



Swedish sustainability experts wins competition to redevelop Southend Pier

Teamed up with Price & Myers, White arkitekter from Sweden won the prestigious competition to redevelop Southend Pier situated on the English Channel and the mouth of the Thames.

"We are extremely proud of having been chosen to work with this iconic treasure", says Anders Svensson, CEO, White arkitekter. The proposal shows our ability to combine high-end design with social and economic sustainability.

The competition attracted 74 entries and 5 was shortlisted. Southend Pier was in 2007 voted Pier of the Year and is the longest pier in the world. An iconic pier with its own distinctive character, history and people. One of the main attractions of the Pier is the view of the sea, and in particular, the feeling of being on the sea.

"A key element of our proposal is to make sure that the people of Southend use the Pier and take it into their heart. The Pier Head should be a vibrant place filled with activities", says Fredrik Pettersson, architect in charge together with Niels de Bruin, landscape architect. We envision a walkable and bikeable street with attractive destinations located every 500 metres.

The Pier should be an extension of the High Street's urban fabric onto the sea. We have proposed a series of destinations starting at Priory Park and ending at the Pier Head, transforming the pleasure pier into an urban pier. We imagine The Pier Head designed as a public space functioning like a modern agora, part theatre, part art space, acting as a vibrant meeting place for both the people of Southend-on-Sea and visitors.

The main feature of the new Pier Head design will be an open air theatre with a terraced platform that will create lee, view point and seating for the audience. The outdoor theatre, with the Southend coastline as backdrop, has the capacity of 500 spectators. New buildings - a Culture Centre and a Restaurant - will be built offshore next to the existing Pier Head, creating a balanced enclosure and populated edges around the theatre space.

"The dramatic curving shapes of the buildings are derived from the wind and the waves themselves. This public, yet enclosed, space will be perfectly integrated into the scenery. It will be sculpted by wind and wave", says landscape architect Niels de Bruin.

Materials will be low maintenance and long-lasting. In this specific setting we prefer materials with an untreated natural finish such as timber, corten steel and glass. These materials will add personality and warmth to the elegantly shaped buildings. The aggressive maritime environment is extremely hard on most traditional building materials and they have to be considered carefully in the design process.

All new buildings will be self-sufficient. Energy efficient design and renewable energy sources including wind turbines for electricity, natural ventilation and sea water heat pump, will make it a carbon neutral development.

"Southend Pier is a unique structure with an interesting history. The new additions will continue the evolution of the structure, enhancing the quality of space at the end of the pier, while respecting the historic fabric", says Tim Lucas, Price & Myers.

For more information, please contact:

Niels de Bruin, landscape architect, phone +46 40 6609312

Fredrik Pettersson, architect, tel +45 33 32 44 91

Alexandra Hagen, International Business Officer, phone + 46 40 6609334

Keith Boxer, Director of Innovation and Sustainability UK, 797 720 33 59

For images:

Ann Nilsson, White, ann.nilsson@white.se

White arkitekter is Scandinavia's leading architectural firm with around 500 employees in Sweden and Denmark. Our joint expertise includes architecture, project management, urban design and planning, landscaping, interior design, architectural heritage, design and environmental management in the phases of strategy, concept and production. The company is employee-owned and has a unique R&D organization for developing ideas and know-how. White is a market leader in sustainable design, and a pioneer in environmental aspects of architecture and building.

For nearly two decades, White have invested in establishing a unique department of highly qualified experts in the environmental field. Our leading role in internationally acclaimed projects such as Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm and low energy housing at the Western Harbour in Malmö bear witness to our ability.

We do believe we can make a significant contribution to the need for sustainable solutions in the United Kingdom, where the government's agenda on sustainability and climate change is very impressive. In our attempt to penetrate the UK market, we have appointed Keith Boxer as our country manager for the UK.

Price & Myers was established in 1978 in London as a firm of consulting structural engineers, with the aim of working with good imaginative architects, to make excellent buildings. In our first 30 years we have completed over 18,000 jobs, and won over 250 awards; we now also have offices in Nottingham and Oxford, and currently employ about 150 people.