

30 April 2008

Dear colleague

When I sent out an update to stakeholders and interested parties, last September, I explained that Deeley Freed and their project team were revising their proposals for the St Mary le Port site in response to the previous consultation and feedback. Since then the team has significantly reduced the amount of open space to be included within the proposed development and has been working up more detail about the look and character of the new buildings and spaces.

In recent months Deeley Freed has also been liaising with the City Council's parks department which is currently working with English Heritage on a conservation management plan for Castle Park and funding for many of the projects in the plan expected to be provided through the St Mary Le Port development.

Deeley Freed had expected to be in a position to consult again with the public and stakeholders this Spring in order to share these revised proposals and again ask for comments and feedback before finalising a scheme for submission to Bristol City Council later in the year.

In the meantime, however, an application has been made to the Commons Registration Authority to grant Castle Park Town or Village Green status. The area covered by the application includes part of the St Mary le Port site. Consideration of this application by the Commons Registration Authority requires a full judicial procedure, quite separate from any planning process, and this could take several months to resolve.

If Town or Village Green status is granted for Castle Park this would jeopardise any redevelopment of the St Mary le Port site by Deeley Freed and the opportunity to remove the eyesore buildings on this site would be lost. Funding for important improvements to Castle Park set to be provided through the development would also be lost as would wider benefits such as creating a vibrant new food-centred quarter which reclaims the historic heart of Bristol; improving the connections between Broadmead, the Old City and Redcliffe and enhancing the setting for St Mary le Port Church.

Deeley Freed has submitted a formal objection to the application to grant Castle Park Town or Village Green status and now needs to await the outcome of the formal process before it can progress its plans further.

I will update you again once Deeley Freed and their team know the decision and how this affects their development proposals for St Mary le Port.

Best wishes

Avril Baker

Consultation co-ordinator