

Lionel Road Liaison Group

Notes of 30 April 2008 meeting

12 May 2008

Attendees:

- Julie Brooker (JB), Clayponds Residents Association
- Brian Burgess (BB), Brentford FC
- Ruth Cadbury (RC), Councillor for Brentford
- Steve Curran (SC), Griffin Park Residents Association
- Andrew Dakers (AD), Councillor for Brentford
- Chris Gammon (CG), Brentford FC
- Eileen Henderson (EH), Brentford Chamber of Commerce
- David Hughes (DH), Hughes Jones Farrell architects
- Donald Kerr (DK), Bees United
- Luke Kirton (LK), Lionel Road Supporters Consultation Group
- Peter Ladhams (PL), Assael Architecture
- Tim Luckett (TL), Brentford Chamber of Commerce
- Phil Marchant (PM), Brentford Independent Association of Supporters
- Jason McAleve (JM), Friends of Stile Hall
- Peter Murphy (PM), Barratt West London
- Steve Lancashire (SL), Four Communications, in the chair
- Andrew Doe (AD), Four Communications, minutes

Apologies: were received from Councillor Matt Harmer, Mike Simson, Sanjay Singh

Introductions: SL invited those present to introduce themselves.

Current Position

BB outlined the vision for the project and the ideas behind the stadium and the club's social ethos. He confirmed that the strategy is relocate from Griffin Park and develop the new Brentford Community Stadium on land at Lionel Road to include a modern replacement for the ageing Fountain Leisure Centre currently on Chiswick High Road. When this has been done Griffin Park will be redeveloped for housing.

PM referred to the Swiss Cottage leisure centre development as a good example of a successful public – private partnership, and a model for new leisure centres and regeneration. He also mentioned Heston Leisure Centre, showing a map of the proposal and indicated the need to generate money from other activities as well as football, so Brentford FC aren't exposed to millions of pounds of financial risk. This is potentially a £500 million project to include a 20,000 capacity stadium. The aim is to complete the whole project by 2014, with the stadium opening in 2012.

*Both presentations were supported by exhibition boards, copies of which can be made available on request.

Questions and discussion in response to the presentations:

DK: why has the Heston project taken so long? Is it really a good model?

PM: The issue has largely been political. There was some uncertainty whether the new administration

would back scheme. More recently Barratt has been finalising legal and commercial issues.

RC: The risk of political delays with the Brentford project is less. All political parties have supported the club. Therefore thinks and hopes that this aspect of risk is less.

PM: New administration in Hounslow has backed the scheme.

JB: Lived in Brentford many years, although not into football. Really welcomes it, but will it end up like Watermans, which isn't affordable for local people and not used much by residents living nearby.

PM: When the stadium is handed over to the club it's a clean break, and the club will be responsible for pricing policy but won't have to pay off debt from stadium costs. The Council will be responsible for deciding on charges for the Leisure Centre.

BB: There is always pressure to put up prices, but we haven't done so for three years. There is a budget of £500,000 per year to pay for players. Ticket prices are one of the only ways of raising sufficient money. However the new stadium will enable the club to develop other streams of revenue. Wants to encourage as many local supporters as possible and be as socially inclusive as possible.

JB: Hopes the club doesn't lose its community feel. Doesn't want local people of Brentford to lose the benefits of the club's community activities.

TL: Have you had any contact with the High Street developers? Believes there could be important links, particularly on the commercial side. What sort of housing will there be?

PM: There have been no direct discussions with Ballymore to date. Not doing anything on Lionel Road to compete with the High Street. No shops, possibly the odd restaurant. Housing at Griffin Park will be medium rise – three story houses and blocks of flats, designed to blend in with adjacent housing. The Fountains site will almost certainly have a ground floor commercial retail use, with apartments above. Height not yet determined but financial viability and need will influence this.

BB: We want to learn from the High Street group has recently consulted the community.

LK: What is cross fertilisation? What impact will the deteriorating housing market have on the project? When can we start drawing up our Section 106 list?

PM: Believes that some of the housing market problems have been caused by the banks lending irresponsibly. The conditions are not same as during the last recession, when there were high interest rates, and high unemployment. There is currently high employment, demand is high, supply is dwindling, and interest rates are low. This is a long term project, and we must assume that things will improve. Wouldn't attempt any project if you always jumped when the market changed. The Section 106 moneys will largely be contained in the project itself, with provision for things such as a health centre.

BB: Cross fertilisation is getting people into a place where they have the opportunity and can benefit from activities that they wouldn't usually be able to or choose to do (such as young people going to see a GP after going to the gym). Idea is for the stadium to have a common entrance with a wide range of activities branching out from there – football, health, conference, learning facilities. This has been tried successfully elsewhere by combining leisure centres with health centres.

RC: Feels it is fantastic that Barratt WL and Brentford FC have got together, and is excited by the project. Believes a problem might be that the site is physically constrained by railway lines. Difficult to get to whether you are walking, cycling or driving. Believes that the idea of linking the project to the community is fantastic. Are you looking at other sites to extend the boundary?

PM: Accessibility is challenging. There needs to be a prominent and inviting entrance, possibly where Lionel Road is. When development complete, the Glaxo site is completed new routes will be opened and provide access to the north side of Lionel Road. May need a link from Lionel Road to Capital Interchange Way - hopefully a pedestrian link across.

BB: Have had three meetings with Network Rail to talk about the bridge across the railway. The issue could be solved in a similar way to the Emirates' Stadium design. We'd be receptive to using a tunnel off the platform.

PM: We would like to include the builders' yard in the scheme and have been speaking to the owners. We need to identify a relocation site so we can site swap.

JM: How will crowd control be managed? Traffic control will be horrendous.

PM: Will have to look at this in some detail with police and traffic people. May use road that goes through industrial area. Brian will be talking to the police regarding crowd control. Need to identify emergency exits and maybe three ways into site.

AD: Well done on getting things this far. Have you considered environmental sustainability? Will the design be of a high quality? Will you be involving the community in affecting the design? Is there a density of building requirement? Through the Brentford Area Action Plan we will hopefully get clarity as to what the area can cope with. Glad to hear that the Fountains Leisure Centre aspect of scheme will be open book. Believes the economics of the scheme are extremely important for the community in terms of accepting the density of the scheme. Doesn't want a white elephant.

PM: We have to do a lot regarding sustainability under the planning system. There will almost certainly be an energy centre on Lionel Road, fuelling hot water, electricity etc. There will be a range of renewable initiatives, and we'll do a whole presentation on renewable energy. On design, yes it must be attractive. We have been looking at how we can make this an iconic development, and must come up with an attractive stadium and housing. Some images have been superseded by recent thoughts. We will have to go through CABE, and Design for London etc. There will be lots of suggestions. On density – the BT building is a reference point of height on the Fountains site.

BB: Being owned by Bees United the club is by definition open to the community. Finances will be open to the public unless commercial confidentiality is needed.

JB: If a GP surgery does go on site it will be quite far away from Brentford, and is more in Chiswick. Will the doctors be more for Chiswick residents?

BB: This is a decision for the PCT. The PCT are looking at where they need more surgeries. We are offering them a choice. Could be a fairly small centre or a big one. We don't know yet what is best for PCT and local residents. This might be a topic for a specific meeting.

PM: There is a doctors' surgery allocated for GSK site.

SC: What about policing and how this affects activities around the stadium? There is now a good relationship between the football club and Hounslow. What happens to Griffin Park after 2012? We don't want the club to walk away from us. We want to reach agreement before planning, so that the proposals can go smoothly through the planning process.

BB: Not the case that we'll get the new stadium and then watch from afar as the Lionel Road and Griffin Park sites are developed. The planning application will have to deal with all three sites.

PM: All three sites will all go in as one application, although we will have separate meetings with appropriate people to discuss each site. The architect designing Griffin Park will need good solutions that everybody buys into.

TL: Is it first stadium that Barratt will have built?

PM: We will act as an overall developer, but employ a specialist contractor to build the new stadium and employ one of the top project management companies to oversee the development.

LK: Subject for another meeting could be the quality of public space outside the stadium. It is

important that young people are at the centre of consultation for the design of outside spaces.

PM: We would love this to be one of the meeting topics. Can get to Carville Hall Park North, Gunnersbury, Kew Bridge. On the plans we hope to show how other public amenity spaces in the area can link together. The idea is for the whole sports and leisure offering to be a mix of indoor and outdoor.

SL: Hopes this has given a good idea of the many aspects of the project. It is complex and challenging, and this is very much the beginning of consultation.

Draft Terms of Reference

SL introduced a draft paper he had prepared which had been circulated and invited comments. He explained it was felt important that people attending, who lived busy lives with lots of pressures and many of whom were giving their time to be involved, needed to be clear as possible about the purpose and procedures of these meetings.

RC: Some of us will no doubt not always have the capacity to attend.

LK: Doesn't want this to be a decision making body. Wants it to be a sounding board. Suggests adding "to act as a sounding board" and "we are not a decision making body" to the second bullet point.

TL: When we did the High Street work, a major activity was organising with groups of residents. We want to propose other activities such as workshops, and go into community. Elderly groups in Brentford are important.

RC: This could be like the High Street Steering Group.

PM: Want to try to get people together to start consultation process. It is assumed that this will be central information group. Intend to present to other groups.

AD: suggests that a website would be a useful tool.

PM: We'll listen to everyone's views. There will be conflicting views. Executive decisions will be firmly with Barratts and Football Club. The consultation list is not exhaustive.

SL: What do people think of the membership list? Are there any suggestions on key groups?

TL: It would be good to invite people from local schools and elderly groups

LK: Steven Hawkins of Age Concern Hounslow could be invited.

PM: Planners may have to be careful about how involved they are.

TL: We need to know that planners are listening.

SL: There will be technical meetings in addition to our meetings.

AD: Important point is that we need to ensure that planners are observing the journey.

LK: Involve young people. Doesn't want young people to be disappointed.

PM: Suggests possible collaboration with a school project.

JB: Suggests attending fun days on estates. Will you be going to fun days on estates?

RC: Is a monthly meeting too often?

PM: No, we need to cover lots of topics.

TL: Get people from Ealing and Richmond into the group, plus Kew Society.

SL agreed to redraft the terms document incorporating the points made and circulate it for agreement at the next meeting.

Any Other Business

SL noted that at various points during the meeting the matter of communication was raised. Given the time, he proposed this be discussed in greater detail next time but noted that a simple website, newsletters and specific presentations and events were under consideration.

Dates times and venues of future meetings

It was agreed rotating venues around the area would be good if rooms available and Clayponds, Mission Hall, St Paul's, the new Musical Museum and Griffin Park were suggested as possible venues.

SL pointed out that it would be difficult to find a day/dates that suited all but he was keen to see if a certain day of the month (e.g. 1st Monday, 4th Wednesday, etc) could be identified to help people forward plan and get it in their diaries. He had been advised that Mondays and Wednesdays were probably best. After discussion it was agreed to try and settle this next time.

Next meeting agreed as Monday 2nd June, 7-9. Venue TBC from above list.