
Locum Destination Consulting

New Assignments at Europe's Leading Destination Consultancy

The Turner Centre

The Turner Centre is a proposed £10 million contemporary visual arts centre commemorating J.M.W. Turner's life-long association with Margate. A major international architectural competition to design this exciting new destination has been launched by Kent County Council and Thanet District Council, with over 300 expressions of interest received to date. Located on a site overlooking Margate Bay, the Turner Centre will open in 2004. The Centre will help restore the historical relationship between the Old Town and the seafront, and become a place for public art and entertainment.

The creation of the Turner Centre is one element in the wider regeneration project turning Margate's promenades and town centre into a cultural quarter, a long-term initiative in which £90 million of EU and UK government funding is being invested.

This new-build art facility has been conceived to explore both Margate's influence on Turner, and Turner's own influence on subsequent generations of artists. The Centre will provide a home for Kent County Council's Masters collection, comprising approximately 300 prints and drawings, along with loaned works by Turner (on a temporary or semi-permanent basis). It will also host temporary exhibitions of contemporary art within the 700 m² gallery space. The Centre will also incorporate a resident artist's studio, workshops, a lecture theatre and education rooms.

Locum was initially appointed to undertake a detailed analysis of the regional visitor market in order to identify target segments and examine their size, profile and behaviour. This formed the basis of an indicative visitor admission forecast.

Locum has recently completed the preparation of an outline operational financial model for the Turner Centre and has prepared an assessment of the economic impact of the proposed development. The bespoke operational financial model can be updated over time as the design, layout and content of the Turner Centre solidifies. The Locum team is continuing to advise the project as the architectural competition progresses.

Southampton Night-Time Economy

Southampton has ambitions to be regarded as a leading European City. It has recognised that a key element of any successful and appealing modern city, both in terms of the quality of life it offers its citizens and the success of its economy, is vibrancy – at night as well as during the day.

As with most British cities, Southampton's evening economy has grown substantially in recent years, especially in terms of theme bars, branded restaurants, cinemas and clubs which are targeted mainly at young people. They have enhanced the quality of life, but had limited impact in giving Southampton a distinctive image and an evening environment attractive to the whole population.

There are also familiar side effects such as boisterous and noisy alcohol-induced behaviour at night, an ambience that is threatening to sections of the community, and not enough taxis and buses to serve the bars and clubs at weekends.

Locum Destination Consulting has been commissioned by the Southampton City Centre Management Steering Group, a public/private partnership, to prepare a five-year strategy and plan for developing a mature night-time

economy consisting of a mixture of culture, entertainment, food and beverage, and retail, serving an increased residential population.

The Locum team will be looking at strategic issues such as whether one or more areas of the city should be specially zoned for 24-hour economic activity, what needs to be done to put that into place, and how they should integrate with new residential developments.

Locum will also be delivering a practical action plan for how improvements can be made in the short term. Ultimately, the objective is twofold: to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Southampton, and to help ensure its continuing prosperity.

Greenwich Cruise Terminal

The cruise industry worldwide has been booming over the past decade, and that growth is set to continue – there are 60 new ships due for delivery, most of them of enormous size. Many of them will be heading for the primary cruise territories in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean. Ships they will displace will be heading for other waters, including Northern Europe, where there is increasing demand for 'destination-intensive' cruises with a cultural theme.

Clearwater Estates has appointed Locum Destination Consulting to carry out an economic feasibility study of a new Cruise Ship Terminal within its mixed-use development alongside the Thames at Greenwich.

Locum consultants will assess the demand for the terminal, the impact on Clearwater's development, and the wider economic impact on Greenwich and London. They will assess whether the terminal should cater for 'turnarounds' (i.e. where passengers leave and new passengers embark) or for 'transit' visits (i.e. just a port of call on an itinerary), and what the implications of each are in terms of the design of the facility.

The Locum team will also assist in developing an operational and funding model, and identifying potential joint venture partners.

Belfast Visitor Attraction

Following extensive work over the years on tourism and heritage in Northern Ireland, Locum Destination Consulting has been commissioned by Belfast City Council to ascertain whether Belfast should develop a museum or visitor centre focusing on its history.

The study is assessing what the needs of the community are in terms of cultural and economic (especially tourist) development, to what extent those needs will be fulfilled by other projects in the pipeline, what collections or artefacts could form the core of a new museum, what presentational alternatives are available, what the markets are for those options, and how viable the options are likely to be in terms of funding and financing ongoing operational costs.

The project starts with a blank sheet of paper. The City Council has no collections or curatorial obligations. There is no compulsion for it to do anything at all.

Locum Destination Consulting is carrying out extensive consultations with stakeholders, and producing examples of international best practice in order to produce a short list of options. After further analysis and consultation, Locum will make a recommendation as to how the City Council should proceed.

National Rail Academy

In the competitive post-privatisation railway, much of the training and professional development that was traditionally provided centrally by British Rail has simply evaporated. Many of the personnel who received BR training have now left the railway. This has left a large unmet need for rail-specific training and education at all levels from top management to frontline operatives.

The objective of the proposed National Rail Academy is to provide integrated, industry-specific training, education and lifelong learning to the leaders and managers of Britain's fragmented rail industry.

Locum Destination Consulting has developed the initial business case for a National Rail Academy (NRA) on behalf of Cumbria Inward Investment Agency and a partnership of North West England regeneration and economic development agencies and the Learning and Skills Council Cumbria.

Locum developed the NRA from the initial concept floated by Eric Martlew, MP for Carlisle, and prepared a case for presentation to the Lifelong Learning Minister, Malcolm Wicks. Locum's initial business case foresees a demand for up to 100,000 person training days per annum provided by a core academic staff of up to 55 full-time specialists, supported by a corporate services team of around 30 people. Locum marshalled expert support from the long-serving Modern Railways columnist Alan Williams and the UK's leading rail academic, Dr Felix Schmid of the Advanced Railway Research Centre. They consider that the National Rail Academy will play a significant role in raising standards, competence and expectations throughout Britain's railway industry.

The NRA's subject areas will range from the technical specialisms central to contemporary railways – including the software and informatics disciplines which are now as important as traditional civil, electrical and mechanical engineering – through to economics, customer service and franchise contract law. Working with existing educational bodies, the Academy will also offer a system for the accreditation of third parties providing training throughout the industry.

Locum's ongoing role is to coordinate delivery of the project and to refine the detailed business plan for the development and operation of the Academy. This role includes political and funding negotiations with partners including the Strategic Rail Authority and the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

National Strategic Rail Test Centre

Locum's growing portfolio of rail assignments includes this preliminary study of a potential National Strategic Rail Testing Centre, for the same partnership that commissioned the National Rail Academy study.

The point of departure was that the complex safety and vehicle acceptance regimes in Britain's fragmented post-privatisation railways are actually hindering the entry into service of long-overdue new rolling stock. There is also a 'Catch 22': network capacity and safety constraints make it difficult to test the new trains intended to increase capacity and improve safety. Locum's research revealed a consensus within the industry that a dedicated test facility would overcome this and solve the commercially and politically damaging problem of expensive new trains deteriorating in sidings for want of acceptance certificates. Such a facility would be self-contained and segregated from the national rail network, so new trains could accumulate much of the mileage needed for service acceptance without interfering with network operations and infrastructure upgrades.

Locum's role was to generate and sell the vision for development of a world-class rail test centre in the North West, with the regeneration benefits flowing from a major investment. The client partnership is led by Cumbria Inward Investment Agency and includes North West England regeneration and economic development agencies and the Learning and Skills Council Cumbria.

As with the National Rail Academy assignment, Locum was assisted by a team from The Railway Consultancy under the expert leadership of Dr Nigel Harris. An initial needs analysis concluded that the primary requirement is for a large, continuous loop to allow sustained high-speed test running. The facility would also simulate the wide variety of electrical, electronic and informatics conditions that trains encounter in network operation.

This analysis was presented at a seminar organised by Locum and chaired by the influential Technical Editor of Modern Railways, Roger Ford. Those present included directors and senior managers of almost all the train builders, leasing companies, infrastructure owners and rail regulatory and safety bodies.

Encouraged by their response, the partnership commissioned Locum to take the proposal forward into negotiation with the Strategic Rail Authority.

