

Malton Development Strategy Steering Group

held at Ryedale House, Malton
Thursday 23 April 2008

Present

Councillors Hemesley (in the Chair) Andrews, Keal, Knaggs and Wainwright.

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| Paul Comberford | - WSP |
| J Fitzgerald Smith | - Malton Town Council |
| Mrs A Hopkinson | - Malton Town Council |
| R Hopkinson | - Ralph Yates Ltd |
| Ms Z Plummer | - Ambiente Tapas Restaurant |
| D Lloyd-Williams | - North Yorkshire County Council |
| Tim Sinclair | - Ambiente Tapas Restaurant |
| D Townsend | - Business in Action |

In Attendance

Mrs L Carter and J Rudd.

Minutes

MDSG.19 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Keal.

MDSG.20 Minutes

The minutes of a meeting of the Malton Development Strategy Steering held on 3 April 2008 were circulated with the agenda.

Councillor Lloyd-Williams reported that he had been unable to attend the last meeting and asked that his apologies be noted.

Representatives expressed concern that the minutes did not provide a full reflection of the discussion that had taken place at the meeting. It was pointed out that the Council did not have the resources to provide verbatim minutes. It was suggested that in future a practical solution was for representatives to provide a summary of any statements made at the meeting, these could then be published either as an appendix to the minutes and/or made available on the website. This course of action was agreed and it was suggested that notes be forwarded electronically to the Member Services Section.

Councillor Fitzgerald-Smith sought clarification as to whether his comments submitted in connection with the previous meeting would be included in the minutes of the 3 April 2008. The Chairman pointed out that these minutes had already been endorsed by the Council's Policy & Resources Committee. However, consideration would be given to the request.

Resolved

- (a) That the minutes of a meeting of the Steering Group held on 3 April 2008 be noted
- (b) That representatives submit for publication a summary of key points raised at meetings.

MDSG.21 Urgent Business

The Chairman reported that there were no items to be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

MDSG.22 Declarations of Interest

Elected Members of the Steering Group made the following declarations of interest:

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct Councillor Andrews declared a personal interest as a member of the Car Park Action Group. Councillor Mrs Hopkinson declared a personal interest as her brother works at the Cattle Market and her daughter is involved in the retail trade in Malton.

MDSG.23 Malton Retail Trade and Key Sites

The Chairman referred to the executive summary in the WSP and Atisreal report and quoted the following statement for representatives' consideration:

"Though much of Malton's identity lies in its lack of multiple retailers, the need to secure suitable multiple retailers is vital to ensure a successful economic future for the town to complement and support independent traders."

The Chairman reported that, as agreed at the last meeting of the Steering Group (Minute MDSG.17 refers), Julian Rudd the Council's Local Plans and Economic Development Manager, Mark Nicholson, James Stephenson and Peter Elwes had met on the 18 April 2008 to discuss the potential relocation of the Cattle Market to Showfield Lane and how this could best be achieved through enabling development.

Mr Nicholson reported that the meeting had been very constructive and

representatives had concluded that, if a new Cattle Market was to be funded out of enabling development on the Showfield Lane site, there should be a mixed development of employment, residential and non-food retail. It was considered whether a new food outlet should be built at this site. It was also considered that the scheme should be developer-led, a number of developers had been approached and a plan was now needed showing the scale, siting and nature of the development. Any costings would need to include any highway improvements and this information was needed before moving forward.

Mr Stephenson reported that there would need to be a positive expression of encouragement from the Council and an acknowledgement that the project would be considered with an open mind.

The Council's Forward Planning & Economic Development Manager, Mr Rudd, reported that the discussion had been helpful but he had disagreed regarding the location of any new supermarket on this site. Mr Rudd expressed the opinion that Wentworth Street provided the better location for a food retail outlet. One of the central themes of national planning policy was that food retail should be as close to the town centre as possible. People were much more likely to walk from Wentworth Street into Malton town centre. Mixed use on the development may well be required and in response to Mr Stephenson's comment Mr Rudd reported that he would be obtaining a quick and open reaction from the Council's officers.

Mr Townsend expressed strong concern regarding the extent of the proposals outlined and reported that it appeared that Malton was to have an out of town shopping centre, and that it was a foregone conclusion that a further supermarket was needed.

The Chairman reported that the Steering Group had not yet discussed the need/requirement for a further supermarket; until it had done so it was premature to consider location.

MDSG.24 A Lack of Balance Supermarket Offer

The Chairman referred representatives to page 10 of the WSP report "The lack of a balanced supermarket offer". The report stated that "Malton and Norton were currently home to three supermarkets, including Morrison's (37,700 sq ft), Netto (13,000 sq ft) and Jackson's (9,800 sq ft), the latter selling a limited range of Sainsbury's products. However, the town lacked a mid to high quality supermarket offer such as a Marks & Spencer Simply Food, Waitrose or Sainsbury's. The need for a mid to high quality supermarket was considered essential to balance the current range offered, as well as encouraging shoppers into Malton. The additional footfall generated by such a development would support and complement independent retailers through linked shopping trips."

The Forward Plans & Economic Development Manager reported that the

work undertaken by WSP followed on from a retail study of Ryedale in 2006. Everyone had views on retail capacity and there was a balance to be struck in assessing capacity between developing and maintaining a healthy, vibrant place without damaging or taking away from existing trade. WSP had concluded that there was spare capacity of approximately some 30,000 sq ft, which was slightly smaller than the gross size of the existing Morrison's store. Part of the reason behind this was that two out of five local shoppers chose to shop outside Ryedale.

The Chairman reported that the general idea was that an increase of supermarket shops somewhere with Malton would in fact be complementary to the existing retail traders.

Representatives discussed in detail the issue of capacity and square footage, and the basis on which the estimates had been calculated, did the square footage relate to the overall size of the development or the actual sales area? The Forward Plans & Economic Development Manager reported that following investigation he would circulate details of the figures to representatives.

Mr Hopkinson reported that a key element was to ensure that Malton was a vibrant town. However, large retail outlets tended to have an adverse effect on the smaller independent retailer as they had a greater buying power and were probably more efficient. Malton should not lose its uniqueness and the fact that people shopped out of town was not welcomed.

Representatives discussed in detail their preferred options for siting of any new store, the square footage and the type and range of goods to be sold.

The Chairman sought views on the pedestrianisation of Market Place and whether this was a welcome suggestion. It was anticipated that if the area was pedestrianised the road to the top of the Market Place would be closed off and the road along the low side of the Market Place would be made two-way.

Mr Townsend was of the opinion that the road along the low side of the Market Place was not wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic and concern was expressed regarding any potential loss of car parking spaces. Councillor Lloyd-Williams reported that he was against any form of pedestrianisation in Malton, such schemes were more suitable for large towns, not Malton, and he would strongly oppose any proposals. Councillor FitzGerald-Smith echoed these comments and was of the opinion that the current arrangement should not be altered. However, Zoe Plummer reported that she was of the opinion that a pedestrianisation scheme would be more aesthetically pleasing and this would be welcome subject to the provision of alternative car parking.

Councillor Andrews reported that although phase 1 of the Market Place enhancement scheme had been completed phases 2 and 3 had not been

implemented. Mr Comberford reported that some enhancement measures were included within the WSP report.

Mr Rudd reported that he would like to address some of the issues raised in order to assist. In terms of two-way traffic outside the Post Office if it was considered that there was sufficient room for vehicles to pass. It was accepted that they might have to give way but this was a natural speed control method. It was accepted that everyone had their own views on the issue, however 70% of people visiting the open day had preferred a pedestrianisation scheme. The area could be made much more attractive and tended to be over dominated by vehicles. Mr Rudd circulated for information a table indicating the current principal parking areas in Malton and the impact of the proposed schemes on the number of available spaces. The issues raised by Mr Bushell were to be discussed with NYCC colleagues and the outcome reported to the Steering Group.

The Chairman referred to page 27 of the WSP report and sought views on the comments. The WSP report stated that the size and location of Wentworth Street Car Park, together with the current low utilisation rate of the parking provision indicated that this was a key underused site that had the potential to significantly contribute to the regeneration of Malton's town centre. The site had been identified within the study for potential development due to the following reasons:

- Opportunity for improved retail offer
- Opportunity for new residential accommodation
- The District Council ownership of the site and peripheral land
- Links with other key sites

Representatives considered the options as set out in the report and the WSP recommendations in this respect.

The Chairman requested that the debate be restricted at this stage to the potential provision of a supermarket on the car park. Mr Rudd reiterated that he would provide a full breakdown of the square footage of the existing supermarkets so as to enable representatives to envisage the scale of development.

A representative requested that the consultants, WSP, be requested to carry out a similar study for the Showfield Lane site.

Councillor Knaggs reported that he wished to make it clear that these were consultation meetings. Decisions had not been made by the Council. The purpose was to enable Members to gather views so that decisions, when they were made, were informed. So far as going back to the consultants was concerned, this could very well happen but at the moment Showfield Lane was not included in their brief and there could be financial implications if that brief was widened. However, the point made was understood. Councillor Knaggs reported that it was also understood that a number of people in the room very

much influenced by their own commercial best interests. Councillors had to consider all those interest, but must also consider what was perceived to be the best interests of the community as a whole.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and requested that summaries be sent to Member Services for attachment to the minutes.

MDSG.26 Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Steering Group be held on Wednesday 21 May 2008 at Ryedale House at 6.30pm.

Comments and observations received from the following consultees are available on the Council's website:

D Townsend
J FitzGerald-Smith
P Elwess
R Bushell
T Sinclair