

06 community consultation

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Introduction

This summary presents an overview of the consultation work that has taken place for The Elizabeth Shaw Chocolate Factory project by developers Squarepeg. Details of the full process can be seen in the report entitled:

- *Squarepeg Statement of Community Consultation - The Chocolate Factory*

Overview

Squarepeg made a strong commitment to a community consultation programme in accordance with the Planning Performance Agreement and as outlined in the Super Major Application Protocol. The company retained the services of a specialist independent consultation consultancy, Interface. Interface's role has been to help with the process of communicating information with the local community, local stakeholders and residents within the wider community, identifying and sharing the views of the community with the professional team and sharing the proposed plans and actions of the

professional team with the wider community.

It was agreed in the PPA that this application would fall within Tier 2 of the DCLG's indicative guidance for this type of application. Due to the history of the development site a considerable amount of desk research was undertaken in advance of the consultation and proposed uses were drawn from the community Chocolate Box website which acted as the voice of the community during the opposition to the previous plans. Because of this research, the preferred 'blank sheet' approach was not practical in this instance. Research into the inquiry refusal showed that retention of the original factory buildings was a requirement of future development and therefore the communication process was started with the premise that the original buildings would be retained and

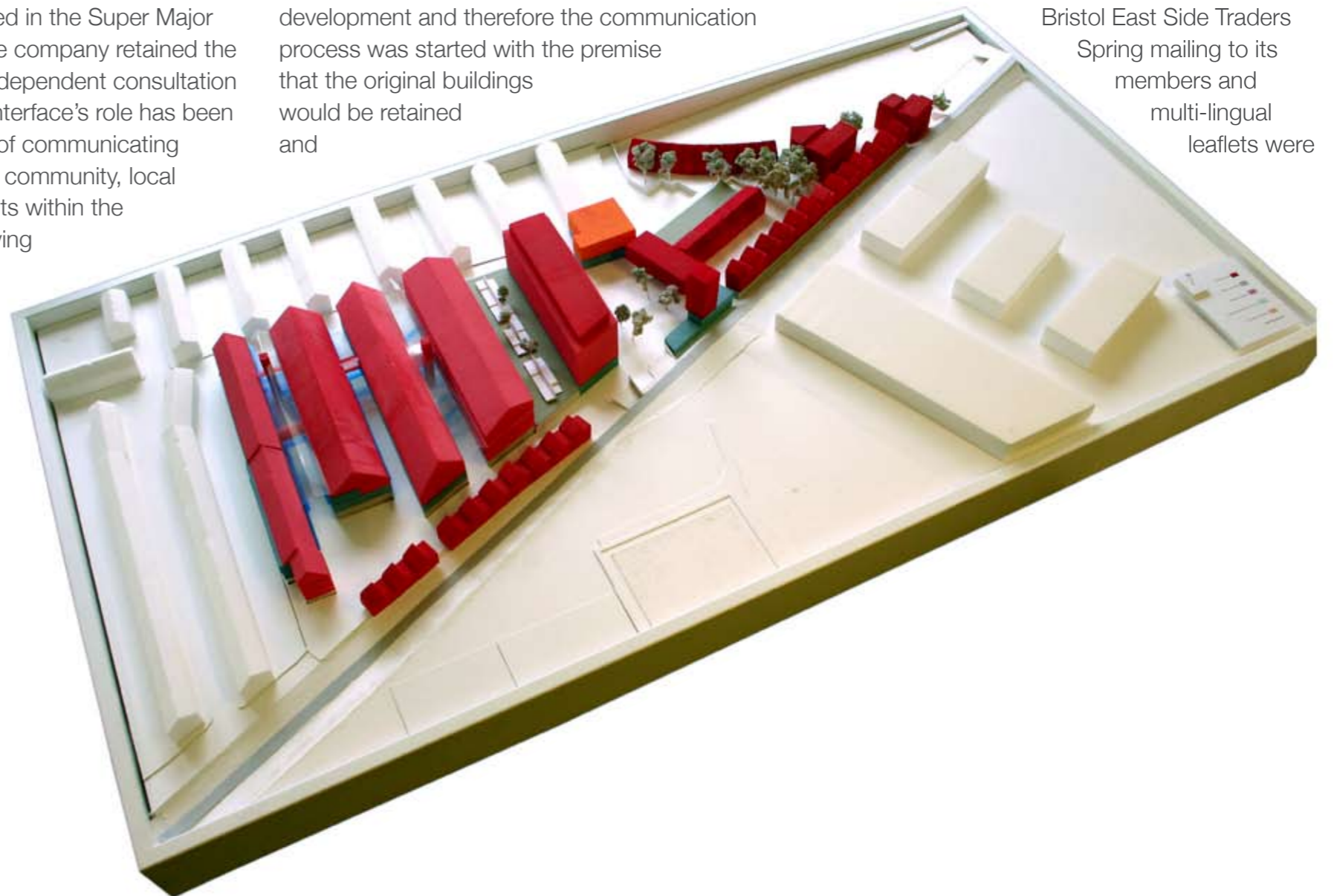
refurbished whilst the remainder of the site would be the new development area.

A consultation time plan was developed and agreed along with a 'Steps' action plan being prepared.

Community consultation process

The consultation was started in February 2008. A simultaneous media announcement and house-to-house delivery of 1000 letters to local residents confirmed the developer's commitment to consultation and details for residents to register for information via the website (www.greenbankchocolatefactory.co.uk). A further

letter was inserted in the Bristol East Side Traders Spring mailing to its members and multi-lingual leaflets were



Right A model was made for consultation purposes, highlighting proposed uses

distributed throughout local Mosques and cafes. The following initiatives formed the core activities of the process:

Early consultees and stakeholder meetings

Initial meetings and discussions took place with the following groups, with a view to introducing Square Peg, and publicising their broad aspirations for the consultation process:

- Local councillors/officers/politicians
- Relevant Environmental/Property Conservation Groups
- Media Groups
- Local Residents Associations
- Bristol City Council
- Chocolate Box
- East Bristol Partnership
- Bristol and East Side Traders
- Sustrans

Stakeholder Workshops

On Monday 17 March 2008 two workshops were held at St Anne's Parish Church in Greenbank. These were publicised through postcards distributed locally to 1500 homes, media cover in the local paper, email communication and via a newsletter distributed to 3000 homes. People were asked to register



Acanthus Ferguson Mann Architects September 2008

their intention to attend.

The workshop topics included:

- *Architecture and sustainability* led by AFM Architects
- *Accessibility, transport and traffic* led by Pinnacle Transport Consultancy
- *Community benefits and possible types of use* led by Pegasus Planning Consultancy and Squarepeg

In total 113 people attended the afternoon and evening events. In addition to the workshop, attendees were asked to complete a questionnaire. This questionnaire was also made available online and all handwritten results were transferred to the online database.

In addition to the workshop, individual meetings were held with:

- Chocolate Box, campaigning group (Feb)
- Easton Planning Partnership (Feb/June)
- BEST (March – July)
- Local WI including ex-employees (with Chocolate Memories)
- IRIS
- Sustrans

Public Exhibitions

These formed a key element of the communication process. Two were held, both publicised in advance supported by newsletters (reaching between 3,500 and 4,000 homes and businesses) as well as email notifications. They were held on April 18th/19th 2008 and July 18th/19th 2008.

Over 140 people attended the first exhibition, with similar numbers at the second.

In addition to the public exhibitions previews were held with stakeholders. 36 key stakeholders were invited to an informal pre-exhibition briefing session from the following

groups:

- Local MP and MP's constituency office
- Prospective Parliamentary Candidate
- BCC Planning Authority – various departments
- Local Councillors
- Sustrans
- Civic Society
- S W Planning Aid
- BEST
- IRIS
- Conservation Advisory Panel
- Bristol Urban Design Forum
- East Bristol Enterprise
- BEST
- Architecture Centre

A further exhibition will be held in the Architecture Centre, Narrow Quays, throughout September 2008 during the application consultation period.

Online communications

Email

Much of the public consultation has taken place via email. The dedicated email address CFconsultation@greenbankchocolatefactory.co.uk was set up to receive and log email correspondence from interested parties. Some 654 emails which referred to the development were exchanged during the consultation period.

Website

The website was one of the key resources for communicating development progression. It went live on 28th January. Since this date 540 people have registered on the site and of these 504 opted to receive email updates and news.

Online resource

The exhibitions were built as an online resource with the entire content being uploaded onto the website within 5 days of the exhibitions closing.

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Left Using the model to discuss the proposals at one of the public exhibitions