



Briefing Note for Carriageworks Action Group Volunteers

13 Sept 2011

Qs and As

These are the answers to some of the questions you may be asked.

What's the consultation for?

The consultation will help the Carriageworks Action Group write a Community Vision (or plan) for the site. The consultation includes:

- street surveys
- residential & business door canvassers
- group meetings
- workshops
- website

Who is consulting who?

The Carriageworks Action Group is made up of local residents from Kingsdown, St Pauls, Montpelier and Cotham who are working together, with the support of the City Council, to write the Community Vision. People who are members of local organisations such as St Pauls Unlimited, Kingsdown Conservation Group, Transition Montpelier, and People's Republic of Stokes Croft have all been involved in helping organise the consultation.

Why now?

The Government has made c£800k available to try to get something done at Westmoreland House. Also, the new Government places great emphasis on what they call 'localism' and community led planning, so it's a good time to be developing the methods and ideas.

What do you want to know?

We (the Carriageworks Action Group) want to know

- what you think of the site at present
- how you think the site should be developed and used in the future
- who you think should do the development

We are also interested in knowing what you don't want.

Who owns the site?

The site is privately owned by Comer Homes Group, a London based property development company. They have owned the site since the 1980s. They also owned Tolgate House in St Judes before it was compulsory purchased by BCC for redevelopment as the Cabot Circus carpark.

Why haven't the owners ever done anything?

In the past Comer Homes have submitted two planning applications for the site. An application in 1989 for 63 flats and offices was approved, but development never started. An application for 153 flats and parking was refused by the Council and at appeal in 2010. Comer Homes have now submitted another planning application, this time for 183 flats, shops and parking. This is being considered by the Council in its separate role as planning authority.

Why hasn't the Council done something before now?

The City Council can not force the owners to do anything. But the community vision will give a strong steer to the Council as and when it considers any proposals concerning the site.

Why doesn't the Council buy the site?

The Council does not have the resources to buy the site unassisted so it would have to be in partnership with an alternative developer who could help fund the scheme. If the owners do not develop the site themselves or cooperate in selling the site the Council could use compulsory purchase powers to buy it, but this could be expensive.

What's the site worth?

Opinions vary. It could be from hundreds of thousands up to millions depending upon the property market and the final uses.

Will the Community Vision really make any difference?

We hope so. We are consulting a large number of people. Also, the City Council is committed to listening to what people want, and to using the vision to inform its decision making. Some people will always be cynical about processes like these, but elsewhere they have been proven to make a real difference.

Who is paying to write the community vision?

The City Council is paying for the printing, facilitators etc using a grant from the Homes and Community Agency, the government body responsible for urban regeneration. Volunteers from the local community are also putting in a great deal of time and effort free of charge.

I haven't got time right now but want to give my views. How?

Fill in the questionnaire online - carriageworks.org.uk; email ideas@carriageworks.org.uk; or write to Carriageworks (JR/BB), Freepost BS6935, Bristol BS1 5ZZ (these details are all in the leaflet).

What happens next?

The responses will be considered in November. The Action Group will then develop ideas for the site, and ask the community for its response. By the end of the year we hope to agree our Community Vision. Development of the site is, however, likely to take some years.