



## Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday, 22 November 2010</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6.15 pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall</b>

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### AGENDA

#### **CALL-IN OF CABINET MINUTE 160 (14 OCTOBER 2010) - THE SAIL PROJECT**

At its meeting held on 14 October 2010, the Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management, which informed Members of the current position with regard to The Sail Project in West Kirby and sought approval to conclude negotiations with the proposed developer. The report set out the background, the present position and additional information.

Cabinet minute 160 is attached, together with the report (and appendices) of the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management and site plans.

The Cabinet decision has been called in by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor S Foulkes and Councillor P Davies, on the grounds that –

- This project was set up to secure a world class sailing school and supporting facilities for the West Kirby Marine Lake, and the Hotel development on the Dee Lane Car Park is the enabling development to achieve that goal.
- The need for that world class sailing school and supporting facilities for the Marine Lake has not changed and there is no other source of finance available now, or likely to be in the future, given the current financial climate.
- This project has taken considerable time to develop, is in the last stages before Heads of Terms for the Development Agreement are finalised, and the developer remains committed to the project.

- Another quality hotel in Wirral would be of benefit because, as the Merseyside Partnership acknowledges, “it would attract investment and bring significant benefits to the tourism offer in Wirral”. This is particularly the case with the advent of the Open Golf.
- Any development, particularly in this current economic climate, will require a level of compromise in order to achieve the primary goals.
- There is still time to consider the best way of mitigating the loss of those parking spaces and accompanying traffic issues, provided that any investigation is set in the broader context of the interests of West Kirby as a whole. However, that time has been denied to officers and to the Developer by the Cabinet decision to abort the whole project at this late stage.
- A rejection of the project at this late stage sends out a very negative message to potential investors in Wirral who may be wary in the future of investing time and money into development projects that can be cancelled in this arbitrary way, and who may believe in future that Wirral politicians are prepared to allow a small and vocal minority, resistant to change, to over-ride the interests of the wider community.

**1. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS**

**2. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP**

Members are asked to consider whether they have personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they are.

Members are reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they are subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

**3. EXPLANATION OF CALL-IN BY LEAD SIGNATORY**

**4. EVIDENCE FROM CALL-IN WITNESSES**

**5. EVIDENCE FROM CABINET MEMBER'S WITNESSES**

**6. SUMMING UP BY MOVER OF THE CALL-IN**

**7. SUMMING UP BY CABINET MEMBER**

**8. COMMITTEE DEBATE**

**9. COMMITTEE DECISION**

## CABINET – 14 OCTOBER 2010

### 160. THE SAIL PROJECT

A report by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management informed the Cabinet of the current position with regard to “The Sail” project in West Kirby and sought approval to conclude negotiations with the proposed developer. The report set out the background, the present position and additional information.

Councillor G Ellis apologised to the Cabinet for the quotes attributed to him in the local press that had stated that the Cabinet would not proceed with the project. He informed that he actually said he very much hoped that the Cabinet would reject it.

Councillor Ellis then went on to make representations over the loss of car parking spaces that would result in West Kirby if the project was to go ahead and the resulting traffic chaos that was expected. He indicated that he was in favour of development in Wirral and for a hotel in West Kirby but not on the site identified for the Sail Project. The people who lived in the area were totally and utterly opposed to it.

Councillor J Hale also made representations against the Sail Project. He raised concerns over the loss of car parking income that would result if the project went ahead and the adverse effect there would be on the local economy if car parking space was lost. He considered that independent consultations should have been carried out and that it was wrong to strip away parking spaces.

A letter dated 14 October 2010 from Mr R Holmes, Chairman of the Merseyside Partnership addressed to Councillor J Green was circulated informing of the Partnership’s support, in principle, for another quality hotel in Wirral because it would attract investment and bring significant benefits to the tourism offer in Wirral.

Councillor G Gardiner informed the Cabinet that she would prefer to see the proposed developers given more time to resolve the parking problems.

**Councillor S Holbrook moved the following Motion and it was seconded by Councillor G Gardiner:**

“The Cabinet reaffirms that the purpose of this project is to secure a world class sailing school and supporting facilities for the West Kirby Marine Lane, and that a Hotel development on the Dee Lane car park is an enabling development to bring about that goal.

That, in view of the primacy of securing world class facilities for the Lake, Cabinet notes the views of Lake Users on the use of the spur for shared parking and accepts that shared use of the spur for car parking is not a viable solution.

Cabinet notes in particular that consideration of parking and traffic issues needs to be set in the broader context of the requirements of West Kirby as a whole.

Without prejudice to the planning process, Cabinet reaffirms its support in principle for an enabling hotel development. However, Cabinet requires, as a matter of urgency, that a transport assessment is completed (setting out the best possible proposals for minimising the net loss of car parking) and the Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement Plan is revised, all to the satisfaction of Council Officers; and that this is completed by no later than 31 December 2010. Cabinet authorises the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources, the Deputy Chief Executive (Interim Chief Executive, designate) and the Director of Technical Services) to finalise Heads of Terms for the Development Agreement once this has all been done, or to terminate the project if the deadline is not met.

Cabinet notes that Carpenter Investments no longer have exclusivity in relation to this development and indicates the willingness of the Council to enter into discussions with other interested parties and potential developers on any alternative plans which they might have to provide world class sailing school facilities.

A further report be brought to Cabinet on 13 January 2011.”

**Councillor A Hodson moved the following Amendment which was seconded by Councillor D Elderton:**

“Cabinet recognises that:

- (a) the primary purpose of the Sail Project has always been the re-provision of the existing Sailing School in a high quality building that responds to the regional and national importance of the Marine Lake;
- (b) Carpenter Investments have worked diligently to develop a scheme that would deliver this outcome through enabling development consisting of a high quality boutique hotel on the Dee Lane Car Park, which would bring in excess of £5m of inward investment and create over 50 jobs;
- (c) economic circumstances beyond the control of either Carpenter Investments or the Council would lead to a revised development scheme which created a significantly increased net loss in car parking in the vicinity; and
- (d) the development has become highly controversial within the local community, which would lead to Carpenter Investments being asked to develop a Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Cabinet considers that;

- (a) despite the endeavours of Carpenter Investments there appears to be little realistic prospect of a resolution of the car parking issues to our satisfaction;
- (b) making further efforts to resolve this issue may be likely to delay the possible improvement of the Sailing School;
- (c) in these circumstances, it would not be reasonable or appropriate to expect Carpenter Investments to expend further monies on striving to resolve this issue; and

(d) similarly, it would not be reasonable to require Carpenter Investments to refine and implement its Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

Accordingly, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed:

(a) to express the Cabinet's sincere appreciation and thanks to Carpenter Investments for their considerable commitment to the Sail Project since 2007, but to inform them that the Council will not proceed further with this development; and

(b) following consultation with the Director of Technical Services and the Director of Corporate Services, to report back to a future Cabinet meeting with options for securing the future enhancement, or re-provision, of the Sailing School, without involving any material net loss of public car parking in the vicinity."

**The Amendment was put to the vote and carried 7:3. It then became the Substantive Motion and was put to the vote and carried 7:3.**

**RESOLVED: (7:3) That Cabinet recognises that:**

**(a) the primary purpose of the Sail Project has always been the re-provision of the existing Sailing School in a high quality building that responds to the regional and national importance of the Marine Lake;**

**(b) Carpenter Investments have worked diligently to develop a scheme that would deliver this outcome through enabling development consisting of a high quality boutique hotel on the Dee Lane Car Park, which would bring in excess of £5m of inward investment and create over 50 jobs;**

**(c) economic circumstances beyond the control of either Carpenter Investments or the Council would lead to a revised development scheme which created a significantly increased net loss in car parking in the vicinity; and**

**(d) the development has become highly controversial within the local community, which would lead to Carpenter Investments being asked to develop a Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.**

**Cabinet considers that;**

**(a) despite the endeavours of Carpenter Investments there appears to be little realistic prospect of a resolution of the car parking issues to our satisfaction;**

**(b) making further efforts to resolve this issue may be likely to delay the possible improvement of the Sailing School;**

**(c) in these circumstances, it would not be reasonable or appropriate to expect Carpenter Investments to expend further monies on striving to resolve this issue; and**

**(d) similarly, it would not be reasonable to require Carpenter Investments to refine and implement its Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan.**

**Accordingly, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed:**

**(a) to express the Cabinet's sincere appreciation and thanks to Carpenter Investments for their considerable commitment to the Sail Project since 2007, but to inform them that the Council will not proceed further with this development; and**

**(b) following consultation with the Director of Technical Services and the Director of Corporate Services, to report back to a future Cabinet meeting with options for securing the future enhancement, or reprovision, of the Sailing School, without involving any material net loss of public car parking in the vicinity.**

**WEST KIRBY REGENERATION - THE SAIL PROJECT**

**1. Executive Summary**

1.1 This report informs Cabinet of the current position with regard to “The Sail” project in West Kirby and seeks approval to conclude negotiations with the proposed developer.

**2. Background**

2.1 At its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2009, Cabinet resolved:-

1) That the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to undertake detailed negotiations with Carpenter Investments with a view to drafting a Development Agreement including a consultation and stakeholder engagement plan, which would be reported back to a future meeting of Cabinet for approval.

2) That Cabinet give approval in principle for the Council to seek powers of Compulsory Purchase in order to facilitate redevelopment of the site, in the event that all other reasonable means to acquire vacant possession have proved unsuccessful, subject to the Developer indemnifying the Council against the associated costs.

2.2 The primary purpose of the `Sail` development has always been the re-provision of the existing sailing school in a high quality building that responds to the regional and national importance of the marine lake. The Hoylake and West Kirby Masterplan of 2004 identified that the current sailing school facility was at that time in a poor state and needed to be replaced.

2.3 The scheme proposed by Carpenter Investments would deliver a new sailing school through enabling development consisting of a high quality `boutique` hotel on the Dee Lane car park. This would bring inward investment in excess of £5m and would, in the estimation of the developer, generate some 50 jobs.

2.4 Carpenter Investments were selected as preferred developer for the scheme in September 2007, following the initial marketing of the development opportunity in 2005 and a competitive process. The progress of this project is summarised in the table below.

September 2007	Carpenter Investments selected as preferred developer.
January 2008	12 month conditional lock out agreement awarded.
December 2008	Revised scheme proposed by Carpenter Investments.
December 2008	Cabinet approval to 3 month extension of lock out agreement to allow Carpenter Investments time to provide additional information on their

	revised scheme.
March 2009	Details of revised scheme reported to Cabinet. Concern raised by Cabinet over revised design, specification of the sailing school and the loss of parking spaces at Dee Lane car park.
April 2009	Further report to cabinet outlining Carpenter Investments' proposals to mitigate the loss of parking on Dee Lane car park by utilising the spur car park in front of the Sailing School.
April 2009	Cabinet decision to allow the developer further 6 months to provide additional information on delivering the scheme.
September 2009	Cabinet approval to proceed towards a development agreement subject to clarification of proposals for further consultation and clarification on car parking strategy.
December 2009	Carpenter Investments requested to provide car park management plan and stakeholder consultation and engagement plan.
March 2010	Meeting between Council and Carpenter Investments' legal team to address outstanding issues over Heads of Terms.
June 2010	Meeting with Carpenter Investments to clarify progress and further request the car park management and consultation proposals.
August 2010	Consultation plan and letter outlining parking provision received.

### **3. Present Position**

- 3.1 Following from the above resolution, discussions have been held with Carpenter Investments and their professional advisers, in order to progress the terms of the development Agreement, refine the design, and generally move matters along.
- 3.2 Whilst progress has been made with the Heads of Terms for the Development Agreement these are not yet concluded. Details of the "overage" arrangements, for example, have yet to be finalised and remain outstanding.
- 3.3 The Heads of Terms do not deal, at this stage, with the key issues of consultation and car parking. It is expected that the treatment of these major issues will be resolved separately, before a development agreement is finalised and they are referred to below.

### **4. Additional Information**

- 4.1 Since this project was last considered by Cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2009, Carpenter Investments have provided additional information in relation to progressing the proposed scheme.
- 4.2 In response to Cabinet's request for the developer to provide a stakeholder consultation and engagement plan, Carpenter Investments' has engaged the support of public affairs consultants Remarkable to develop this on their behalf. The



document, included in appendix 1, is Remarkable's brief to Carpenter Investments, outlining the methodology and approach they would undertake.

- 4.3 When Carpenter Investments were selected as preferred developer by Cabinet on 6 September 2007, their proposal offered three delivery options in terms of the provision of car parking spaces and/or a capital receipt.
- 4.4 As proposals have developed over time alternative solutions have been considered, and the resolution of car parking has been an issue of concern. A revised scheme (reduced in scale) was considered by Cabinet on 19 March 2009. This removed previously proposed basement car parking for the hotel and proposed a net loss of approximately 85 car parking spaces.
- 4.5 Carpenter Investments were asked to identify potential ways of mitigating the loss of parking spaces on the Dee Lane site as a result of the development. In response, the scheme as presented to Cabinet on 9 April 2009 sought to do this by introducing public car parking to the marine lake 'spur', and sharing the use of that site with users of the marine lake. This approach remained the basis of the scheme when it was further discussed at Cabinet on 24 September 2009. In discussion at that meeting concerns were expressed about the loss of car parking spaces within the scheme.
- 4.6 The developer has subsequently held a number of informal meetings with stakeholders, specifically the newly formed West Kirby Lake User Group (WKLUG) and the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) to outline their development proposals. Whilst these stakeholders have indicated their 'in principle' support for a new scheme which enhances the facilities for lake users, they have also indicated their concerns with Carpenter Investments' proposal to redevelop the spur car park adjacent to the Sailing School into a shared space for both lake-user parking and public parking. Carpenter Investments has provided a plan indicating how parking on the spur could be managed with a series of demountable bollards to account for times of peak demand and usage. However, the WKLUG consider that as the current parking is exclusively for licence holders using the lake, any proposal to bring part of this into public use will compromise the current provision for lake users and have stated their opposition to this proposal.
- 4.7 Whilst WKLUG would not be a statutory consultee, Carpenter Investments' recognises the importance of the views of this group as key stakeholders in the project and has now indicated that it would not seek to proceed with its proposal for shared parking on the spur.
- 4.8 As these developments represent a change from the position reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2009, officers asked Carpenter Investments' to clarify the impact on public parking provision. The developer indicates that in its current form, the scheme will result in a reduction in public parking spaces on the Dee Lane car park from the current level of 176 spaces to approximately 90 spaces, a net loss of around 86 spaces.
- 4.9 The developer has submitted a letter, included in Appendix 2 which sets out the proposed loss of spaces and outlines a number of additional measures that have been explored to mitigate the loss of parking spaces on Dee Lane. These include the suggestion that spare capacity in the West Kirby Concourse car park could mitigate some of this loss and a suggestion there might be space for up to 34 additional parking spaces on South parade in front of the proposed new Sailing School.

However, no information has been provided at this stage on how much the additional parking provision would cost or who would be responsible for meeting these costs.

- 4.10 This further revision for the scheme effectively returns it to the position as at 19 March 2009, in respect of car parking, if the alternative suggestions set out in the letter at Appendix 2 prove unsatisfactory.
- 4.11 Officers from Technical Services department have indicated some concerns as to the overall impact on parking in West Kirby. As suggested in Appendix 2, even with its current capacity, the use of the Dee Lane car park is heavily peaked, with high demand during good weather, weekends and holiday periods. There is known to be an issue of overspill parking in adjoining residential areas at times of high demand. The reference to spare capacity at the concourse car park should be taken in the context of the relatively high proportion of blue badge and contracted spaces associated with the medical centre. The practicality of additional spaces on the Dee Lane frontage would need to be considered in more detail, as part of a Transport Assessment.
- 4.12 A full Transport Assessment would be required as part of the statutory planning process. This has not yet been undertaken. The Transport Assessment would compare before and after traffic/parking conditions and provide further information on a range of issues including servicing, staff and user parking details, parking mitigation measures and operating arrangements. In negotiations to date there has not been a requirement for Carpenter Investments to produce a full Transport Assessment before signing a development agreement.
- 4.13 As the scheme is currently envisaged there would be a clear loss of car parking provision, and, from the information presented to date, the means of mitigating such loss is not apparent. Without the further detailed information that would be presented through a Transport Assessment the Director of Technical Services, at this stage, is unable to reach a conclusion on the impact of the scheme on traffic and parking in the area.
- 4.14 In the meantime, some 6 years after identification of the issue in the Hoylake and West Kirby Masterplan, the replacement of the existing sailing school building is outstanding.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 Since it was last reported to Cabinet, there have been a number of developments with this project. Carpenter Investments has set out its proposed approach to consulting and engaging people subject to the scheme proceeding. Proposals in relation to car parking have changed in response to informal discussions between the developer and a number of stakeholder groups. A statement has been provided as to the loss of car parking spaces resulting from the development, with suggestions of possible mitigation measures, but the Director of Technical Services needs more detailed information before he can come to a view on the overall impact of the scheme.
- 5.2 Carpenter Investments have assured officers that they remain committed to the scheme. They would welcome confirmation of the Council's commitment to the scheme, to give them the comfort to undertake further spending on the studies necessary to finalise the scheme.

- 5.3 It is recommended that members consider the additional information provided to confirm their continued support for the scheme. Subject to Members approval, officers will continue negotiations with Carpenter Investments' to finalise the Heads of Terms of the Development Agreement and secure any necessary improvements to the proposed consultation and engagement plan. In addition, the Director of Technical Services will seek further discussions with the developer to facilitate the production of a Transport Assessment, which will allow him to make a final decision on traffic management and parking impacts.

## **6. Asset Management Implications**

- 6.1 The current Sailing School is an important leisure facility on a lake, which hosts events of international significance. It is in significant need of repair. The Dee Lane car park has not been declared surplus.
- 6.2 The proposed development opportunity would involve the Council offering up the site on a long lease arrangement to be agreed with the Developer, with the Council retaining the freehold interest. The Council managed elements of the development, i.e. the Sailing School would be leased back to the Council on a peppercorn rental basis.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The project would be financed entirely through private sector investment, with the new Sailing School being provided for within the value of the scheme at no cost to the Council.
- 7.2 On completion of the land transaction the developer would be responsible for maintaining the site with an annual service charge payable by the Council for maintenance in connection with the Sailing School.
- 7.3 Disposal of the Dee Lane car park would result in a net loss of car parking revenue of approximately £28,000 per annum to the Council. Were the scheme to proceed, this would require an adjustment to Technical Services budget.
- 7.4 Disposal of both sites would result in a loss of revenue to the Council in respect of a number of rented units and kiosks totalling £10,800 annually. Should the scheme proceed, this would require an adjustment to Technical Services budget.

## **8. Staffing Implications**

- 8.1 There are no additional staffing implications.

## **9. Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 9.1 The provision of new, improved public facilities will bring about equal opportunities benefits in terms of access.
- 9.2 The current, free blue badge-holder parking provision at Dee Lane will be affected by these proposals. Under planning guidelines there will still be a requirement to make provision for some blue badge bays. However, this would be reduced in line with the reduction in overall provision unless stricter requirements were included in the

Development Agreement. Whether there is a charge for such use would be up to the site operator.

## **10. Community Safety Implications**

- 10.1 Implementation of the project could result in Community Safety improvements with increases in footfall and general activity at the junction between Dee Lane and South Parade during evening time.
- 10.2 If the project is supported and goes through to a full planning application, the Police Architectural Liaison Officers will be engaged to ensure the principles of 'secure by design' are incorporated into the design detail.

## **11. Local Agenda 21 Implications.**

- 11.1 Implementation of the project proposals could bring environmental improvements through a high quality sustainable development. Any development proposal will need to satisfy an environmental impact assessment (including Habitats Regulations Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment if appropriate) and take on board the views of all relevant consultees including Natural England.
- 11.2 The proposal is an important element of the regeneration of the Borough.

## **12. Planning Implications**

- 12.1 Proposals identified within the report will require planning permission and will be reported upon as and when they come forward.
- 12.2 The site of the existing sailing school is within the Developed Coastal Zone in the Council's adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and adjacent to the Dee Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest, which is also of European and International Importance for nature conservation, being designated as a Special Protection Area, Ramsar site and Special Area of Conservation. Redevelopment of the Sailing School is in principle appropriate, subject to UDP Policy CO1. The site of the Dee Lane car park to the East of The Parade is within the West Kirby Key Town Centre. Development of the hotel at Dee Lane is therefore in principle appropriate as a town centre use. As indicated above, any planning application will potentially need to address requirements relating to the assessment of environmental impact, along with assessments of flood risk and impact on European nature conservation sites.
- 12.3 Carpenter Investments will be required to pursue further relevant consultation through the planning process in line with standard planning guidance and procedures.

## **13. Anti-poverty Implications**

- 13.1 There are no anti-poverty implications.

## **14. Social Inclusion Implications**

- 14.1 There are no social inclusion implications.

**15. Local Member Support Implications**

15.1 This report is of particular importance to Members in Hoylake and West Kirby and Thurstaston wards.

**16. Background Papers**

16.1 Previous reports to Cabinet, most recently 24<sup>th</sup> September, 9<sup>th</sup> April, and 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2009. The Special Initiatives Team in the Corporate Services Department holds background papers in relation to this report.

**17. Recommendations**

17.1 Members are requested to consider their continued support for the scheme in the light of the revised information provided.

17.2 Subject to continued support from Members, officers are requested to finalise Heads of Terms negotiations with the developer and to discuss with the developer the production of a Transport Assessment to allow the Director of Technical Services to reach a conclusion on the traffic management and parking impacts of the proposed scheme.

**Bill Norman**

Director of Law HR & Asset Management

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Kevin Adderley  
Head of Strategic Development  
Wirral Borough Council  
Wallasey Town Hall  
Brighton Street  
Wirral  
CH44 8ED

Thursday, 26 August 2010

Dear Kevin,

**Car Park Management: The Sail, West Kirby.**

Further to our previous meetings and discussions we are writing to confirm our understanding of the current position with regard to the provision of car parking associated with the development of the Sail hotel and the replacement of the existing Sailing School in West Kirby.

In the current difficult economic climate, any development upon the Dee Lane Car Park may result in some loss of capacity upon the Dee Lane site, if at the same time the aspiration for a new and world class replacement Sailing School at no cost to the council or taxpayer is going to be met.

This loss could be mitigated by the provision of an equal or greater number of spaces elsewhere and that any reduction in parking numbers upon the site should be weighed against the very significant regeneration, employment and leisure benefits this project brings.

The Sail project is the largest and most significant new investment proposed in West Kirby in over twenty years. It is a project which has been recognised as being of strategic importance in the regeneration of the Mersey coast, with many important benefits in terms of tourism, creation of sixty new jobs and the promotion of local businesses. In addition it has the potential to provide a significant improvement to the quality of life in West Kirby and Wirral in general and to help promote the sailing and leisure activities of the area to a far wider public.

Our proposed development will result in the creation of a world class new sailing facility and does not require any public subsidy. It has been independently assessed by the council appointed surveyors as offering excellent value for money. The proposed cost of the sailing school is considerably in excess of the market value of the Dee Lane site for either its current or its proposed new use.

The site currently provides 176 car parking spaces on a pay and display basis. Information provided by your own Technical Services show that overall usage of the car park is still under 25%. It is however equally apparent that at peak times during

summer weekends and holiday periods the car park operates at much higher capacities.

The revised plans submitted to Cabinet in 2009 for the development of the Sail hotel will involve a reduction in the current provision of car parking spaces available to the public on a pay and display to around 90 spaces. These plans, will, obviously be subject to further revision as a result of our proposed consultation exercise and as the project progresses through planning. It is possible that this may result in some minor movement around this figure. Car parking substantially in excess of 90 spaces cannot be achieved without either a sub basement or decked approach. Both of these require a significantly larger development than either our own consultations or the market show to be desirable.

We have examined carefully various options for the management of car parking spaces within the Dee Lane car park and the spur site adjacent to the Marine Lake, currently used exclusively by Marine Lake Licence holders.

A series of meetings have been held with members of the Lake User Group and representatives from the RYA.

It was proposed that a flexible management system could ensure that while lake users would continue to receive priority, with dedicated spaces and rigging areas, some space could be made available to ensure that a further 98 spaces could be created in this area. This would include a total 51 spaces that were either oversized or designed to accommodate vehicles with trailers.

As developer we proposed that any car parking on the spur should adhere to a set of key principles that would

- 1) Ensure priority for lake users.
- 2) Ensure separation of public and lake user spaces.
- 3) Maintain flexibility.
- 4) Ensure adequate turning circles.
- 5) Provide adequate signage and entry points.
- 6) Maintain the space as a “robust”, natural environment with minimal markings.
- 7) Ensure that all access to the general public was limited and only made when conditions were appropriate.

The Lake User Group would prefer exclusive use of the spur. Their group view, expressed at a series of meetings, is that while they support the redevelopment of the Sailing School, they are not willing to support car parking by non lake users on the spur. The Lake User Group is not a statutory consultee, but nevertheless, as responsible and responsive developers we feel it is only appropriate to report our understanding of their position.

We have identified also that in addition to the provision of potential overspill car parking on the Spur site a further 34 new car parking spaces could be made available on the South Parade on land immediately in front of the Sailing School, when the Sailing School is re-developed. The development of these spaces would require a TRO.



Information provided from Technical Services also shows that while usage at the 170 space Concourse Car Park is higher, this car park is also not operating at capacity.

We have been advised both independently and by Wirral Council Development Control that in planning terms, the Dee Lane site would be considered a sustainable site for its proposed use and, subject to a detailed Transport Analysis and Traffic Study, which would form part of a planning application the proposed level of car parking which would be retained at the site would be considered acceptable.

We would welcome that further advice is sought from the director of Technical Services as to the optimal level of car parking provision within the town as a whole.

We look forward to working constructively with the council in helping to deliver the appropriate car parking solution and to taking forward this extremely exciting and important project at the earliest opportunity.

Yours Sincerely

**Alan Beer**  
**Director**

**David Brewitt**  
**Director**

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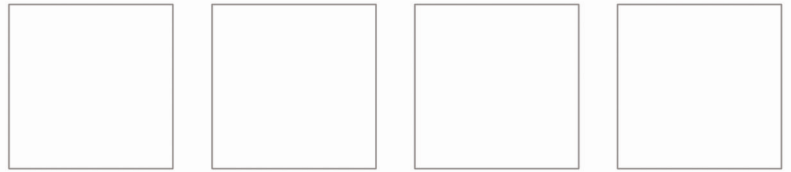
remarkable<sup>△</sup>

**Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement  
Plan**

**Carpenter Investments**

**The Sail Hotel & Sailing School,**

**West Kirby**



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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following further discussions with Carpenter Investments, Remarkable has been requested to co ordinate a consultation and stake holder engagement plan which will inform the planning and development process for the proposed Sail hotel and replacement Sailing School in West Kirby by Carpenter Investments.

Carpenter Investments is currently negotiating a development agreement with the Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (WMBC) in respect of the progression of a new boutique hotel and associated retail space to be located on the seafront.

The project has been running for some time and has produced a high level of interest, with strongly held local views both for and against. The project has important status as a regeneration project and is a strategic priority for development. A number of consultations have been undertaken as part of the proposals, including a widely attended public exhibition, press coverage and meetings with local stakeholders. The project team has recognised that it needs to work closely with the council to ensure that all external messaging is consistent and consultation activity agreed in advance.

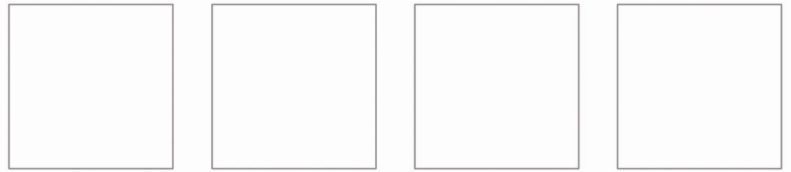
Carpenter have selected Remarkable because of their previous experience of working within the WMBC area and providing communication and consultation advice and support which meets council requirements. Remarkable are recognised as one of the leading public affairs consultants and have considerable experience in understanding and managing the complex requirements of key regeneration proposals such as the Sail.

In light of this and the understanding of the current requirements, Remarkable considers that its objectives are as follows:

- To deliver a focused understanding of the political and community environs to the project team;
- To devise and provide a dedicated communication and engagement strategy for LPA officers – ensuring that the council’s own consultation requirements are appropriately met;
- To provide opportunities to engage and influence key stakeholders while creating positive working relationships, alongside ensuring opportunities are presented for wider community involvement and understanding; and
- To understand the concerns of local opposition and to try and ensure these concerns are taken into account.
- To work with key decision-makers and influencers to mobilise support

To achieve the above, Remarkable will:

- **Identify** the key influencers and opinion formers alongside key community stakeholders through the production of a mini Political and Stakeholder Audit. This would benefit from our experience and knowledge of working in the area.
- **Engage** key stakeholders, such as local ward councillors and key cabinet members, via a range of communication channels including face-to-face briefings and informal one to one conversations.
- **Involve** local residents and the wider community through a well advertised, well planned and accessible informal public exhibition.



- **Inform** and ultimately influence the decision-making process by ensuring all key stakeholders are presented with positive messaging and scheme details while working to address all known objections where possible.
- **Report** via a Supporting Consultation Statement in response to the council's SCI.



## II. PROGRAMME OF WORK

### Identify

#### Political and stakeholder update

It is essential to know and understand local stakeholders such as the ward councillors and the existence and make-up of bodies such as relevant community / residents' associations when undertaking community consultation. It can help mould the strategy and inform discussions leading to a better communication and engagement campaign. We understand that some of this work has already been undertaken and therefore we shall look to update and check on matters ensuring all appropriate stakeholders are identified and that the most up to date views are understood from the consultation.

We would also recommend, at this stage, that we review the previous feedback and place this into the document which Carpenter Investments should give to the council outlining their consultation to date and their proposals for the consultation, which will need to build on the previous exercise.

This should be completed before the cabinet meeting in September.

#### Project messaging / Q & A

As the project is the subject of a development agreement with the council, Remarkable considers that it will be useful to produce a messaging / Q & A document that will help underpin all external communications. Furthermore, this will ensure that all messaging and information provided is consistent throughout the duration of the project.

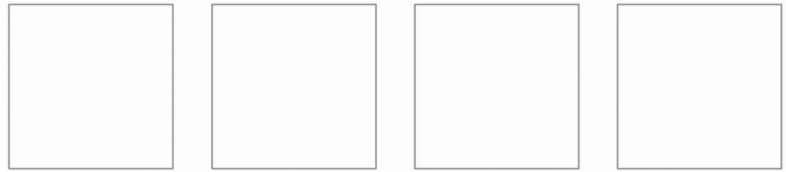
Remarkable will, therefore, devise a set of core messages, which will be followed by a Q & A including all likely questions and associated responses. Once finalised and approved, the document will then be issued to all appropriate team members including the council's own planning and communication officers.

### Engage

#### Key stakeholder contact

Remarkable will wish to engage the project's key stakeholders from the earliest opportunity, ensuring that open dialogue can be held allowing for issues to be understood, messages to be delivered and working relationships to be further developed/enhanced. However, the political differences of the members involved in the project should be highlighted and therefore an even handed and transparent approach should be taken. It will also be important to recognise the potential for future 'politiking' around the site's future. The developer is keen for the huge regeneration potential of the site not to be lost and for it not to be seen in political terms.

Initially, Remarkable will wish to arrange informal briefings with the local ward members for Hoylake and Meols ensuring that they are well informed while also providing them with the chance to be firmly involved in the process. Councillor Ellis has, however, been particularly critical of the project in the past commenting that *"this was a stunningly stupid idea in the first*



*place which people in West Kirby did not accept.”* Following any initial engagement, contact will be maintained through regular telephone calls and progress briefings. All ward members for both West Kirby and Hoylake wards will be given full opportunity for involvement.

Aside from the local ward councillors and given the development agreement, Remarkable will wish to ensure that senior council members such as the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning Strategy and potentially the Leader and Deputy Leader, are also engaged.

Given the earlier community interest in the site and the profile of the project, Remarkable will also seek to ensure that the local Member of Parliament, Esther McVey is approached and given the opportunity to communicate constituent opinion.

We would also seek to review the list of stakeholders which have previous been consulted and may have had either strong opinions or been supportive – such as

The West Kirby Chamber of Business  
The Lake Users Group  
The Hoylake, West Kirby and District Civic Society  
The Royal Liverpool Golf Club  
The West Kirby Sailing School  
West Kirby Working Group

These one to one meetings would all be held over a period of two days, in order to fully bring them up to date and ensure that opinion is solicited at the same stage of development.

#### Media management

It will be vital to ensure that the local media – including the Wirral Globe and Hoylake and West Kirby News – is well and accurately informed about the proposals from the outset and in this respect a proactive approach will be required. The development of the site and the agreement linked to it has already been the subject of previous press interest and therefore, the progression of concrete plans is highly likely to attract significant interest.

Following the initial contact, Remarkable will maintain regular contact, creating and issuing news releases at key project milestones such as announcing the public exhibition, following the exhibition, the submission of the proposals and, of course, determination. With specific regards to determination, Remarkable will draft a series of statements covering all eventualities, ensuring a swift response can be provided to the press.

Remarkable will, however, ensure that the council’s own communications team is kept well informed and involved in any media activity, ensuring that contradictory messaging and positions are avoided. In this respect, a protocol will be agreed at the outset ensuring that all draft releases and press material is provided to the council prior to issue.

The overarching aim of all media work will be towards securing positive coverage which helps to inform and influence those stakeholders that will be determining the application. Remarkable will also work to ensure that any known scheme supporters also make effective use of the press through the letters page, for instance.





## **Involve**

### Organising and manning of a public exhibition

With strong interest highly likely in this next stage of the project and to assist the team in developing the plans on the basis of local understanding, it will be vital that an opportunity is provided for the community to view, comment on and discuss the latest plans.

In this respect, Remarkable will seek to arrange an informal public exhibition at which the proposals can be viewed and feedback provided. Remarkable considers that a one day exhibition should be managed around separate sessions; a dedicated preview session for key stakeholders, such as councillors and influential third party groups followed by an open session for wider residents.

This will assist in ensuring that audiences can be appropriately separated and that team members are provided with a greater opportunity to engage key stakeholders away from the wider community.

The Remarkable team will therefore be responsible for organising and co-ordinating the event, inviting stakeholders and publicising the event locally.

The exhibition activity will include:

- Preparation and mailing of invitational material to public exhibition
- Organising materials and co-ordinating the event on the day
- Publicising the event locally
- Providing feedback response forms
- Providing a post-paid return facility
- Manning a dedicated 0800 information line

The exhibition display will tell a story – setting out how we have got to the current plans and how they stack up in delivering something special for West Kirby.

### Newsletter

In order to inform and invite residents to the event, Remarkable will create a dedicated exhibition newsletter, functioning to both update the community on the project while providing details of the planned consultation event. It will be vital that this newsletter is issued to the same area / number of residents as previously and that a sufficient period of notice is provided (potentially 14 days, for instance). To help further publicise the event, particularly in light of earlier comments by the West Kirby Renewal Group, Remarkable will produce and arrange for advertisements to be placed in the local press in the two weeks leading up to the event, while additional posters are arranged for display in key local venues – such as the council offices. A dedicated exhibition news release will also be provided to the local press.

### Provision of exhibition display equipment

Should it be required, Remarkable will be able to provide exhibition display equipment for use on the day.



## **Inform**

### *On-going stakeholder contact*

Following the earlier engagement activities, Remarkable will be responsible for managing on-going communications with stakeholders and the community through until the determination of the application.

### *Update briefings ('report back')*

Following the exhibition, it will prove beneficial to arrange a series of informal update briefings reporting back on the feedback received and clearly setting out the next steps for the project and the proposals. Amongst those that should be engaged at this point are the three local ward councillors and appropriate Cabinet members.

### *Update materials*

Upon submission of the final planning application, Remarkable will produce an update newsletter for issue to key stakeholders, those residents that attended the exhibition and those that have expressed an interest in the proposals to date. This newsletter will provide an update on the proposals and how they have moved forward, as well as addressing any comments received.

Prior to the determination of the reserved matters application at committee, Remarkable will produce an update package of information for issue to committee members. This would enable details of the consultation, any scheme amendments alongside key project messaging to be highlighted, while also responding to any comments raised by the officer within their own committee report. Committee members can then use the information provided to inform their own discussions.

## **Report**

### *Supporting consultation statement*

Following the public consultation, it will be important to document the activities undertaken as part of the planning process.

Remarkable will therefore undertake the following activities:

- Collation of responses/comments received
- Creation of a Supporting Consultation Statement in response to the authority's Statement of Community Involvement
- Distribution of report to key stakeholders, those who sent in comments



### III. STRENGTHS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Remarkable has the range of skills required to professionally and efficiently execute the public consultation and communications strategy to support a client's planning application.

**Remarkable strengths** lie in our exceptional knowledge of UK property sectors, associated planning and policy issues, knowledge and experience on local, regional and national media relations, track record in facilitating stakeholder management strategies, research capabilities, quality of our management and monitoring systems, experience with diverse key influencers and stakeholders.

**Team members** have extensive experience in developing and implementing communications strategies involving widespread consultation, devising, implemented and managed media campaigns while using innovation and creativity to reach and influence key stakeholders.

**Delivering the service**, Remarkable has extensive experience creating, implementing and leading multi agency consultation, developing and implementing community engagement strategies which incorporate partners across all areas of the community, providing private and public sector clients with consultation strategies and contact management programmes aimed at a cross section of stakeholders, including the community, media and political audiences devising implemented and managed both country and county wide public consultation exercises and designing and producing exhibition and promotional material.

**Remarkable focuses** on research and analysis to benchmark and direct all its communications strategies. As a result it has delivered hundreds of political and communication audits throughout the region which highlight key stakeholders, issues and policy.

**Remarkable has extensive** regional media experience across the UK. The generation of positive media coverage can be key to planning applications and development proposals. **Remarkable has achieved positive coverage in local publications through to the BBC national news** and prides itself on the relationships it builds with key journalists - an essential and integral part of our strategic media strategy for development and regeneration proposals across the country. By negating adverse media coverage, stakeholders are shown the benefits that any given proposal provides, helping its eventual outcome at committee.

**Remarkable Marketing and Design** support the property and planning communications team. They understand the messaging that is important in reaching key stakeholders and design exhibition and supporting material to reflect this. The team has supported planning applications throughout the UK.

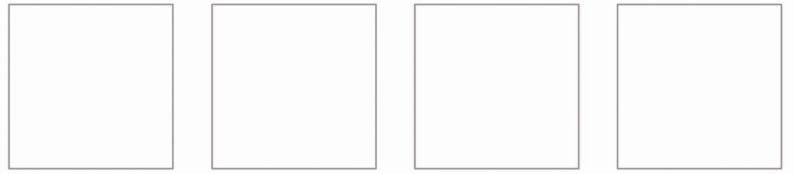


#### IV. TEAM AND ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

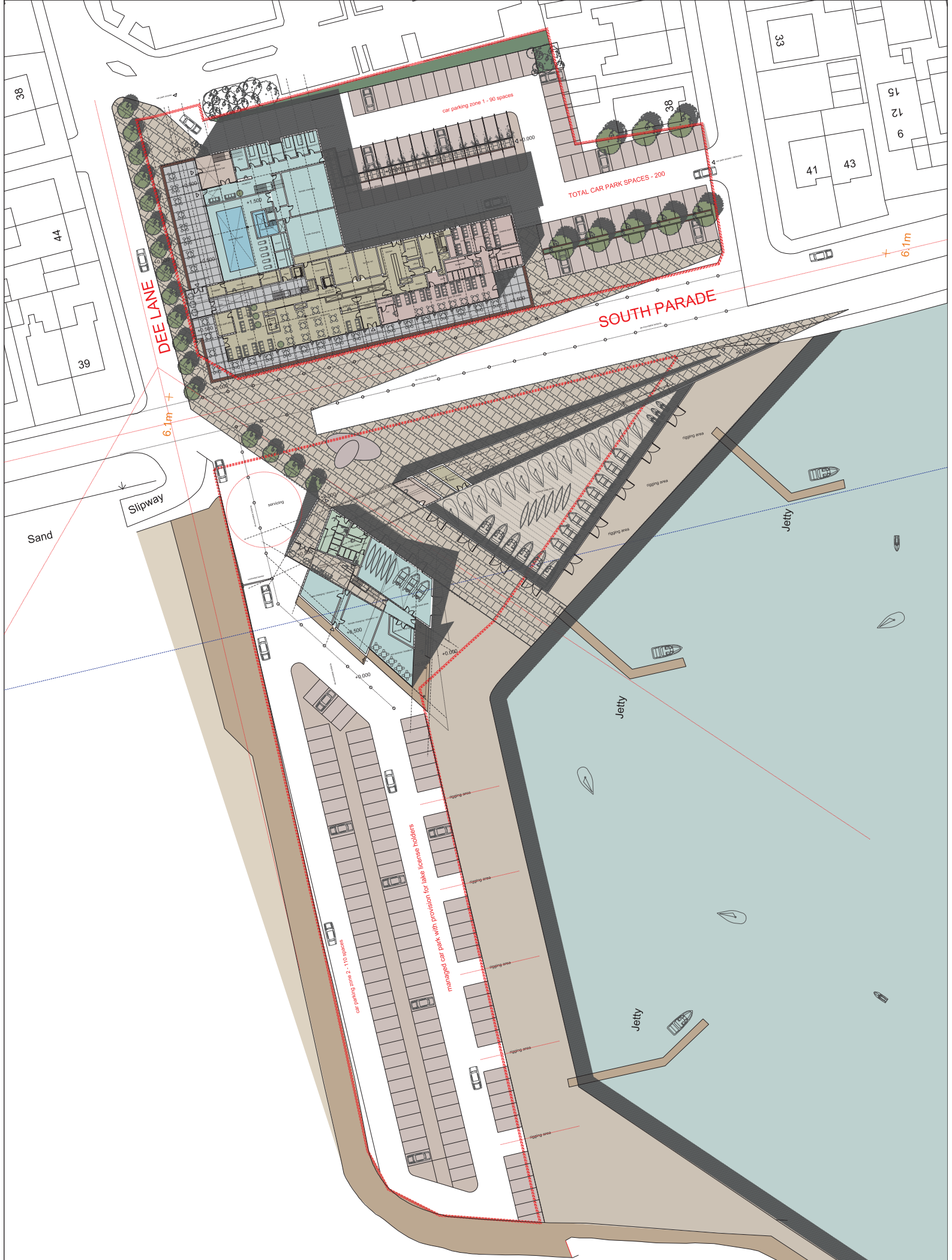
**Account Management Structure** - Overall strategy for the project would be driven by Daniel Hayman, Director, with day-to-day management provided by Laura Wyatt. Additional support would be provided by Account Executive, Francesca Weeks.

#### V. SUMMARY

Activity	
Phase One: <b>Identify</b> – Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning search and comment analysis</li> <li>• Creation of mini Political and Stakeholder Audit</li> <li>• Production of communication and engagement strategy document for LPA officers</li> <li>• Production of project messaging / Q and A document</li> <li>• Production of stakeholder and resident database</li> </ul>	<b>Month 1</b>
Phase Two: <b>Engage</b> – Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing contact with key stakeholders via correspondence and telephone</li> <li>• Coordinating, managing and attending two days of key stakeholder briefings and meetings including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local ward councillors</li> <li>- Key Cabinet members</li> <li>- Local Member of Parliament</li> <li>- Key third party groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continued contact with key stakeholders throughout campaign</li> </ul>	<b>Month 2</b>
Phase Three: <b>Involve</b> – Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation and attendance (x 2 Remarkable consultants) of a one day public exhibition (to be finalised), including dedicated preview session/s</li> <li>• Booking and liaison with venue</li> <li>• Drafting of resident / stakeholder invitational material (excluding artwork and design costs, see below)</li> <li>• Creation of feedback forms</li> <li>• Manning of freephone information line, post-paid response provision</li> <li>• Media relations management including up to four news releases, liaison with local journalists</li> </ul>	<b>Month 3</b>
Phase Four: <b>Inform and Report</b> – Including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing resident / community / media contact</li> <li>• Review of feedback, SCI Response Document for submission</li> <li>• Production of update newsletter / briefing document upon submission</li> <li>• Production of update brief to committee members, including covering correspondence prior to determination</li> </ul>	

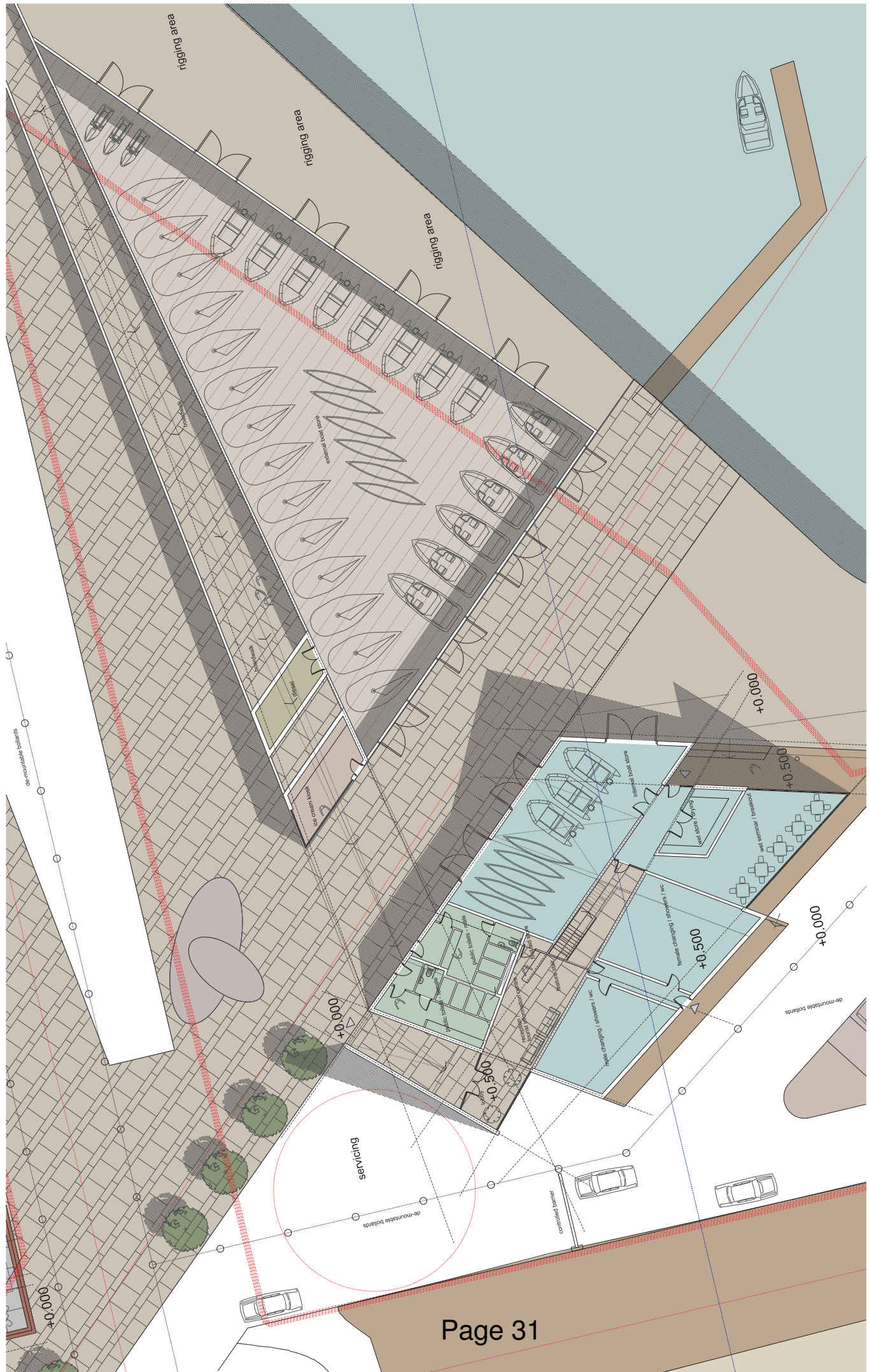


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DATE: 21.12.2018	CHECKED BY: AG	DRAWING NO: 02/2018
COMPUTER DRAWING REF: L1 188	PROJECT NO: WJ001	CLIENT: CARPENTER INVESTMENTS

PLEASE NOTE: THE DRAWING MUST BE USED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE CLIENT'S AGREEMENT. ALL DIMENSIONS AND LOCATIONS MUST BE VERIFIED ON SITE PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.

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