

Lionel Road Liaison Group

Notes of 14 July 2008 meeting

15 July 2008

Attendees:

- Steve Lancashire (SL), chair
- Phil Osborne (PO)
- Brian Burgess (BB)
- Chris Gammon (CG)
- Donald Kerr (DK)
- Phil Marchant (PM)
- Sanjay Sharma(SS)
- Bela Cunha (BC)
- Luke Kirton (LK)
- Matt Harmer (MH)
- Pete Ladhams (PL)
- Tom Grey (TG)
- Andrew Doe (AD), notes

Welcome and apologies:

SL welcomed all present to the meeting and invited them to introduce themselves.

Apologies had been received from Dave Hughes, Andrew Dakers, Ruth Cadbury, Peter Murphy, Steve Curran, Tim Luckett, Mike Simson.

AFL Stadium presentation:

PO: Made a PowerPoint presentation on the early ideas behind the stadium design (presentation to be posted on Brentford Community Stadium website). He discussed what the considerations are behind designing and building a stadium of the highest quality, and that AFL and the whole team are keen for an input from stakeholders now and in the coming months so that so that carefully considered design can be nearing completion by the end of 2008. This presentation led to the following questions and points being raised.

Questions:

LK: Likes Art Deco look of early designs, carrying on from Great West Road theme and what Barratt is doing at Great West Quarter. When PO mentions efficiency, does he mean maintenance efficiency or carbon footprint efficiency? Would be interested in seeing a transport study, as we are hoping to have many more fans inside the ground. Will the PCT be on the ground floor?

PO: Art Deco is a theme of the area we have been inspired by. By maintenance I am talking about an efficient use of energy, and efficient materials. AFL are experienced at using a variety of materials to clad stadia, and have worked through challenging maintenance operations. The PCT will be accommodated on podium level, accessed from the hub.

LK: Accessibility is major issue for PCT, probably more than other areas, and it's good to hear that there is level access. Transport routes into and around the Community Stadium will be a big issue. We need to educate people that driving to the stadium isn't the best plan. The major issues for local residents are, not just transport, but education. We need to agree a travel plan for fans and staff.

MH: Main worry is that the development team doesn't over promise. On the PCT, they could have rooms in GWQ but don't want them. People want the stadium and the enabling development, but if things get taken away there will be more bad feeling towards the team. We want a good design, and there needs to be a balance between good design and cost, so that the project is not put in jeopardy.

PO: We are taking a consultative approach, and have done a lot of work on what is appropriate and deliverable for a stadium. The proposal will only contain what we think is realistic and it has to be affordable.

BC: Will there be endless problems with the pitch because of how the stadium is designed?

PO: There is an idea that 12 degrees off north- south access is ideal in this country. A 20,000 capacity stadium with a modern grass specification is capable of being built with any orientation. Light would not be a problem.

LK: A sub-strata is used at AFC Monaco and the pitch doesn't drain well and the bounce is not good. Will we have similar problems here?

PO: No. The pitch would be properly irrigated, and as long as there is a stable deck it will not make a difference. We are bringing pitch specialists on board to ensure that there are no problems.

PM: Will you be weaving plastic into the pitch?

PO: This will be a natural Fifa compliant pitch. It will be frost resistant, irrigated and air ventilated. In order to meet requirements of regular use by football and rugby teams this has to be a robust pitch surface.

BB: Meeting pitch specialist tomorrow morning with structural engineers. We have brought on board a highly recommended pitch supplier, involved in Amsterdam Arena, which is also over a car park. We will be getting his expertise on pitch and drainage together with that of the structural engineer. Pitch will need to have some sort of plastic reinforcement. The roof needs to be flat for adverts for passing aircraft.

DK: Energy use and sustainability are hugely important.

BB: Agreed. The club can't afford big energy bills.

PO: A greywater study will be carried out and a thorough environmental statement will be produced.

SS: There is an LRLG topic coming up on sustainability.

BB: From the club's point of view the PCT and business centre are key parts of the business plan. We want to be a landlord, and if they pay rent it gives us a much more stable income. We would be worried if the PCT and business centre don't happen. The business centre is a social enterprise business centre and Community Action Network, who run 1 London Bridge, have already expressed interest. On the PCT, Chris and I gave a presentation to Capital Strategy Group, which is a sub group of the PCT board. We had good feedback – they are excited by project and its location halfway between Brentford and Chiswick health centres. They are doing more detailed studies to establish the needs of people in the area. They can have as much space as they want, but we will need to wait for the PCT to do these studies.

LK: Did you see the announcement in the press about funding for three new duty practices?

BB: Yes, one likely to be at Feltham, one in the heart of Hounslow, and one this end of the borough.

PM: How confident are you that demand will be there for the hotel and conferencing facilities?

CG: Capital from hotel would help fund cost of stadium. Intention is for the hotel to use our catering facilities. Five hotel groups have approached us, expressing that there is demand in this area for a 3 to 3 plus star offering. We have just appointed a business plan consultant, who is talking to local businesses to put more flesh on work we've done, and underpinning demand for conferencing and banqueting.

PO: Curvature of the stadium is most efficient to fit 20,000 seats in. The curve goes up so we can fit the requisite number of seats in. There will be curvature at the ends of the stadium, and we are ensuring that there is room for a pleasant concourse experience.

LK: Can we incorporate the pub on each corner theme in some way?

PO: At the moment we are trying to show that there will be opportunities around the ground to get something to eat, although a pub on every corner is not likely to be possible. We are seeking to incorporate the idea in some way as it is a strong anchor for club.

BC: When can we see models of the stadium?

PO: Once we get to a point where we've met the current brief we can begin to generate computer imagery.

SL: A model might be possible for a future LRLG meeting.

BB: From the club's point of view we are reluctant to go into models until we know that the stadium design works. These plans need to be costed and we are looking at the business plan to make sure everything is correct. This will come together around November, and once we have a confidence that the stadium works we can then show a model.

DK: We need to be cautious and don't want to over promise.

SL: Thanks PO for the presentation.

Notes of 2nd June meeting: Agreed

Matters arising:

LK: Brings groups attention to a new regeneration director at Gunnersbury Park. It would be good to open dialogue with this person.

SL: I have been encouraged to, and will speak with, Richard Gill, who is the Development and Regeneration Manager at Gunnersbury Park.

Schedule of topics:

SL: Drew attention to the schedule he had circulated and explained the idea is to have a meeting monthly over the next 7/8 months. There has been a strong proposal that we switch the current September and August meetings around, so that traffic, pedestrian movements and parking is covered in September, with sustainability and energy covered in August. There is also a suggestion that we move the August meeting forward to Monday 4th August. A

BC: Unavailable on 4th August.

SL: Reminded the Group that they can send deputies if they are unable to attend.

MH: Are all these topics concerned with just the stadium?

SL: No, most are much wider and cover issues relating to all the sites proposed for development.

LK: Wonders whether there is a different way of arranging the topics, as the early meetings are likely to be the ones that are fed into more because the project is at an earlier stage.

SL: The schedule is based on the discussion we had at the June meeting. It was difficult to identify a clear logical order. The idea is to have a general discussion at each meeting so that local groups can tell technical people what the considerations and important issues are. Group members have been clear that we need to be informed about peoples' movements around the site. People were very clear about this. However the schedule of topics is not a tablet of stone.

Group agreed to switch the meeting topics planned for August and September, and to move the August meeting forward to Monday 4th August. Venue to be confirmed.

Communications:

SL had circulated a draft paper that he had produced in the light of discussion at June meeting.

BC: I would add the Hounslow Chronicle, and the Ealing Gazette.

LK: There used to be a Brentford paper, which may still exist. It was called the Brentford Buddy but its name may have changed.

MH: ChiswickW4 website is better read than any of the newspapers. EalingToday is also well read.

SL thanked people for their useful suggestions and proposed moving on to the subject of the Brentford Community Stadium website, which will go live soon. It is being designed by Sprunt and managed by SL so all copy needs to come through him. We are posting the latest news from Brentford FC and Barratt, and also having a links page of local groups' websites. We want your organisations to go on the links page, and are hoping that either tonight or over the next few days you could give us the name of your website and a couple of sentences describing the group. We have also prepared an introductory brochure, introducing people to the proposal. There is a form to go inside each brochure to be filled in and returned to Four Communications. People were encouraged to take copies away to put in local places like libraries, tenants halls, youth and community centres, churches, doctors surgeries and let AD know where they were putting them. There will also be a 4-page newsletter, with the first edition likely to be in September. It will be available in hard copy and electronically.

BC: On summer events, the Gunnersbury Mela on 10th August in Gunnersbury Park.

LK: There is a Brentford Picnic on 6th August.

SL: We are also conducting workshops in addition to these LRLG meetings. We are looking at workshop groups with primary and secondary school students. This includes working with primary school students on designing the Buzz newspaper. We plan to make contact with women's groups, BME groups, elderly groups and disability groups. We are planning to hold these workshops in the September to November window and feed the comments into the architects and development team.

LK: There is the Disability network Hounslow, Age concern, and a Positive Futures team

working with young people. I am concerned that these workshops need to be meaningful. Because the stadium project will take a long while to come to fruition it may not be meaningful for school children, especially the older ones who may not be living in the area when it is completed, whilst some secondary school pupils may not actually live in the Brentford area at the moment. For school children the workshops need to be an education process, so that they learn about architecture and other issues. For your information there is a Positive Futures team youth club on a Monday night run by Mo Jammer, Steve Hutchins is in charge of the Youth Council in the borough, and Linda Eversley parties involved in the production of Buzz newspaper for the younger age group.

SS: Have we identified any groups in Ealing?

SL: We've had a session with Lee Doyle of the Community Sports Trust, who work there as well, and have also talked about groups in Southall.

LK: I believe there are groups in south Acton.

DK: There is a community radio station that broadcasts to the whole area, with a community slot at 11.00 am.

LK: Other radio stations are Westside FM, Radio Jackie, and Sunrise.

SL: We will add a section in the Communications report on radio stations.

Any other business:

SS made a brief statement on Barratt Homes financial situation and reassured this Project is being actively pursued and has a high priority.

Date of next meeting

Next meeting date confirmed as Monday 4th August. Venue TBC. Although people happy with St Paul's Centre agreed it would be good to go to others in the area. AD to explore options.

Topic, as agreed earlier at meeting, to be Sustainability and Energy.