



Wilson Bowden  
Developments

[www.wbdevelopments.co.uk](http://www.wbdevelopments.co.uk)

## **SUMMARY REPORT ON CONSULTATION**

### **CHANDOS STREET REDEVELOPMENT,**

### **LEAMINGTON SPA**

April 2008

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1. This report details the extent of consultation undertaken to date in relation to Wilson Bowden Developments' proposals for the major retail-led redevelopment focused on the Chandos Street car park site in Leamington Spa.
- 1.2. The Council's Local Plan (together with its' associated supporting technical and retail reports) identifies the need for significant new retail floor space within the town. (With the 2004 DTZ Study confirming that the town could support a maximum of 37,700 sq m of comparison goods floor space to 2016). Indeed, the Local Plan confirmed that 76% of respondents to the Plan called for improvements to Leamington town centre.
- 1.3. Against this background, and the identified threats of further out of centre retail development and increasing competition from nearby towns, the Council identified and promoted the Chandos Street site as its preferred location to accommodate a retail-led development. Indeed, during 2006 and 2007, a competitive selection procedure was undertaken by the Council to identify a partner to bring forward this significant development for the town.
- 1.4. Wilson Bowden Developments Limited duly submitted to this process and were selected as the Council's partner, in the summer of 2007.

#### **2.0 Consultation Strategy**

- 2.1. With widespread experience of promoting and delivering retail-led town centre schemes and working in partnership with local authorities, Wilson Bowden Developments Limited recognise the importance of consultation in delivering large scale new development. Indeed, the requirement of the current planning system also makes it clear that engaging with the local community and appropriate stakeholders is a matter of good practice in such circumstances.
- 2.2. Accordingly, a 'consultation strategy' was agreed in principle with the officers of Warwick District Council in order to ensure that the scheme was developed and informed having regard to views expressed by the local community, stakeholder groups, as well as the normal statutory and non-statutory consultees associated with the planning application process.



Wilson Bowden  
Developments

[www.wbdevelopments.co.uk](http://www.wbdevelopments.co.uk)

- 2.3. Hence, the agreed 'consultation strategy' included for appropriate engagement with local stakeholder groups, statutory and non-statutory consultees as well as the public. Furthermore, recognising that a land assembly process was also likely to be required, the strategy involved appropriate engagement with owners, occupiers, tenants as well as other parties with land interests within the proposed development site.

### **3.0. Stage 1 Consultation**

- 3.1. This process began in September 2007 and continued to the end of the year. It was focused on introducing and explaining the proposals which had been chosen by the Council through the competitive selection procedure. It was targeted at raising awareness and seeking views in respect of these initial proposals.
- 3.2. Following briefings with stakeholder groups (including representatives from Leamington Society, Leamington Town Council, The Old Town Business Forum, The Chamber of Trade etc.) and the Town Centre Management Initiative (TCMI) – meetings being held on 11<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007 respectively – a formal public exhibition took place from 5<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2007.
- 3.3. The exhibition was held in the Royal Priors Shopping Centre and offered members of the public an opportunity to see the scheme and feedback on the development proposals. Questionnaires were provided and information leaflets distributed extensively throughout the town. Furthermore, extensive publicity relating to the proposals was carried in both local newspapers.
- 3.4. Later in October 2007 (30<sup>th</sup> October 2007), a group meeting was held with owners/occupiers and other affected parties and this was followed up with a series of one to one meetings with owners and occupiers and other parties affected by the scheme.
- 3.5. Follow-up meetings/presentations were also undertaken with the Town Council (12<sup>th</sup> November 2007) and the TCMI (21<sup>st</sup> November 2007).
- 3.6. During this Stage 1 Consultation period, Wilson Bowden Developments design team also carried out consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees to the planning process. Meetings were held with the Environment Agency, Warwickshire County Council (as Highway Authority), English Heritage and MADE – the local representative body of CABE.



### Questionnaire Responses – Summary Only

- 3.7. The exhibition was promoted locally through the medium of press publicity, public notices and local press advertising, and comment forms and questionnaires were handed out to all those visiting the exhibition, as well as being made available more widely.
- 3.8. The questionnaire provided the public with the opportunity to respond to a series of multiple choice questions, as well as providing a 'Further Comment' section. Topics covered included:-
- Shopping in Leamington town centre and its facilities.
  - Improving the retail offer.
  - Desirability of new public spaces.
  - The principles of the proposed development.
  - How best to achieve links with existing shopping provision.
  - The style of external architecture.
- 3.9. As was expected, the questionnaire responses covered a wide range of issues. However, in summary, strong support was given to:
- A better range of shops.
  - A new department store.
  - Better parking facilities.
  - The provision of good quality public realm and a new 'square'.
  - The use of 'Regency' style architecture.
  - A link to The Parade.
  - Underground servicing.
- Indeed, it was encouraging that even at this initial stage, over half of those responding via the questionnaire supported the Development proposals on display.
- 3.10. Two significant themes emerged from the 'Further Comments' section. One focussed on the limitations of previous development proposals in the town and highlighted the loss of major retailers. The other was the desire to see Leamington step-up its retail offer to compete with other town centres.
- 3.11. The questionnaire responses also identified a number of general and specific concerns. In summary, these included:-
- Traffic congestion, particularly at the northern end of the scheme (where the new accesses were proposed).
  - Scale of the development in relation to the historic setting and nearby residential uses.
  - Loss and inconvenience to local businesses.
  - Too many apartments.





Wilson Bowden  
Developments

[www.wbdevelopments.co.uk](http://www.wbdevelopments.co.uk)

- Loss of surface car parking.

3.12. Overall, the exhibition, questionnaire responses, and Stage 1 consultation provided a wealth of feedback, highlighting both strengths and weaknesses of the originally selected scheme, as well as providing a series of prompts and ideas to inform the ongoing design review.

#### **4.0. Stage 2 Consultation**

4.1. This process began in February 2008 and continued until the middle of April 2008. It was a more focused exercise, targeted at updating all key consultees and stakeholders on the revised design and layout of the Stage 1 Consultation scheme.

4.2. The process also involved specific meetings with particular stakeholder groups who had expressed views in the early stages.

4.3. The Consultation meetings took place with:-

- Clarendon Avenue Residents Group – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008
- Leamington Town Council (Planning Group) – 13<sup>th</sup> March 2008
- Leamington Society/CLARA – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2008
- T.C.M.I – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008

4.4. In addition, a further 'Owner/Occupier consultation meeting took place on the evening of 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008.

4.5. The intention of this second stage consultation was to emphasis how the feedback received had influenced the scheme proposals, as well as providing another opportunity for further feedback on the revised proposals. The meetings were advised of the primary changes undertaken, including:-

- Service and car park access points relocated to respond to concerns about congestion and amenity, and to take-on the comments from the Highway Authority.
- Vehicle access ramps now enclosed within the building 'envelope', leading to improved visual appearance and reduced external impacts.
- Reduction in the overall scale, height and mass of the building by the removal of one complete storey of car parking, thus ensuring a much improved relationship to adjoining buildings and far less impact on the historic environment.
- Specific attention to the proposed buildings' relationship to the rear of properties in Clarendon Avenue. Reducing the scale of



Wilson Bowden  
Developments

[www.wbdevelopments.co.uk](http://www.wbdevelopments.co.uk)

- the proposed building at ground floor, and setting it back at higher levels.
- New pedestrian access provision incorporated, with a main entrance to the department store from the north, via Guy Street. Thus allowing enhanced elevational treatment and better pedestrian access.
- The development has been set back from the listed buildings on the Parade in order to reduce intervention into the historic fabric and to protect specific buildings of known historic importance.
- The inclusion of further service corridors to ensure service/refuse disposal facilities for all commercial and retail premises around the site via the underground service area.
- Revision to provide an access 'core' direct on to Chandos Street, opposite the Baptist Church, so as to facilitate ease of access to the car park. As well as access for shoppers, this allows convenient access and parking facilities for both the Church (and its various community users), as well as visitors to the sheltered housing.
- Residential apartments replaced with town houses fronting on to Chandos Street.

## **5.0. Summary**

- 5.1. The consultation with the community and key stakeholders has informed and helped improve the design and layout of the proposals. Significant changes have been introduced, and, where concerns have been expressed, the Wilson Bowden Developments Design Team have sought to find solutions.
- 5.2. Inevitably, not all of the concerns raised through the consultation process have been capable of resolution. However, the process has been open and inclusive and follows good practice advice in dealing with schemes of this nature.
- 5.3. Further engagement and review will, of course, continue in the pre-application process.



## APPENDIX I

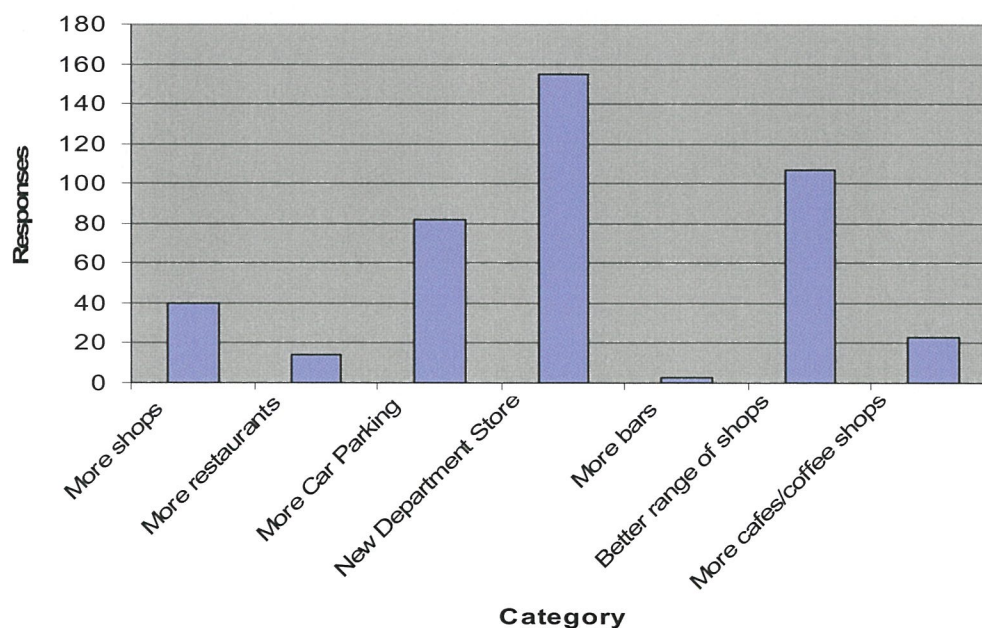
### INITIAL DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES (TO BE READ WITH 'SUMMARY REPORT ON CONSULTATION' APRIL 2008)

#### General Information

- 84% of respondents identified shopping as their main purpose for visiting Leamington Spa town centre.
- 78% of respondents use Leamington Spa town centre as their main shopping destination.
- 63% of respondents generally use a car to travel to the town centre.

#### Improvements to Leamington Spa Town Centre

- This question asked respondents to identify what improvements they would like to see in Leamington Spa town centre.







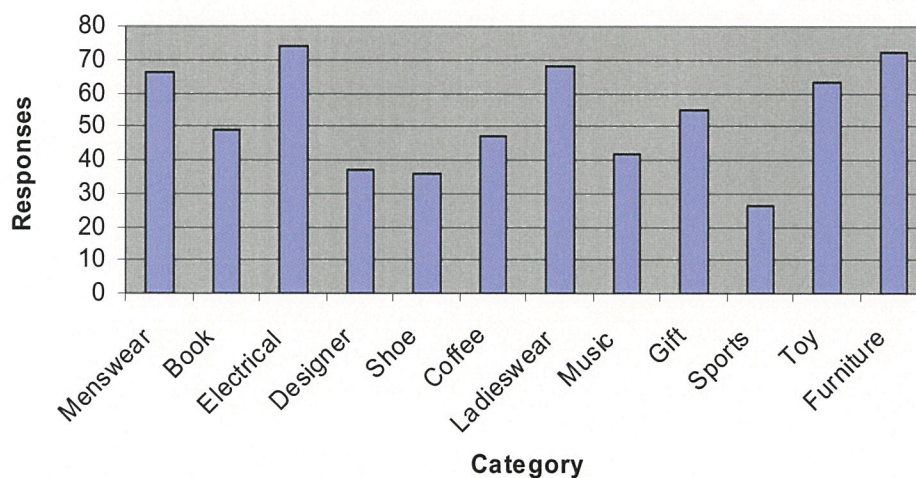
Wilson Bowden  
Developments

[www.wbdevelopments.co.uk](http://www.wbdevelopments.co.uk)

- A new department store, better parking and, generally, a 'better range of shops' were the most often expressed preferences, with the new department store being the most supported improvement.
- 71% of respondents supported the inclusion of one or more public squares in the development.

### Type of Shops

- Respondents were also asked to list the type of shops that they would like to see.



### Style of Architecture

- 75% of respondents supported the use of 'Regency' style architecture in the external facades of the new building.

### Link to 'The Parade'

- 70% of respondents supported the inclusion of a 'link' into The Parade so as to encourage a retail circuit with the existing shops.

### The Principle of Underground Servicing

- 83% of respondents supported the use of underground servicing.



Wilson Bowden  
Developments

[www.wbdevelopments.co.uk](http://www.wbdevelopments.co.uk)

### **Layout and Design of Clarendon Arcade**

- 58% of respondents who answered this question supported the initial development proposals on display.

**Note 1:** The figures quoted are expressed as a simple percentage of the total number of responses on individual questions.

**Note 2:** A more comprehensive analysis of the questionnaire responses will be included in the Statement of Community Involvement to be submitted with the application.





Wilson Bowden  
Developments

www.wbdevelopments.co.uk

## Clarendon Arcade

October 2007

Q1. How often do you visit Leamington Spa town centre?

Daily ☐ Every 2-3 weeks ☐ Rarely ☐

Weekly ☐ Once a month ☐

Q2. What is the main reason for your visit to Leamington Spa town centre?

Shopping ☐ Restaurants ☐ Work ☐

Pubs ☐ Nightclubs ☐ Other please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Q3. Do you use Leamington Spa town centre as your main shopping destination?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q4. Which of the following do you consider would improve Leamington Spa town centre as a shopping destination?

More shops ☐ More restaurants ☐ More car parking ☐

New department store ☐ More bars ☐ Better range of shops ☐

More cafes / coffee shops ☐ Other please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Q5. The design proposals for Clarendon Arcade include the provision of a significant amount of extra floor space to attract additional retailers to the town. What type of shops would you like to see incorporated in to this development?

Menswear shops ☐ Bookshops ☐ Electrical goods ☐

Designer shops ☐ Shoe shops ☐ Coffee shops / cafes ☐

Ladieswear shops ☐ Music shops ☐ Gift shops ☐

Sports shops ☐ Toy shops ☐ Furniture shops ☐

Other please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Q6. What form of transport do you use to get to the town centre?

Car ☐ Cycle ☐ Bus ☐

Walk ☐ Other please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Q7. The proposals for Clarendon Arcade show the external design approach in keeping with the Regency period style of architecture in Leamington Spa. Do you support this style for the new development?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Undecided ☐

