

Lionel Road Liaison Group

Notes of 08 December 2008 meeting

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Attendees:

- Steve Lancashire (SL), chair
- Brian Burgess (BB)
- John Assael (JA)
- Pete Ladhams (PL)
- Robert Sprunt (RS)
- Joel Kuenzi (JK)
- Sanjay Sharma (SS)
- Peter Murphy (PM)
- Dave Hughes (DH)
- Cllr Phil Andrews (PA)
- Chris Gammon (CG)
- Peter Hughes (PH)
- Tim Luckett (TL)
- Donald Kerr (DK)
- Steve Curran (SC)
- Cllr Matt Harmer (MH)
- Andy Miller (AM)
- Sara Ward (SW)
- Robert Colvill (RC)
- Dorothy Boland (DB)
- Sonja Leadlay (SoL)
- John Burrow (JB)
- Janet Burrow (JaB)
- Emma Cable, notes

Welcome and apologies:

SL: Welcomed all present to the meeting, particularly those attending from Strand on the Green for the first time, and invited them to introduce themselves.

Apologies had been received from Bela Cunha (in the U.S.), Ruth Cadbury, Joanna Dabrowska, Steve Edwards, John Ormsby, Jane Griffiths, Mike Simson, Mike Simson, Patricia Wright, Phil Marchant.

SL: Indicated there were two presentations on initial proposals for two different sites as the main item and outlined the way he would like to handle the item. His approach was agreed.

Fountains Leisure Centre (Chiswick High Road) presentation:

JA: Made a presentation outlining the initial proposals for the Fountains Leisure Centre site explaining the factors that had been taken into consideration. SL explained the presentation will be made available on the Brentford Community Stadium website.

Griffin Park Site presentation:

RS: Gave a presentation outlining two options for the development, emphasising that Sprunt wish to work in consultation with local stakeholders to understand the needs and context of the area and to propose the most exciting solution. RS requested the attendees' views on the broad approach and the context of both schemes. This presentation will also be made available on the Brentford Community Stadium website.

SL: Explained that both presentations would be put on the website as had been the custom with previous presentations.

Discussion:

TL: Stated his surprise that the buildings on the Chiswick High Road site would not be taller.

JA: Explained that present planning guidance tended to encourage clusters of tall buildings in certain areas. Therefore no tall buildings were proposed directly on Chiswick High Road. The proposals for this site need to take into account the views from Kew Gardens, which is a World Heritage site.

SW: Asked if the development will be taller than the current leisure centre.

JA: Stated that some elements would be taller and the scale would be appropriate to the street and take into account what is already there.

SW: Asked whether the flats nearest the A4 get any direct sunlight?

JA: Replied that most of these flats will have some sunlight, although there are problems regarding the motorway and acoustics on the north east corner of the development. The plan is to put lifts and other services on this side of the building.

RC: Stated that he does not want the Brentford Towers scheme to set the precedent for this scheme. He believed that developments were often poorly described, such as when the ground floor is not included in the number of floors in a building. If the buildings are too high, there will be a canyon effect in the buildings going down to the river. He felt that buildings near the river should be kept as low as possible.

JB: Asked how many planning applications are being submitted?

JA: Answered that there will be a single application covering all four sites. There are four distinct sites involved in the scheme and the overall plans can only be delivered if all sites are approved and linked into one overriding legal agreement.

JB: Stated his approval of the potential improvements to Kew Station.

JA: Believed that transport improvements are also important to the whole development and area.

JaB: Asked how many parking spaces there will be on the site?

JA: Explained that there will be managed parking, where residents and commercial owners share parking spaces throughout the day.

PH: Regarding the ground floor commercial space, he felt that the shops on the other side of Lionel Road are a bit run down, and something of a no-man's land for shopping purposes. He was unsure whether there would be demand for more retail. Also, the dual carriageway gives the area a heavy transport feel which means there may not be as much shopping on the road as it appears there will be at first.

JA: Said that compared to the riverside and other settings the advice is this is quite a busy street; given the station, the bridge and housing (including new). These factors will give shops high visibility and relatively high footfall.

SW: Asked if there is any way to get the Brentford Market fountain back.

PH: Thought it unlikely. The fountain was taken by the market traders and has been moved to their new site. They have ground the inscription off the fountain now.

SC: With regard to Griffin Park proposals, felt that a memorial garden proposal sounded like it is commemorating someone's passing away. He also expressed interest in having a focused discussion on the site lines.

SL: Said that if individual groups would like more detailed presentations, these can be arranged early next year.

SW: Regarding the Griffin Park site, felt that the first option looks cut and paste, and loses the feel of Griffin Park. In the second design, asked if there is a glass roof in the middle?

RS: Answered that there will be a "green roof" with a translucent atrium in the centre of the site and grass could grow all around the roof.

PH: Thought that on the Griffin Park site, it would be a tragedy if there was not a reference to the club, though does not want it done in a gimmicky way. Said that an old idea was to keep a communal garden in the middle of the site with houses on the outside, keeping the original turf on an open green space where the pitch was.

AM: Stated that the football design disconcerted him but agreed that the site needed open green space, and therefore an idea somewhere between the two designs would be best.

RS: Believed that the problem is how to get enough homes on the site to cover the building costs if we do not build on the middle of the site. Stated that in that case we would have to

add storeys to the 'terraces' on the outside, making them 5 or 6 storeys. The atrium would give a football reference

PH: Felt it a rather remote reference.

MH: Felt that Sprunt should be congratulated for referencing the old ground, and hoped this be retained. Stated that to complement this meeting it would help to have a small working party of Griffin Park residents regarding the site.

SC: Regarding parking on this site, will people feel saturated by cars? Is there enough on-site provision?

JK Replied both options would provide on-site parking at a ratio of 1 to 1 for the larger units and 1 to 2 for the smaller (1 bedroom) units.

SC: Stated that traffic management needs to be looked at for all sites, and that if there is a suggestion that there are not enough spaces, we will have a different situation that will need looking at carefully.

RS: Stated that underground parking facilities are not financially feasible for this size of scheme.

SC: Recalled that when seeking planning permission five years ago, it was stated that people should be able to walk through the site.

BB: Said that there has been more recent thinking regarding security – will residents want to have more restricted public access?

SC: Believed that a walkthrough will help to define the garden as public space.

RS: Said that we need to fully work out and understand what the routes through the site ought to be.

PH: Stated that the effect of having a large green area near Braemar Court will be that the green space appears larger. A clever arrangement can make the green space seem bigger.

JA: Thought that there needed to be a sense of the Football Club, not just green grass. We need to preserve what's important about the Football Club.

JA: Said architects were conscious of other developments like the Scottish Widows and other sites. They need to get the context of the whole area in order to see exactly where the tall buildings.

SL: Stated that the presentation at the next meeting could put all the developments in a broader context and pick up on the various general issues raised in the discussion.

Notes of 10th November meeting:

Notes agreed.

Matters arising:

PM: Explained that Barratt are keen to get as much planning certainty as possible across all sites> It will cost several million pounds to get full planning permission across them all. The current strategy is to use all available design information, supplement it with necessary reports and go for an Outline Planning Application instead of the hybrid referred to at the last meeting. He believed there was enough information to get a degree of certainty on the four sites and direction of travel through the submission of an outline planning application. There needs to be traffic and environmental impact studies conducted on the sites. The planning fee is less for an outline than for a full application and Barratt are managing the costs of moving to the next stage in the light of the current economic climate. It will still cost several hundred thousand pounds going this route. The current plan is to get the outline application submitted by April/May 2009 and get a decision by the end of 2009. It will then be possible to progress the more detailed matters, which have been referred to and discussed in these meetings.

He believed the timeline from the start of the construction project to completion will be 2-3 years. However, it is likely to be 2-5 years for the residential elements as the properties need to be sold and that could be difficult in the current economic climate. This model is based upon surplus receipts from the sale of private residential projects paying for the stadium, community hub and leisure centre. He thought it unlikely things would be clear until this time next year - specifically, how much prices will fall and bounce back and how long this might take.. In order to help financial viability, it is hoped to go to the GLA and others to explore the possibilities of grant towards the stadium and some residential units. At the beginning of 2008 it was thought 250,000 residential units would be produced, whereas we think it has actually been about 75,000 units. The demand is still there and we are looking to explore how the government can help make units affordable.

DK: Expressed concerns regarding the outline planning application, as there is more right to intervene on detailed applications, meaning that we may not be able to change aspects of the application once it has been submitted.

PM: Stated that the amount of consultation both before and after outline planning submitted on similar schemes to this has been quite considerable and it is intended this will be the case on this scheme.

DK: Felt that the application should clearly show exactly what we are proposing in the schemes.

JB: Regarding the timescale, what will happen if there is a delay between projects?

PM: Responded saying that the basic infrastructure will be done in the initial phase, and that Griffin Park is less of a concern, as there is less to do on that scheme. Stated that there will be no major changes to traffic that will delay the projects. Roads and other infrastructure will be developed as part of the stadium works.

BB: Said that we can cover this in more detail in the next meeting - we are in discussions with Network Rail so that people won't have to cross Lionel Road to get to the London-bound platform.

TL: Noted that PM called this a community project; which means there is an open book regarding how it is developed. Says that everybody has to concentrate on making the project work for the community as a whole instead of looking at the issues that only affect them, and that we need to move this project forward together.

Any Other Business:

SL: Informed the group and distributed leaflets of the carol service taking place on 22nd December in the park next door to St Paul's.

Date of next meeting:

The date of the next meeting is confirmed as 12th January, and will be held in the St Paul's Centre. There will be a focus on Lionel Road in a broader context. The project team is also available in the New Year to meet with specific groups. The different groups need to give an indication of what it is they'd particularly like to look at and a meeting can be organised.