

## **CONFIDENTIAL**

### Margate Seafront Development Steering Group

Wednesday 26 March 2014 – 11.30 am

#### Minutes of meeting

Attendees:

- |                         |   |  |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Kent County Council     | - | Mike Hill (MH), Stephanie Holt (SH), Sarah Wren (SW),<br>Barbara Cooper (BC), Rebecca Spore (RS),<br>Donald Farquharson (DF), Jo Weatherley (JW) (notes) |
| Thanet District Council | - | Clive Hart (CH), Sue McGonigal (SMcG),<br>Madeline Homer (MHo)   |
| Turner Contemporary     | - | Richard Morsley (RM)   |

Guy Holloway (GH) attended the meeting for item 3.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Amanda Honey.

#### 2. Minutes of meeting held on 22 January 2014

Item 3, page 2, paragraph 3 refers to the Leader of Kent County Council. The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2014 were agreed.

#### 3. Rendezvous Site

Guy Holloway (GH) shared with the group the two options for the Rendezvous Site. The first option was the design previously shown which included a four storey building with 60 bedrooms and 18 retreats, a restaurant, bar and conference area. If this design had 75 bedrooms then the building would have an additional storey and this could obscure views. Christies see option one as the business orientated option but are struggling with this business aspect as Margate is more leisure/culture orientated. Rebecca Spore (RS) stated that it was difficult to see commercial trade in the medium term. Christies feel that option one is not viable as a commercial business hotel.

[REDACTED] This hotel would have a different operator, would be more of a boutique hotel and would be more family and leisure orientated. The plans include 89 bedrooms, a spa, gym, pool, restaurant, roof top bar, crèche and one screen cinema. Parking would be provided by valet parking as there are no plans for underground parking on site.

Clive Hart (CH) commented that this proposal makes better use of the space available. As the structure is not as tall it would probably be passed by the Planning Committee. He asked that it was noted that the retreats are at the most exposed position so this part of the design may need to be altered.

There is the possibility of moving the sailing club under the bridge with the boats moored at the front of the hotel (discussions would be required with the sailing club to seek agreement to this). There is also the long term potential to tunnel from the hotel to the Winter Gardens to link the two buildings, although it was accepted there is no intention to progress this element at this time.

Richard Morsley (RM) asked if the change of design is driven by the market, what has prompted the change and what is the aspiration? RS explained that it has always been the vision for a hotel to be on the site. The original design needed to be tested with the market and has now been done. Option one lends itself to the corporate edge and questions have been asked whether this is sustainable. Further work has been done with the market and with Warbird. Turner Contemporary has been hugely successful but only a certain amount of time is spent at the gallery and it is hoped that with the opening of Dreamland more tourism will be brought into the area. This could attract families looking for short breaks. There has been lots of discussion around viability and costs. One of the reasons you can do more for less money is due to not elevating nor building into the cliff.

RS stated that both options have been costed and both schemes would cost over £10m. The operating side would need to be sustainable and viable.

Option two still needs some work and an application for planning permission for one of the two designs (or variants of) will be submitted in May. A view is needed between option one and option two. If option one is chosen this would have to have an additional floor.

The overall consensus of the group was that option two is the favourable option. It was however felt that the retreats require a different design as their resemblance was very similar to Hastings.

RS explained that it was important that this design would need to stand up with or without Warbird and that they were one of a number of companies KCC was working with.

An exhibition/launch is needed and this needs some thought. GH would be interested in feeding back to the visioning group and RS will consider this.

#### 4. Visioning

A clearer vision is required for Margate to provide confidence to investors. Madeline Homer asked that the vision was not just for Margate but at the very least articulates how Margate investment can benefit all of Thanet and could be shared with other partners. The group was asked to look at the document and it was proposed to bring comments back to the next meeting.

5. Winter Gardens

Stephanie Holt (SH) updated the Group on the Winter Gardens. When the group last met FEI had not had access to the cinema site. This has now happened and the confirmed thinking is a strong connection between the two buildings. To obtain the HLF funding the buildings need to be restored to their original state, or as close to as possible. There is an identified gap in phase 1 (the live music market) which requires to be 'bottomed out' before the Seafront Committee next meets. Further discussions are needed with HLF regarding how their funding might be prioritised, and phasing implications for taking both buildings forward.

Discussions are required with Paul Carter and with KCC's Cabinet.

BC stated that phasing could have implications.

6. Dreamland Development

Madeline Homer (MHo) updated the group on the Dreamland Development which is progressing. It was emphasised that the information shared was confidential.

BC has received a letter from Tony Godden and this may require a legal response.

The opening date is planned for April 2015 but this is subject to change. The visitor centre will be opening on 24 May 2014. The Scenic Railway is currently being refurbished. The insurance issue is being looked at and it is Thanet District Council's intention to lease the site and appoint an operating company. However there may still be a role for a Trust in an educational and community role.

BC suggested contacting David Williams, the Chief Executive at Portsmouth City Council for advice regarding insurance.

7. Margate Harbour

KCC is still to look into this matter with Thanet District Council. Contacts are required from KCC and TDC. This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

8. Any Other Business

It was felt that a follow-up launch would be helpful. This would need to be arranged before the Planning Permission was submitted in May.

9. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be arranged for the end of May (JW).

Jo Weatherley  
29 April 2014