

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.

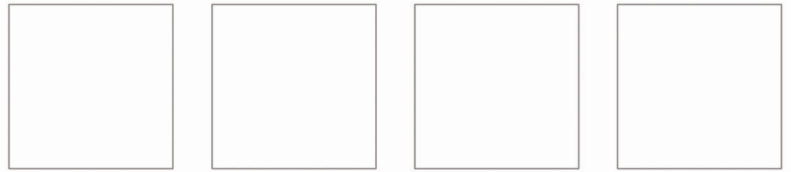
Carpenter have selected Remarkable because of their previous experience of working within the WMBC area and providing communication and consultation advice and support which meets council requirements. Remarkable are recognised as one of the leading public affairs consultants and have considerable experience 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.

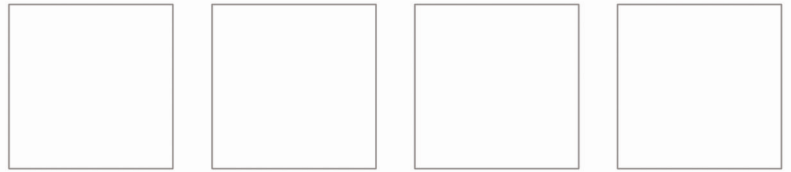
### Media management

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

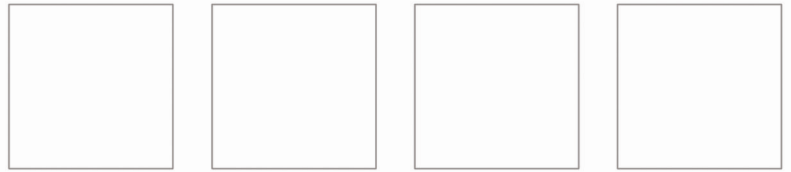
The exhibition display will tell a story – setting out how we have got to the current plans and how they stack up in delivering something special for West Kirby.

### 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.

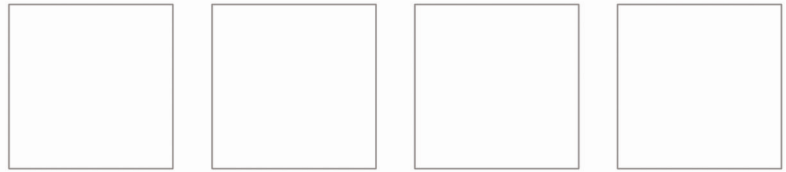
**Team members** have extensive experience in developing and implementing communications strategies involving widespread consultation, devising, implemented and managed media campaigns while using innovation and creativity to reach and influence key stakeholders.

**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>	

