

Our Ref: Firepool Public Information
Session

Date: 4th and 5th November 2019

Consultation Summary

Headlines

- Event held on 4th and 5th November at Deane House, Taunton
- 230 attendees
- Generally positive and overwhelming response is please get it delivered asap
- 38 written and online comments 37 generally positive and 1 neutral

Regular Comments

Venue

- Venue received positively
- Needs to work with and not compete with Brewhouse
- Needs to be large enough to be a regional draw
- Local residents worried about noise

Cinema

- Mostly supported
- Slight concern about Brewhouse conflict

Hotel

- One negative comment – undesirable

Residential

- Generally supportive

Cafes/Restaurants

- Needs more

Green Space

- As much as possible

Water

- Wanting more use of it

Parking

- Regular comments was there did not seem to be enough of it

- Facilities for charging/bikes

Conclusion

Wide support for scheme and key message is get it delivered as fast as possible.

Firepool Public Information Session

FAQ's

Introduction

Q : What is the purpose of the scheme?

A : It is a commercial leisure led scheme with enabling residential development. Key objectives are:

1. Creating a high quality public realm link between bus station and river and onto the Town Centre
2. Uses to complement the Town Centre and to help generate more and longer trips to Taunton
3. More urban living in Town Centre to create a captive market for Town Centre

Venue

Q : How big will the venue be?

A : To be confirmed The space marked on the layout plan was the same size as for the Bonus Arena in Hull at a seated 2800, for masterplanning purposes only. The actual size of a venue, if developed would be advised by industry experts alongside the market demand

Q : Will this conflict with the Brewhouse?

A : The detail is to be agreed but the concept is that the Council wants to see more attractions and facilities for residents and visitors alike. Any potential multi-purpose venue (and the business case that would support it) will be assessed alongside the Brewhouse, including potential for integration into one site. To be successful any proposed use would have to address both day time and night time activity, utilising internal and external space to maximum effect. However, this is in the context that there is very limited revenue funding and if revenue support is needed it must be supported by a positive business case that places little or no revenue impact on the Council's future finances.

Cinema

Q : What is the purpose of the Cinema?

A : This is a 5 screen cinema to provide a commercial operation to compete with out of town cinema's to encourage visitors into the Town Centre

Hotel

Q : What is the purpose of having a hotel here?

A : There is strong demand for an up market Town Centre hotel to compete with out of town facilities to be provided at the operational cost and risk of the private sector.

Cafes/Restaurants

Q : Will there be many cafes/restaurants on the boulevard/waters edge?

A : It is intended to have as many cafes and restaurants as possible. It is hoped to have pavement cafes and a range of bars and restaurants (F&B is food and beverage) to create a bustling leisure led environment.

Other Uses

Q : Any other commercial uses planned?

A: Yes there is a digital innovation centre planned and also various work hubs to bring jobs to the site. There is also hopes to have some gallery space and specialist retail space where this does not conflict with the Town Centre.

Boulevard and Ground Floors

Q: What will the ground floors of the boulevard consist of ?

A: As much active and lively space as possible right down to the rivers edge

Residential

Q: What sort of residential space will be provided?

A: This is to provide an innovative mix of residential space that will likely be of mixed tenure, some for rent and some for sale. There will be some town houses, and a range of apartments.

Parking

Q: Where is the Venue Car Parking?

A: Beneath Block 5 with about 300 spaces planned as it stands to serve the commercial uses proposed at Firepool. This is subject to getting detailed costs back. In any case there will be sufficient parking on site. It should also be noted that GWR are building a new 400 space car park to the south of the rail station and directly opposite the Firepool site

Q : Is there any other parking?

A : A further 200 spaces on the South side. There will also likely be podium parking at Firepool North as part of the apartments.

Q: What is podium parking?

A: Podium parking is a surface level car park with a roof. On that roof is a garden.

General

Q : What is SUDS

A : Sustainable drainage systems – designed to slow down the movement of surface water to natural watercourses in times of heavy rain to alleviate potential flooding problems.

Q : Will this scheme be delivered in my lifetime?

A : The Council is working on a plan to deliver within a 5 year period.