

WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

29 May 2003

BROADWAY FRIARSGATE PLANNING BRIEF

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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RECENT REFERENCES:

WDLP 15, Broadway Friarsgate Planning Brief, 10 January 2003

CAB 554, Winchester District Local Plan Committee, 10 January 2003

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Draft Broadway Friarsgate Planning Brief was published for public consultation on the 3 March 2003. A six week consultation period concluded on 11 April 2003. The Brief set out the key planning objectives for the site and a design framework to guide the preparation for a planning application. Around 30 individuals and groups made comments on the Brief on a diverse range of subjects. These comments are summarised in Appendix One and form the basis for the changes recommended in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the changes set out in Appendix One of this Report be endorsed and incorporated into the final text of the planning Brief.
2. That the Director of Development Services be given delegated authority to make appropriate minor amendments to the Planning Brief to correct any minor inaccuracies to the text, plans or images.

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REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Broadway Friarsgate Planning Brief is the latest stage in the process of securing the redevelopment of the area surrounding the bus station. The Brief proposes key planning objectives for the redevelopment, and a design framework to ensure that the highest quality of design is attained.
- 1.2 The Planning Brief was formally published on 3 March 2003 for a six-week period of consultation concluding on 11 April 2003. This resulted in a number of people commenting on the Brief, raising a number of points that are addressed in the appendix to this report with changes to the Brief proposed where appropriate.
- 1.3 A final version of the Brief will be published following its anticipated adoption by Council on 25 June. This will inform and guide the drafting of a master plan for the site, which will be prepared by architects acting for the developer, Thornfield plc. A planning application is anticipated in 2004 and if permitted, development will start as soon as land ownership issues have been resolved. This could be problematic, and the Council may have to use its Compulsory Purchase powers to secure control of the whole site, but the developers currently anticipate starting on site in 2005.

2 PUBLICITY

- 2.1 During the consultation the Council sought to engage a number of different interests including:
 - Site owners
 - Key stakeholders
 - Amenity groups
 - Local residents
 - Young people
 - Local businesses
- 2.2 A number of different initiatives were carried out to engage these interests including :
 - Planning Briefs being sent out to site owners and key stakeholders
 - Presentations to the City of Winchester Trust, Winchester Town Forum, Winchester City Centre Partnership and Winchester Rotary Club.
 - Letters to businesses and residents within the site and around it.
 - Press releases
 - Publication of the Brief on the internet
 - Presentation to young people at the SNAPS disco at River Park Leisure Centre

3 FEEDBACK

3.1 In response to the consultation, the Council received comments from 30 different interests, covering a wide selection of topics. A summary of the key issues raised are outlined below. Details of the points raised are set out in Appendix One.

3.2 Transport

3.2.1 General concerns were raised over the location of the bus station, the importance of well-located bus stops and the impact of the proposed bus lane on Friarsgate. People were also keen to offer differing opinions on the importance of the retention of long term parking within the site. Representatives of the cycling interests made comments on the importance of the redevelopment making cycling more attractive and thus reducing motor traffic. Pedestrian interests were concerned over the relocation of the pedestrian crossing on Friarsgate.

3.3 Waterways

3.3.1 Many people commented on their wish to reopen the culverts and brooks in the site with strong endorsement from the Environment Agency and other local amenity groups. One comment suggested that the water level was perhaps too low in respect of development and feared that the watercourse could end up as a deposit for rubbish.

3.4 Facilities

3.4.1 A number of people commented on the need to retain the medical centre within the development or at the very least in close proximity to the site. The same concerns were expressed over the Post Office with reference made to the recent closures of sub Post Offices around the district and the subsequent likely increase in the use of the remaining Post Offices.

3.5 Market

3.5.1 All interests welcomed the retention of the street market. Comments were received that the Brief should provide for the expansion of the market in the future. Although there may be 'little demand to expand the market' at present, one comment suggested that a different location and layout may lead to a growth in demand.

3.6 Evening Economy

3.6.1 Comments were received which generally supported the Brief's vision for providing for the evening economy within the area. Further amplification was suggested to highlight the need for alternative non-alcoholic venues and family friendly restaurants. Although some people supported the provision of a nightclub, there were reservations over the impact this would have in the light of a possible relaxation of the licensing laws.

3.7 Young people's facilities

- 3.7.1 A number of young people wrote in asking for facilities such as an outdoor ice-rink, bowling alley, clothes shop, fast food places and a cyber café. One comment suggested that there was a good case for better central facilities for young people rather than having them split up around the city.

3.8 Economy

- 3.8.1 Concern was expressed that the redevelopment would lead to a shift in the centre of gravity away from Jewry Street and the area at the top end of the High Street. Some people also had reservations over the assumptions made on the long term need to provide up to 8500m² of comparison floorspace. There were also general comments on the need to retain a mix of small and large shops and the importance of realising that Winchester should not attempt to compete on retail or leisure terms with nearby cities.

3.9 Retention of Buildings

- 3.9.1 Comments sought the retention of the Woolstaplers building, Antiques Market and the buildings either side of the bus station. However there was strong support for the replacement of the multistorey car park

3.10 Additional areas to include

- 3.10.1 A number of comments suggested that the Brief should extend the area it covers and include proposals for works to The Broadway, Cossack Lane Car Park, the full length of St George's Street and an area to the north of Friarsgate.

3.11 Urban Design

- 3.11.1 Various comments on the design aspect of the redevelopment including the importance of the layout reflecting the historic character of the area, the need for improved open spaces and the need to ensure a generally high quality overall development.

3.12 Housing

- 3.12.1 Support for the residential aspect of the redevelopment with some people suggesting that the housing should be integrated over the whole area to avoid creating what appears to be a ghetto at one end. Strong support for the affordable housing requirement.

4 RESPONSE

- 4.1 Although the response to the consultation was modest, possibly reflecting its conceptual approach as opposed to presenting a preferred design, the comments received have been very helpful in tying down the perceptions, ideas and concerns of the wider community of interest. The comments have been overwhelmingly supportive, but have also suggested some useful changes to the Brief which will help the developers focus on what is important. They will also help ensure that the Brief reflects the community's, rather than just the Council's, aspirations for the site.

- 4.2 Some of the comments received are too detailed to be addressed by the Planning Brief but will be retained for consideration during the consideration of Master plan and subsequent detailed designs and negotiations.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

5. RELEVANCE TO THE CORPORATE STRATEGY

- 5.1 Looking after the natural and built environment for the benefit of future generations is a key objective.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 None.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Responses to consultation received.

APPENDICES:

Appendix One – Schedule of Comments and Recommended Responses