

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

Sixth meeting – 7pm, Monday, 12th May, 2008

Venue: Civic Centre, Dartford in B12

Attendees:

Cllr Jeremy Kite (Chairman of the Group)

Cllr Geoff Prout

Cllr Tony Martin

Cllr John Muckle

Cllr Patsy Thurlow

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)

By invitation: Chris Pyatt, Andreas Markides (Colin Buchanan) and Paul Dennison (Tweeds)



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

Mr Borkowski stated that the Project Team are aiming to submit a planning application on 12th August and that there was an intention to hold a final public exhibition soon after that date. Cllr Kite spoke strongly in favour of running a public exhibition alongside the statutory consultation as he is felt it gave the public the maximum opportunity to comment on the proposals.

Mr Borkowski advised the Group that St James's/Tesco has appointed Pinnacle, a property management company, to assess the requirements for managing the green spaces and public realm areas of the proposed scheme. Additionally, the appointment of Paul Finch, a respected design consultant, is being considered. Paul Finch's role would be to ensure that the architects are meeting the brief in terms of the scheme design. Cllr Kite cautioned that he hoped the design consultant would not operate outside of the Cross Party Group by, for example, introducing design thinking that has not been put forward to the Cross Party Group. Mr Borkowski provided that assurance.

Mr Borkowski further advised that Purcell Miller Tritton, the conservation architects, had reported that positive meetings have been held with English Heritage with regard to the Lowfield St frontages.

2. **Update on Consultation Programme (Green Issues)**

Green Issues presented the summary feedback from the second exhibition (1/2/3 May) - which was broadly favourable towards the proposals.



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The results are contained in the powerpoint presentation which will be published on the Council's web site. Green Issues is preparing a full exhibition report which will also be published. As before, an individual copy of the presentation would be sent to those members of the public who completed a feedback form.

3. Transport and Highways Presentation (Colin Buchanan)

Mr Borkowski introduced Colin Buchanan, the transport consultants. Colin Buchanan had been invited to provide the Group with an update on the transport and highways strategy.

Colin Buchanan reported that their strategy has been well received thus far by Kent County Council and the Highways Agency.

The transport strategy had been presented in detail to the public in the first exhibition (February 2008) and this presentation now represented an opportunity to update Dartford Council. Following the presentation, certain clarifications were requested in order for the Group to gain further comfort on junction capacity issues. Cllr Prout requested further detail on the Hythe St and Westgate Rd junction; and Cllr Muckle requested further clarification on the Home Gardens Bus Interchange. It was requested that detail should also be provided for the junction of West Hill and Highfield road. Colin Buchanan will provide drawings of the relevant road junctions and of Home Gardens.

The Group also debated the provision of parking spaces. Dr Stoate asked for reassurances in terms of the provision of an adequate number of spaces. Colin Buchanan commented that they had carried out a comparative study with other Kent towns and had determined that, taking account of the Lowfield Vision proposals, the average number of spaces in Dartford as a whole would compare favourably.



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4. AoB

At the next meeting on 2 June, it was agreed that there would be a design update from the scheme architects.

