tolerated, only if fenced into a designated space.





# Planting





# Planting





## Planting / Green spaces

The wildflowers and planting. No flat lawns areas! It was all-natural planting with mounds and small hills to give the area a much more natural feel.

**Great example of a green city** – planters, parks, sidewalks, overgrown areas that were still really attractive – temp containers, reusing plants that have been taken away from developments – also the actual infrastructure for permanent planting – room to grow and irrigation in place

The use of colourful and practical ideas outdoor seating and imaginative and moveable planting that can be changed and moved when required.

Allowing planting to 'wild' – not over manicured – better for ecology. Just lots of green!

Landscaping doesn't have to be the orderly, municipal bedding plant carpet. There were plenty of examples of much more natural approaches. The use of grasses and perennials would be more appropriate, require less maintenance and probably cheaper.

I particularly liked the use of temporary greening and gardens.

Planting is a serious issue- it's everywhere, it's interesting and there is lots of examples of temporary planting and experimentation.

Greening – wonderful lush planting everywhere.. whether in raised beds (often sloping) or rain gardens with in-built irrigation – really softened the hard edges of the buildings and created lovely public spaces (whether passing through or dwelling).

The use of high growth, lower maintenance planting to soften hard landscapes.





# Public realm





# Water

Breathing life into water activities and how water features such as the swimming pool can transform areas

The use of water to provide sound and movement

A lot of the public realm buildings were designed to stand out but some of the developments blocked access and therefore a sense of community ownership of the water.

While difficult to access, the waterfront area gave an idea of what can be done with a small space and some imagination.





Guiding principles more than design  
– design, ecology, social and  
commercial/ economics.

I thought the framework that we  
discussed for “Design Panels” or “Quality  
Panels’ was helpful. Projects were  
assessed against the criteria of  
Architecture, Economy, Social Inclusion,  
and Ecology.

Leadership is again underlined- Vienna has a  
framework for its self subscribed to by all  
politicians- though they are currently concerned  
in the city about the rise of the right. This allows  
for big long term decision making.

RSUA are keen on design competitions  
but that requires a willing developer, and  
some practices aren't always  
enthusiastic. How could the Design Panel  
promote creativity?

The concept of key design principles is  
essential- schools, green spaces and  
'communal' rooms in all developments  
seems central as does working on  
providing ground floor usage all leading  
to a liveliness in the housing areas.

We need to encourage some  
creativity in design. If there's a  
location in Belfast that could cope  
with a bit of imagination it's Titanic  
Quarter.



## Rooftops and Ground floors

Use of roof tops for restaurants/bars – also with striking features (steel circles that light up at night).

How do we encourage developers to have uses on the top floors which allow public access? People love getting views from above and apart from Victoria Sq dome there's not many opportunities in Belfast. The rooftop in museum quarter, the 57-floor tower and the restaurant provide proof of the popularity of these spaces.

From Seestadt – the active role taken in managing ground floor space and, in particular, the retail space. It was a great blend of local interesting stores.

Community spaces within residential buildings e.g. the swimming pool, the outdoor library

Carefully choreographed ground floor uses to meet the needs of the community.





# Innovative benches and seating





# Signage





# Mirrors





# Art Box



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