

CASE STUDY 3

Thomas Heatherwick versus Manchester City Council

Thomas Heatherwick Studio and other members of the team who worked on Manchester's B of the Bang sculpture have paid Manchester City Council £17 million in a out-of-court settlement.

The east Manchester sculpture, which resembles an exploding firework and was commissioned to mark the 2002 Commonwealth Games, has remained closed to the public since one spike became detached and needed repairs, with further spikes later removed.

This week's out of court settlement ends legal proceedings brought by the council last year against the design consortium - comprising Thomas Heatherwick Studio and its subcontractors Packman Lucas, Flint & Neill Partnership, and Westbury Structures - for breach of contract and negligence.

The council's solicitor Susan Orrell said: "We have reached a settlement that is in the best interests of the council, [which will now] consider the future of the structure in conjunction with the project's funders. A report will go to the council executive in the new year."

A spokesman for Heatherwick Studio said: "The sculpture was an ambitious and ground-breaking design.

"It is a matter of considerable regret to that the sculpture intended to symbolise the outstanding success of Manchester's Commonwealth Games has suffered the problems that have come to light."

"We are pleased that a settlement has been reached."

Made up of 180 spikes, the B of the Bang is 56m tall, weighs 180 tonnes, and was inspired by sprinter and Olympic gold medallist Linford Christie, who once said: "I'll be gone by the B of the Bang".

