

# Cross Party Working Group for Town Centre Regeneration – Consultation Sub Group

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**Third meeting – 4.30pm, Monday, 10th March, 2008**

**Venue: Civic Centre, Dartford in Boardroom E Level**

**Attendees:**

Cllr Jeremy Kite (Leader and Chairman of Group)

Cllr Geoff Prout

Cllr John Muckle

Dr Howard Stoate MP

Bob Heasman (Town Centre Partnership)

Graham Harris – Dartford Council

Rob Scott – Dartford Council

Christopher Borkowski (St James's Investments)

Patrick Stones (Tesco)

Kelly Edwards, Nick Bohane (Green Issues Communications – community consultation)

**Apologies:** Cllr Patsy Thurlow, Cllr Tony Martin



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## 1. Standing item: Project Planning Update – Christopher Borkowski, (MD St James's Investments)

Mr Borkowski reported that following the exhibition the design team are engaged in an intensive design process and that the objective is to make a detailed application in August 2008.

He reported that the Environment Agency has produced revised flood levels for Dartford at 6.53m as opposed to 5.50m and that the design team would respond with a precautionary approach.

He reported that the outstanding purchases are at or near completion on Lowfield St - all on a voluntary basis. There followed a discussion on timings. Rob Scott pointed out that the full Council would have to be informed in April of the issues relating to entering any CPO process on the Northern part of the site. Assuming that there was a recommendation to proceed by officers and council, then the public would have to be informed soon after that of the Council decision and the rationale. The second Lowfield Vision exhibition should therefore follow quickly on from any Council decision. Councillors also noted that they hoped that the Glentworth negotiation was proceeding smoothly.

Discussion then moved onto the August application. Cllr Muckle commented that he was very much in favour of a detailed application rather than an outline as the public would then really be in position to know and comment on what is being proposed. Patrick Stones (Tesco) commented that a detailed application submitted by August would involve a significant amount of work by the Project Team and asked the meeting whether they would consider an approach whereby the application was phased - with the Make designed scheme (Southern block) application taking place after the application for the Northern and Central blocks.



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There was a general response from Councillors and Dr Stoate that this would not be the desired approach.

Mr Borkowski then moved onto community provision. Cllr Kite noted that Dartford is well provisioned with community and social space – the real requirement in his opinion is space for either established groups such as the Scouts or discounted space for local SMEs. Mr Borkowski stated that the developer wishes to appoint a local business champion for Lowfield Vision.

With regard to providing space for the local PCT, the view was that there could well be enough provision health provision already in Dartford especially taking account of the existing West Hill centre. Dr Stoate made the point that the new development would likely require only one extra GP. St James's were asked to look at the issue in more detail and report back.

The next item was safety and security in and around the development. Mr Borkowski said the development team are passionately committed to this issue and intend to fund initiatives in this area. It was noted that there is a working party being set up to look at this issue at a strategic level comprising members of the Project Team and the Council. Sheri Green has been asked to assist in setting up the group.

The height of the proposed development was discussed in relation to the potential impact on Cranford Road residents. Mr Borkowski said that the project team is commissioning a daylight study to measure the impact of a seven storey building in proximity to Cranford Road. Patrick Stones (Tesco) requested that Green Issues contact each resident individually in Cranford Road and consult with them. Cllr Kite voiced an overall concern as to the aesthetic look of a scheme which had a uniform approach to height.



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## 2. Update on Consultation (Green Issues)

*Green issues reported back via a power point presentation that will be available on the Council's web site.*

Green Issues said the exhibition was extremely well attended with over 2000 members of the Dartford public visiting over the three days. Around 470 feedback forms were collected.

A draft exhibition report was distributed to the meeting. Each member of the public who filled in a feedback form would now, at the request of St James's, receive a personalised response and a copy of the report sent out under Lowfield Vision letterhead. The project team are now working through the issues raised in the report under the headings: height and density; transport and traffic; impact on existing retailers; community provision; housing and the Park.

Councillors noted that it is important that both this Group and the public can be given real insight into the actual designs at the next exhibition. Green Issues reported that Wagstaffs Design is producing exciting 3D visualisations of the proposals for the second exhibition and would endeavour to have early stage work available for the next Group meeting in April.

The project team will be reporting back to the public at a planned second exhibition which was agreed to take place on 1/2/3 May with a stakeholder preview on 30<sup>th</sup> April.



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## 3. AoB

Dates of next group meetings were agreed as 7pm on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 12<sup>th</sup> May and 2 June at the Civic Centre.

