

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

Fifth meeting – 6pm, Monday, 21st April, 2008

Venue: Civic Centre, Dartford in B12

Attendees:

Cllr Jeremy Kite (Chairman of the Group)

Cllr Geoff Prout

Cllr Tony Martin

Cllr John Muckle

Dr Howard Stoate MP

Bob Heasman (Town Centre Partnership)

Graham Harris – Dartford Council

Christopher Borkowski (St James's Investments)

Patrick Stones (Tesco)

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

Apologies: Cllr Thurlow, Rob Scott – Dartford Council

By invitation: Make Architects, Allies and Morrison, Whitelaw Turkington and Derek Beck (Tweeds)



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1. Standing item: Project Planning Update – Christopher Borkowski, (MD St James’s Investments), Richard Rees (BDP)

Mr Borkowski introduced the evening’s presenters: Whitelaw Turkington, Allies and Morrison and Make Architects. The three architects firms had been invited at the meeting of 7th April to return to the Group to present updated designs with respect to the park/public realm, the middle (including Tesco) block and the southern block (residential).

1.1 Whitelaw Turkington (WT) Proposals for the park and the public realm:

The core of the WT plan is develop the spaces to the south of the Edwardian heart of the park into informal, family friendly areas. The Group reacted positively to the overall thinking with broad approval for the direction of travel. Cllr Kite viewed this plan as very much a logical evolution of the Council’s own plan which had secured an 84% approval rating from Dartfordians. Dr Stoate thought it was a positive step on from before. Cllr Kite is keen to establish the zones of security. Cllr Muckle was impressed by planned landscaping strategy. The Group felt any plans presented to the public must mark the existing park boundaries to reinforce the point that the development will *not* encroach on the park.

1.2 Allies and Morrison Proposals for the Middle Block

Allies and Morrison presented their latest thinking on the middle block which incorporates Tesco and the parkside pavilions . Cllr Muckle stated that he was much more impressed with the design treatment, he liked the water features and the varying heights and was really pleased with the Lowfield St treatment.



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Dr Stoate asked that Lowfield Vision should focus on giving the public a good understanding of the actual scheme at the second exhibition.

Cllr Kite liked the Lowfield St frontage, the fact that the park now pokes into the proposed development and the idea of varied Lowfield St frontages. He also liked the water feature but feels it should not be too 'corporate';

1.3 Make Proposals for the Southern Block

Make presented some variations in terms of the shape of the 'pebbles'. The Group in general preferred 'smoothness' rather than a 'toothed' edge but it was agreed both options should be tested at the exhibition.

Make also made the point that as a purely residential development, this part of the proposed scheme could need enlivening. The Group appreciated the argument and it was debated whether more public space or perhaps another form of activity was required such as retail units relevant to park activities. The idea of installing an Arts Centre did not receive support as it would not be regarded as sustainable.

Dr Stoate asked that the public/private green space be better delineated.

Separately, Mr Borkowski reported that the project team is examining the feasibility of a total waste management system, ENVAC, that is used successfully in Scandinavia. The Group expressed strong interest in this system and with examining how it could potentially link into Dartford's wider waste strategy.

2. Update on Consultation Programme (Green Issues)

Green issues reported that planning for the second exhibition on 1/2/3 May is progressing smoothly.



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3. AoB

At the next meeting it was agreed that Colin Buchanan, the transport consultants, would present an update of the transport plans and Green Issues would present a summary exhibition report.

Dates of further group meetings are 7pm, 12th May and 2 June at the Civic Centre.

