

# THE RIVER DON DISTRICT

PLANNING APPLICATION  
MAY 2008

## STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The British Land Company Plc (British Land) are proposing a comprehensive redevelopment of land known as the River Don District. This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) provides a comprehensive description and analysis of the consultation strategy the British Land team have undertaken.
- 1.2 British Land has been working closely with Sheffield City Council for a period of over 5 years to regenerate this key 'Gateway' to Sheffield. This culminated in the Council endorsing a comprehensive Masterplan for the River Don District in September 2007.
- 1.3 British Land is now submitting an outline planning application for development that has grown from the principles contained within the Masterplan. The opportunity is to create a new vibrant mixed use community of offices, housing, local retail, leisure and community facilities. This comprehensive approach will bring new work, living and leisure opportunities to the Don Valley and act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the wider area and the transformational change required to accelerate the City Region's economic renaissance.
- 1.4 This proposal signals the beginning of a transition for the River Don District based around a development which has the principles of sustainability at its centre.
- 1.5 A copy of the Illustrative Masterplan submitted in support of the application for the proposal is included as Appendix I.
- 1.6 The remainder of this chapter outlines how the consultation strategy has developed. The SCI is structured as follows:
  - n Chapter 2 outlines the consultation strategy;
  - n Chapter 3 provides an analysis of the consultation responses;
  - n Chapter 4 illustrates how comments and suggestions have been incorporated into the development; and
  - n Chapter 5 provides conclusions.

### The Need For Community Consultation.

- 1.7 The approach to community consultation has been shaped by both British Land's commitment to achieving Best Practice in all areas of its work as set out in the British Land Sustainability Brief Volume 2, along with the increasing importance placed by Government on community engagement in the planning process. The team have taken into account national planning policy as set out in '*Planning Policy Statement Note 1 (PPS1)*' (February 2004) and the accompanying guidance '*Community Involvement in Planning*' (February 2004) and at a local level, Sheffield's adopted '*Statement of Community Involvement*' (September 2006).

Sheffield City Council Statement of Community Involvement

1.8 Sheffield City Council’s Statement of Community Involvement was adopted on 29 September 2006. SCC has four objectives which it is aiming to achieve:

- *“to help make the planning system **transparent**, by making plans, policies, development proposals and planning decisions available in a form which is easily understood and accessible.*
- *to promote **participation and involvement** by presenting clear opportunities for people to make their views known and to take part in the planning process, and by demonstrating that people’s views have been considered by decision-makers.*
- *to make the planning system **accessible and inclusive**, by removing barriers to involvement and by reaching out to groups that have been less engaged in the past.*
- *to be **accountable**, by clearly identifying decision-makers and processes and ensuring that people get feedback about progress and outcomes.”*

1.9 The Council has eight basic principles to create a foundation of good practice in public consultation:

- n A culture of engagement;
- n Early involvement or ‘frontloading’;
- n Continuing involvement;
- n Reaching out;
- n Fit for purpose;
- n Clarity;
- n Formal representations; and
- n Code of practice.

1.10 The applicant has considered all of these recommendations as part of their overall approach to consultation and will continue to do so in the future.

1.11 With regards to major applications, such as this, the Council encourages strong pre-application consultation.

1.12 An Added Value Test is proposed to determine when substantial additional publicity and consultation measures should be taken.

1.13 The test gives three possible reasons why substantial additional publicity and consultation might be beneficial:

- to help the community shape a major regeneration scheme or a scheme with a wide community impact;
- to overcome barriers to service and assist hard-to-reach groups such as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities; or
- to generate informed debate about very complex planning issues of wide significance.

1.14 It is considered that British Land's proposal fits into at least one of the above categories and therefore merits a comprehensive consultation strategy.

**Masterplan Development**

1.15 To help inform the design of the application proposed an extensive Masterplan process has been completed.

1.16 Urban Strategies Inc. of Canada was appointed jointly by Sheffield City Council and British Land in December 2003 to prepare a Masterplan for the Lower Don Valley.

1.17 The core objectives of the Lower Don Valley Vision and Masterplan Study are to:

- n Establish a clear vision and agreed path for its realisation;
- n Act as a long term strategic plan to guide investment and provide a platform for attracting new investment;
- n Raise the profile of the Lower Don Valley, thus supporting and reinforcing Sheffield's role within the region;
- n Complement and maximise the beneficial impact of existing leisure and retail uses in the Lower Don Valley;
- n Set the foundation for the introduction of appropriate new uses to the area;
- n Provide a coherent planning and urban design context to guide physical regeneration across the study area; and
- n Provide new opportunities for social and economic regeneration.

1.18 The Masterplan designates the subject application site for 'mixed-use' development incorporating business, residential and open space, a key aspect of this is the creation of a new community. This area surrounding Meadowhall is depicted as continuing to provide a unique retail offer and leisure experience whilst serving the districts new workers and community. The area is to be supported by shops, restaurants, cafes and convenience services. The principles of this Masterplan were endorsed by Sheffield City Council's Cabinet in May 2005.

1.19 The River Don District Masterplan was the second stage in the Lower Don Valley vision. The Masterplan has been produced by Urban Strategies Inc. on behalf of British Land and in conjunction with the Council. This report went to Cabinet on the 26 September 2007 and again the principles were endorsed by members of the Council.

1.20 The River Don District Masterplan is anchored by the following five themes:

- n Making it sustainable;
- n Making it green;
- n Making it connected;
- n Making places and creating destinations; and
- n Making a statement of innovation, modernity and success.

- 1.21 The site falls within the 'mixed-use core' of the RDD Masterplan, with the preferred uses being office (B1a) and housing. Weedon Street is to be enhanced as a public transport corridor. To help balance the mixed-use core the Masterplan includes significant parkways and renewed waterways.
- 1.22 The outcomes of these two documents have formed the basis of the proposal to be considered by the public.

## 2. Consultation Strategy

- 2.1 This section contains a summary of the consultation which has been undertaken by British Land to date. It includes an outline of the consultation process, who have been consulted and why, along with the mechanisms included to ensure those unfamiliar with the planning system and hard-to-reach groups were fully catered for. A table is included in Appendix II which summarises who has been consulted and when.
- 2.2 Sheffield City Council provided guidance and support to the applicant in terms of public consultation. SCC provided feedback and advice on who should be consulted internally and externally and the appropriate methods to do so, all of which were taken on board and incorporated into the consultation strategy.
- 2.3 Having considered national and local guidance and the advice from SCC it was decided that a consultation strategy should include:
  - § Consultation with SCC Area Panels and Local Community Forums ;
  - § Community Consultation;
  - § Continuing Professional and Technical Consultation;
  - § Political Consultation; and
  - § Other Key Bodies for Consultation;
- 2.4 For major applications the Council encourages strong pre-application consultations to ensure that a development proposal takes into account consultees comments before submission. A variety of consultation methods are depicted in the SCI, these include:
  - § Media coverage;
  - § Meetings with Planning officers and other groups;
  - § Meetings with Community Groups and Local Area Forums;
  - § Exhibitions; and
  - § Public meetings.
- 2.5 To maximise the reach of the consultation strategy a website was produced ([www.britishland.com/riverdondistrict](http://www.britishland.com/riverdondistrict)), which provided all the relevant information and a presentation was produced for group meetings, this provided an introduction to the scheme and highlighted the development's potential (see Appendix III).
- 2.6 A review of the consultation strategy is set out below.

### Forums and Review Panels

- 2.7 It was deemed to be essential that active communication was had with Area Panels and Community Forums within the pre-application consultation process. A number of such meetings have taken place in which the proposal was presented to the attendees. The opportunity to express views and ideas and ask any questions was made available. An important aspect of such meetings is to gauge an idea of the best way to consult the wider community. Subsequent presentations have been held following requests from the forums within the community and at public meetings.

#### Area Plans Panel

- 2.8 Meetings have taken place with Darnall Area Panel (18 February 2008) along with Brightside and Shiregreen Area Panel with Burngreave Area Panel representatives (3 March 2008).

#### Community Forums

- 2.9 There are a number of forums surrounding the River Don District, who play an active role within the community. It is vital that such organisations are aware of any proposed development as early as possible to ensure that their ideas and opinions can be considered and included within future consultation and subsequent detailed applications.
- 2.10 Meetings took place with Tinsley Forum (14 February 2008), Darnall Forum (18 February 2008) and Handsworth Forum (18 February 2008). Following on from this Tinsley and Darnall Forum provided written comments on the 31 March 2008, this can be found in Appendix IV.
- 2.11 Following the Handsworth Forum briefing a presentation to the forum's public meeting was given. This took place on the 10 March 2008. After which Maurice Littlewood the chairman of Handsworth Forum provide some positive feedback from those who attended. It is also intended that to ensure maximum information dissemination takes place, each Area Panel / Forum is re-consulted as to the timing and format of further consultation particularly within their wider communities.

#### Chamber of Commerce

- 2.12 British Land met with Rotherham and Barnsley Chamber of Commerce (14 February 2008), and Sheffield Chamber of Commerce (18 February 2008), in order to gain an understanding of business needs and developments in the area.
- 2.13 The Sheffield Property and Regeneration Committee (SPARC) were also consulted in the 7 April 2008. In which discussions took place with regards to the housing element of the scheme along with other issues such as parking, employment and flooding.

#### East End Strategy Group

- 2.14 The East End Strategy Group includes representatives from the different forums and other interested parties who review and discuss major developments and strategies in the East End of Sheffield. The Group was consulted on the 7 April 2008, one of the main aspects discussed was the continuing consultation strategy.

### Community Consultation

- 2.15 As outlined above, perhaps one of the most important aspects of the consultation strategy is wider community consultation. An exhibition was considered the most appropriate way to engage with the community as this ensures easy accessibility to view the proposed scheme and a less formal event encourages wider audiences.
- 2.16 Public exhibitions are a useful way of getting large numbers of people to participate in discussions about initial designs and outline plans and to gauge feedback from the community.
- 2.17 The public exhibition was held in Meadowhall from the 26 - 28 February 2008. Exhibition boards were erected and information leaflet packs provided which included a response form. This leaflet provided the public with all the relevant information regarding the development in a clear, concise and engaging manner (please see Appendix V), 10,000 copies of which were either handed out or sent to the local forums for distribution into the surrounding communities.
- 2.18 A comments box was available, and a sweep stake of £100 was offered to ensure maximum responses were received. The winner of this was Neil Rowlinson.
- 2.19 The exhibition was manned by representatives from British Land and their consultants from 10.30 am (Meadowhall opening time) until 5.30pm throughout the three days. The exhibition and comments box were available for the public to view and provide comments until Meadowhall closing time on each of the three days.
- 2.20 It was important to ensure the exhibition was manned between 10.30am – 5.30pm so that the scheme could be properly explained to those without any planning knowledge and to answer any questions or queries. A component of ensuring the exhibition was manned, was the ability to note comments which people expressed who chose not to fill in a comments form. It also enabled the number of interested parties to be counted and for concerns to be heard first hand by the applicants. This allowed any issues to be addressed at the exhibition or later through the design process, as discussed in Chapter 4.

### Continuing Professional and Technical Consultation

- 2.21 Ongoing contact has been established with technical consultants such as the Highway Authority, Environment Agency, Natural England and South Yorkshire Archaeological Service, in order to ensure that any issues are highlighted early in the design process and can be resolved prior to development starting.
- 2.22 Much of this consultation has taken place with respect to the Environmental Impact Assessment process that is reported in the Environmental Statement which accompanies this application.

### Political Consultation

- 2.23 It is imperative that political consultation takes place as early as possible to ensure the Council and other organisations are fully aware of the proposal and have an input into the scheme; thus removing major issues pre submission. Key political bodies were kept informed of each stage of the design and masterplanning process, providing an opportunity for a formal channel for discussion of key issues and concerns.

- 2.24 Ongoing consultation with SCC has been paramount throughout the life of the application. Bi-weekly meetings have been taking place with officers of the Council, British Land and Drivers Jonas and other relevant bodies for over a year. Discussions in these meetings took place regarding issues such as public consultation and design. This has included senior Council officers, from the following departments, Planning, Highways, Ecology, Historic Environment, Education and Housing.
- 2.25 In addition to Council officers, meetings have taken place with the local Members of Parliament Including
- n Clive Betts MP;
  - n Meg Munn MP;
  - n Richard Caborn MP;
  - n David Blunkett MP; and
  - n Angela Smith MP;
- 2.26 Written briefings have also taken place with Nick Clegg MP and Denis MacShane MP.
- 2.27 Meetings and briefings have also been held with SCC Members including Councillor Paul Scriven, Councillor David Baker and Councillor Tim Rippon and Councillor Jan Wilson.
- 2.28 All have expressed support for the principles of the proposal.

### Other Key Bodies For Consultation

- 2.29 Due to the scale of the proposal and the location of the application site it was also considered important pre-application consultation took place with a range of other bodies who could potentially be affected by the development or who would have an interest in it. Consultation has taken place with a variety of bodies including Rotherham Borough Council, Sheffield Urban Design Review Panel, Yorkshire Forward, the Government Office of Yorkshire and Humber, E.ON, the PCT, First Travel, Creative Sheffield, The Source and South Yorkshire PTE.

#### Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC)

- 2.30 The Borough of Rotherham is adjacent to the site. Stakeholder consultation began with RMBC in 2006/2007 and Rotherham Council has previously been briefed by SCC. A presentation and discussions took place with RMBC on the 3 March 2008. The meeting was attended by members of RMBC, SCC, British Land and Drivers Jonas. A presentation of the proposed development was shown to RMBC followed by the opportunity to discuss the proposal and respond to any questions raised.
- 2.31 Overall, the RMBC Officers and Leader and Deputy Leader welcomed the proposal. Concerns were raised regarding the economic impact on Rotherham. This matter is addressed in detail in the Socio-Economic Assessment included in the Environmental Statement.

#### Sheffield Urban Design Review Panel

- 2.32 Sheffield Urban Design Review Panel considered the development on the 31 January 2008 (Appendix VI), their report was received on 14 February 2008. The panel were supportive of the proposed scheme and welcomed the appointment of a strong design team. There were however some reservations with regards to connectivity, car parking and site levels. The

British Land team have welcomed these comments, Chapter 4 highlights how such comments and suggestions have been incorporated into the design of the scheme. A further presentation to the Design Review Panel will take place post-submission.

#### Yorkshire Forward

- 2.33 Yorkshire Forward is one of nine Regional Development Agencies, it aims to promote sustainable economic development throughout the Yorkshire and Humber Region. It supports the enhancement and development of business by connecting people to economic opportunities. A meeting was held with Yorkshire Forward on the 5 March 2008. Yorkshire Forward is broadly supportive of the principles of the development.

#### Government Office for Yorkshire and Humber

- 2.34 Consultation took place with GOYH on 10 August 2007. In which the proposal was discussed in relation to the Lower Don Valley Masterplan and the River Don Valley Masterplan. An aim of these discussions was to secure policy support for the proposal. Other issues covered were the phasing of the scheme, infrastructures and partnership opportunities with regards to the transport strategy.

#### E.ON

- 2.35 E.ON have submitted a planning application for a Biomass powerstation in close proximity to the development. Discussions have taken place with E.ON on 22 August 2007, 18 September 2007 and 5 March 2008 with regards to the potential increase in traffic flows, flooding and the possible effects on air quality of this powerstation to ensure consistency of assessment approach.
- 2.36 The powerstation will generate excess waste heat. British Land are investigating ways in which this heat can be substantially and sustainably used, for example to provide heating and warm water, as part of its commitment to minimise carbon emissions from the site. British Land and E.ON have exchanged letters on this as seen in Appendix VII.

#### Creative Sheffield

- 2.37 Creative Sheffield are an Urban Regeneration Company, with a specific remit in Sheffield City Centre. Creative Sheffield have attended Project Delivery Board meetings which have taken place between SCC and the development team, to ensure they are aware of the proposal and can have an input into the scheme. On the whole Creative Sheffield are supportive of the proposal.

#### The Source

- 2.38 The Source is a training centre created to meet the needs of local business and communities, as a joint charitable venture between Sheffield City Council, British Land and other partners. It is a central point for training and development and enables local communities to obtain local employment.
- 2.39 An initial meeting was held with The Source on 14 January 2008 to gain an appreciation of the work undertaken and how the best use of the facilities and skills in employment can be made by the developers.
- 2.40 The Source is supportive of the development and continued contact with The Source is taking place to ensure that suitable training courses and employment opportunities are available to local populations. Members of

the management team at The Source have assisted in developing the Employment and Training Strategy that supports this application.

**Primary Care Trust (PCT)**

- 2.41 The PCT were consulted due to the increased population and workforce to be created, so that they were aware of the development and could advise on the possible need for health facilities and possible consequences of the development.
- 2.42 Two meetings have taken place on the 19 February 2008 and 6 March 2008. Although the proposed development will place additional pressure on neighbouring facilities, discussions highlighted that the new population could be accommodated for within 2km of the site. Therefore there is not a need for on-site provision.

**SCC Children and Young People Department**

- 2.43 Meetings took place with SCC Education Officer (19 February 2008) and SCC Early Years (06 March 2008) to gain an appreciation of supply and demand factors for nursery and school facilities in the area. At present there is no specific need for on-site provision, however there was an interest with regards to onsite provision for young children which could also serve the office development and / or Meadowhall.

**Adjoining Businesses (Forgemasters and Howco)**

- 2.44 Due to the close proximity of the proposed development to Forgemasters and Howco, British Land have engaged in discussions with them. A meeting took place on 31 March 2008 with Forgemasters in which discussions took place with regards to transport and flooding. Forgemasters are in general support of the development.
- 2.45 Informal discussion also took place with Howco during the public consultation event. British Land will continue to engage with Forgemasters and Howco as the proposal develops.

**First Travel**

- 2.46 First Travel provided a letter of support dated 10 April 2008, in which support was offered to Meadowhall and the proposal at the River Don District (see Appendix VIII). First Travel also provided information regarding their Metrocard schemes. British Land will continue to work with First Travel to promote and encourage sustainable travel both at Meadowhall and within the new proposals.

**South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive**

- 2.47 An initial meeting took place with South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive on 20 November 2007. Since then discussions have been on going with regards to the Bus Rapid Transit, Southern Route, Northern Route and Strategic Park and Ride facilities.

**Reaching Out**

- 2.48 Methods were put in place to encourage involvement and ensure that the different forms of consultation were appropriate to people's experiences and needs. It was essential that meetings and exhibitions were accessible to all taking into account disabled access and the requirements of hard to reach groups.

### Advertisement

- 2.49 A press briefing took place on 18 February 2008 after which the exhibition at Meadowhall was advertised widely, receiving much press coverage (Appendix IX). Adverts were placed in the Sheffield Telegraph and The Sheffield Star to ensure Sheffield and the wider region were reached. The advert itself was designed to be eye catching, providing all the relevant information needed; ensuring maximum clarity.
- 2.50 The Sheffield Telegraph, Sheffield Star and Yorkshire Post ran stories describing and supporting the development, with the headlines emphasising the positive aspects of the scheme, these can also be found in Appendix IX:
- “5,000 Job Hope in Meadowhall Plans.” (Sheffield Telegraph 22 February 2008).*
- “£300m Don Valley Development” (Sheffield Star 20<sup>th</sup> February 2008).*
- “Meadowhall Owner Wants Homes on Nearby 62 Acres” (Yorkshire Post 19 February 08).*
- 2.51 Following on from this it was reported that radio stations advertised the exhibition and held discussions on the proposed development.

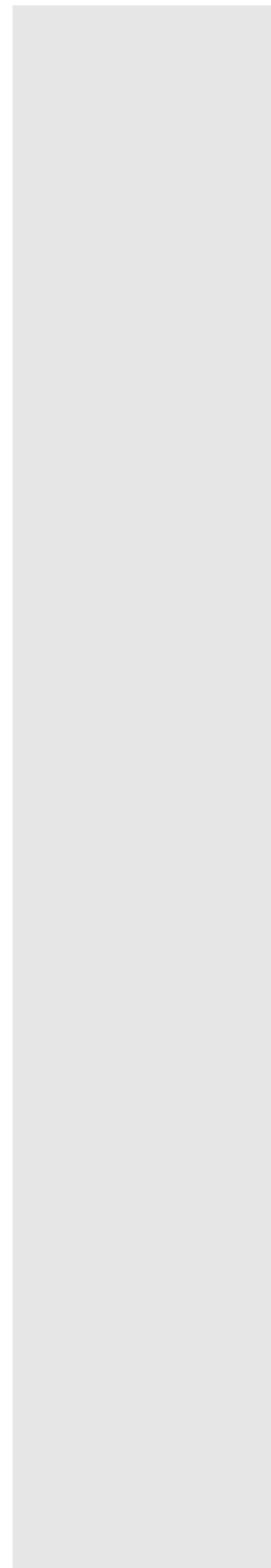
### Hard to Reach Groups

- 2.52 It is essential that all consultation events encourage wide consultation. The public consultation event took place in the Meadowhall Centre in an easily accessible location and a website was created for those who could not attend the event.
- 2.53 Provision was also made for those who cannot speak English with translated documents available on request, languages included Urdu, Arabic, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Samali. Large print, Braille and audio tapes were also available.
- 2.54 An advantage of this consultation strategy was we were able to reach wider groups. During the public consultation we were able to speak with the Editor of the Angling Star, regarding fishing opportunities in the River Don.
- 2.55 The proposed further consultation at the heart of the local communities around the site will ensure opportunities for comment and information exchange are maximised.

### Feedback

- 2.56 Feedback is an essential component of all forms of consultation.
- 2.57 After each meeting, notes or minutes were recorded in which any further actions and follow up procedures were noted. Requests for further information and copies of presentation material were promptly provided.
- 2.58 After consultations with the different stakeholders, personalised ‘Thank you’ letters were sent out and any further requested information was provided, copies of these can be found in Appendix X.

2.59 This SCI forms an important component of the feedback strategy. Chapter 3 of this report highlights the responses gained and Chapter 4 illustrates how the responses to the consultation and the comments received have been incorporated into the submitted proposal.



### 3. Consultation Responses

#### Forums and Review Panels

- 3.1 Many issues have been raised and advice given on the consultation strategy. Altogether the response is positive with the groups consulted supportive of the development and its benefits. The groups were very pleased to have been consulted at such an early stage of the development process and were keen to engage further. This continuity of engagement from Masterplan to River Don District application was also appreciated.
- 3.2 In particular positive comments were made about the sustainability of the site and the aspiration of British Land as a company to be carbon neutral. Darnall Forum and Rotherham and Barnsley CoC were particularly supportive of the link with The Source and were keen to help improve this. It is evidently important to those consulted and to British Land that local employment is a key component of the proposal. The benefits the proposed development would have with regards to the City Region status was also recognised by Rotherham and Barnsley CoC.
- 3.3 Whilst there was general support for the proposed development, a number of suggestions were made.
- 3.4 One of the subjects requiring further explanation to evolve from the consultation was concerns about the 'community' which is to be created. Particular concern was that the new residents would not integrate with the wider communities and in effect a 'commuter village' would be created. It was clear from the discussions that the surrounding communities did not want facilities that would compete with those located in existing local centres, such as Post Offices and community centres. This was also something which The Source confirmed and will be considered carefully in the detailed design of the scheme at the Reserved Matters stage.
- 3.5 Questions were also raised regarding transport to the site and pedestrian safety. Another concern was air quality. These are addressed in the Environmental Statement, where management and mitigation methods measures are outlined.
- 3.6 Questions were also raised with regards to how public spaces were going to be managed and cared for. One of the drivers for the development is the quality of the proposed open spaces. The details of future management are not yet known however the applicant will ensure the long term quality and security of the areas.
- 3.7 Only one of the forums / panels raised the issue of flooding. The Flood Risk Assessment highlights the different mitigation methods which are to be put in place to alleviate risk from flooding. Essentially this consists of raising the development to above the flood level and providing an alleviation channel. This would deal with an event worse than that experienced in June 2007.

### Community Consultation

3.8 The community consultation event was well advertised resulting in excellent numbers of attendees. Altogether over 750 people attended the event and were spoken to personally by the project team, a breakdown of which is provided below. However, thousands of people saw the exhibition, due to the prominent location of the exhibition within the shopping centre. Despite every effort being made to ensure accurate recordings it is important to note that these are not exact figures, they represent a tally which was collated throughout each day and is therefore the smallest number of people that were spoken to.

Day	No. Attendees
26 Feb 08	146
27 Feb 08	303
28 Feb 08	310
<b>Total</b>	<b>759</b>

Table 1: Number of public consultation attendants

3.9 The number of attendees on the first day was much lower than the second and third due to the location of the stand. Originally the stand was located outside House of Fraser in the Meadowhall Centre. However, for day two the exhibition was moved to a more prominent location by the OASIS, the primary food and drink court, adjacent to the main customer service desk. This location incurred greater footfall and generated more interest.

3.10 The below photographs provide an illustration of the consultation event.



- 3.11 Altogether we received 117 responses over the three days and 8 responses have been received via the dedicated site (125 responses altogether), we have also received responses via e-mail. Altogether over 1550 people have visited the website to date. For reasons of confidentiality the responses have not been included within this Statement. They are however available at officers request.
- 3.12 The responses were altogether very positive with 120 people answering 'Yes' to Question 1 and 111 answering Yes to Question 2. The below table illustrates these responses.

	Q1 – Is the regeneration of this area a good Idea	Q2 – Do you agree with the mixture of houses, offices local retail and leisure
Yes	120	111
No	0	8
% Yes	96%	88.8%
% No	0	6.4%
% Yes (excluding non responses)	100%	93.3%
% No (excluding non responses)	0	6.7%

Table 2: Public consultation responses.

- 3.13 The opportunity was available for people to provide their thoughts and ideas on the scheme. With Question 3 asking *'What would you like to see added to the proposals, if anything?'* and Question 4 providing the opportunity for any other comments.
- 3.14 One of the advantages of having a manned exhibition was that the team were able to discuss the development with individuals and gain a deeper insight into their thoughts and ideas, helping to build a more accurate understanding of the issues.
- 3.15 The overall atmosphere was a positive one with people enthusiastic about the development. Within the responses much support was provided for the scheme, written comments were received which included:

*"A much needed development".*

*"Get on with it".*

*"It seems the project is very good I hope it goes ahead".*

*"Sheffield City Council should have done this years ago".*

*“Looks like a great scheme”.*

*“Great news look forward to seeing it in the future”.*

3.16 The responses to Question 3 *what would you like to see added to the proposals?* can broadly categorised into the following main headings:

- n Open Space;
- n Community Facilities;
- n Transport;
- n Linkages;
- n Flood Protection; and
- n Any Other Comments.

3.17 These will be looked at in turn below.

#### Open Space

3.18 The development consists of about 25% open space. Whilst consulting we were actively trying to gauge peoples ideas on what they wanted to happen within the areas of open space, many suggestions were put forward, a sample of which are provided below:

*“Green open space for use by the community with seating, play area, multi use games area”.*

*“Open play for the children would be a good Idea”.*

*“Open play area for children with café or similar for parents”.*

*“A proposed designated wildlife area”.*

*“An area for local wildlife with some protection”.*

*“More trees”.*

*“Creation of wetland areas”.*

*“Community areas to be well lit ... not too many dense bushes and trees”.*

3.19 It was evident that people were in favour of the amount of open space and indeed green space being created. A number of suggestions were made for the inclusion of seating areas and a café for those specifically using the open space and also for those using the Meadowhall Centre.

3.20 Local football clubs have also shown an interest in the site and have asked if they can use the facility as Wincobank is often flooded.

3.21 Safety of the open spaces was an important worry for many of the correspondents who wanted to ensure the areas were well lit, open and patrolled.

3.22 Vegetation and biodiversity was also something which people wanted to see more of on the site.

**Community Facilities**

3.23 Due to the proposed number of residential units on the site, it is essential that a sense of community is created. Central to this is the provision of facilities within the neighbourhood centre and the open spaces.

3.24 The importance of creating a sense of community was recognised. Numerous ideas were put forward as to what should be included in the scheme, a selection of these are listed below.

- n Post office.
- n Youth facilities.
- n Swimming pool.
- n Supermarket.
- n Café.
- n Leisure centre
- n Pub.
- n Shopping area with a supermarket.
- n Child care facilities.
- n Sports fields.
- n Children's facilities such as play areas.
- n Tennis court.
- n Animal care centre.

3.25 Facilities for young people and teenagers were repeatedly suggested a key aspect was differing sports facilities such as tennis courts and football pitches. Respondents were also keen to see such facilities being linked to surrounding schools.

3.26 The team were keen to gauge what was missing from the area, and were aware from previous discussions that they did not want the development to divert resources from existing surrounding communities.

3.27 There was no one clear service that was required from the public, rather a comprehensive list of facilities were suggested. Local shops are however a clear priority and especially a supermarket since the loss of Sainsbury's from Meadowhall Centre.

**Transport**

3.28 Due to the number of people which will be using the site some concern was raised over transport. People were eager to ensure suitable transport facilities would be provided.

- "Bus routes and travel solutions".*
- "Super tram link".*
- "Traffic is already very bad in the area this may add to the problem".*

*“Not all disabled people can use public transport so any car restrictions should not include disabled”.*

3.29 The team are aware of the access opportunities and constraints for the River Don District area, the submitted Transport Assessment addresses these comments. The development actively seeks to maximise the use of non car modes by promoting walking, cycling and public transport.

**Linkages**

3.30 The way in which people use the site and access the river was an important consideration of the public.

*“Paths for disabled people”.*

*“Improved pathways and walks”.*

*“Cycle track linking to the city”.*

*“Have a public walk going around the River Don”.*

*“I hope the Trans-Pennine Trail will be integrated into this system. Plus more riverside walks”.*

3.31 The development has been designed so that people can move through the site and access the river easily so that people are encouraged to use the riverside and associated walkways. Public links from the riverside walks into the new public spaces within the development plots have also been created. New public squares will also attract people from the existing local communities. Please refer to the Design and Access Statement for more information.

**Flooding**

3.32 Concerns regarding the flood mitigation methods were highlighted. The different mitigation methods that are to be employed were explained and the majority were satisfied with this. Details are contained in the Flood Risk Assessment within the Environmental Statement.

**Mix of Uses**

3.33 As table 2 above shows the vast majority agreed with the mix of uses (93.3%). Concern however was raised regarding the proximity of residential development to the existing industry. The development has been designed taking this into consideration. Housing has been located appropriately and buffers have been created in the form of office development and open space. SCC through the endorsement of new housing in the Lower Don Valley Masterplan have shown that this is desirable and efforts have been made to ensure the residential environments are as pleasant as possible.

3.34 Comments received included:

*"It is a good plan to have a mixture of houses and office space".*

*"Pleased to hear that the development won't be all apartments and there will be green spaces".*

*"I think housing is very important".*

*"Not a nice place to live really".*

*"Less office buildings - bring back manufacturing industry".*

3.35 Comments were also made regarding the quantity of office space with people believing that there is not a demand for office space and others wanting to see a return of the manufacturing industry. The Planning Statement, and both the LDV Masterplan and RDD Masterplan show that there is a need for office space in this location. With respect to a return to manufacturing industries this is something pre-determined by the market. Sheffield is seeking growth in service industries and the proposal will support this. The sites which form part of this application have lay empty for many years and no interest has been shown in the re-establishing of manufacturing on these sites.

Other

3.36 Some other comments and suggestions were put forward on the written responses as outlined below.

*"I would like to see the River Don cleaned up".*

*"Possible restoration of the tram depot, possible museum to transport".*

*"Agree with intention to use local workforce and to link colleges to offer vocational training".*

*"Good that local labour is to be used".*

*"Landmark architecture".*

*"Creative design".*

*"Access to the River Don for fishing".*

*"Area not to be taken over by big commercial chains".*

*"Support local business".*

- 3.37 There was great support for the fact that the proposal aims to maximise the use of local labour. This is something which is central to the overall vision of the development, work is ongoing with The Source to ensure this is secured.
- 3.38 People were also keen to ensure that the design of the scheme was to a high standard. This is something British Land are committed to. For more information please refer to the accompanying Design and Access Statement.
- 3.39 A key aspect which came out of the public consultation was the desire for fishing facilities along the River Don, this will be considered at the detailed design stage and worked on in partnership with the local angling clubs and experts.

### Continuing Professional and Technical Consultation

- 3.40 The majority of the professional and technical consultation has been carried out with regards to the Environmental Impact Assessment process. The results of this have been embodied within the Environmental Statement, any mitigation methods will be incorporated as appropriate.

### Political Consultation

- 3.41 Consultation which has taken place with Sheffield City Council has done so in an evolutionary basis. British Land and its consultants have been working closely with the Council to help resolve outstanding issues, and have agreed appropriate solutions.
- 3.42 In general however, there is widespread political support for the RDD proposal from the Council, MPs and Councillors.

### Other Key Consultations

- 3.43 Consultation with other key consultees was positive. All those consulted were in favour of the proposal, and were pleased that a comprehensive redevelopment programme was to take place on derelict land. The employment opportunities the development will bring and the new community was a particular focus of support.

## 4. Response to Consultation

- 4.1 It is clear from the consultation undertaken to date that the principles of the River Don District enjoy widespread community support. As this application is outline with all matters reserved many of the detailed comments will be picked up at the Reserved Matters stage. However there have been some changes to the proposal and revisions made to the Parameters Plans and Regulatory Text.
- 4.2 British Land are committed to maintaining links with the community throughout the development process and are actively seeking opportunities to extend engagement and information exchange. This should raise the profile of the development and generate increased interest in the employment and training opportunities that will arise.
- 4.3 One of the advantages of extensive consultation is that it allows new ideas and suggestions to be brought forward and included in the development of the scheme. Many of those consulted commented on the potential for fishing on the River Don. This was something which British Land were not initially aware of. British Land are considering ways in which this can be a viable component of the development.

### *Employment*

- 4.4 One of the most important aspects of the community consultation was the overwhelming support for the employment prospects and training initiatives. This is something British Land are fully committed to and through working with organisations such as The Source will continue to develop throughout the entire development cycle.
- 4.5 As a direct result of this consultation exercise British Land in conjunction with The Source are setting up Steering Groups which will ensure the effective linkage of training initiatives and employment opportunities. Such Steering Groups will vary dependent on the differing employment prospects, whether at the construction or operational stage. A full description of these Steering Groups can be found in the Socio-Economic chapter of the Environmental Statement.

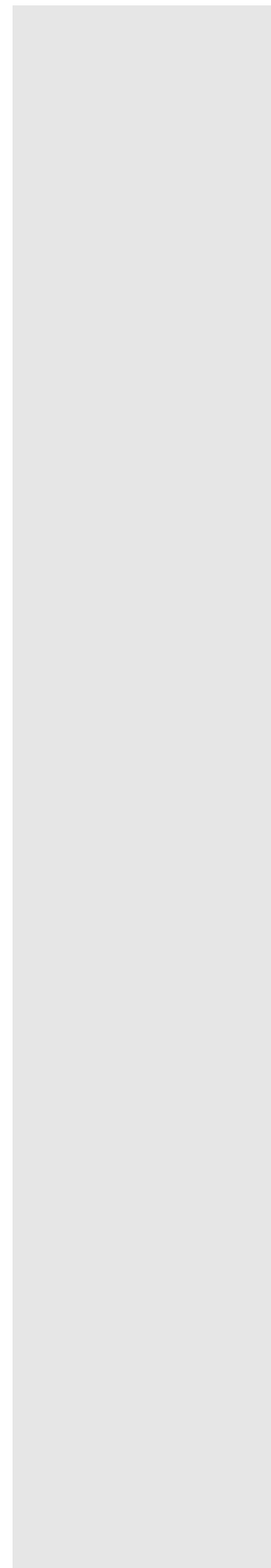
### *Open Space*

- 4.6 A key aspect of the consultation process was to gauge opinions on what should be included within the open public spaces. Numerous suggestions were made throughout the consultation programme.
- 4.7 This consultation confirmed the range of facilities which were required by the community. As a result the scheme will provide sporting facilities and play facilities for children and young adults along with both public and private open spaces. An essential component of this will be the maintenance of biodiversity within the site and The River Don which is similarly embedded in the proposed retention of the former railway embankment.

### *Residential Schemes*

- 4.8 During the consultation exercise it was confirmed that there was a need for a variety of different housing types and a need for affordable housing in the area. As such British Land are committed to providing affordable housing. The tenure and type will be agreed during the Reserved Matters stage.

- 4.9 The British Land team are conscious that planning for urban development of the scale proposed is a complex matter and have actively sought to incorporate and respond to questions and suggestions made throughout the extensive consultation programme.
- 4.10 The outline planning application is supported by a comprehensive suite of documents including an Environmental Statement that addresses transport and access impacts, air quality impacts, noise impacts and socio-economic impacts.



## 5. Summary and Conclusion

- 5.1 British Land has undertaken a widespread, thorough programme of community consultation.
- 5.2 Comments received that have related to technical matters are addressed elsewhere. In general, responses have been overwhelmingly in favour of the comprehensive redevelopment and regeneration of this important area of Sheffield.
- 5.3 All comments received have been welcomed by British Land and where possible resultant changes have been incorporated into the proposal, as highlighted in Chapter 4.
- 5.4 The quality of the proposal will be controlled through the submission for approval of a Design and Access Statement, Regulatory Text and Parameters Plans and Design Codes.
- 5.5 This programme of consultation is ongoing to ensure the River Don District becomes integrated into the existing urban fabric and community and planned consultation post submission, as such any further comments will be welcomed by British Land.
- 5.6 It is anticipated that further consultation will take post-submission or post any outline consent being granted, with the following groups:
- n All three local community forums.
  - n Local ward Councillors.
  - n Senior SCC Councillors.
  - n Local MPs (Clive Betts and David Blunkett).
  - n East End Strategy Group.
  - n Yorkshire Forward.
  - n Sheffield Urban Design Review Panel.
  - n Local media.
  - n Rotherham Borough Council.
  - n Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
  - n Sheffield and sub-regional MPs.
  - n Local and neighbouring Chambers of Commerce (Sheffield, Rotherham & Barnsley).
  - n Sheffield PCT.
  - n SCC Children and Young People Department.
  - n Creative Sheffield.
  - n Principle local businesses (Forgemasters).
- 5.7 There will also be further opportunities for comments at the Reserved Matters stage. British Land are committed to maintaining dialogue and involvement within the wider community through a rolling programme of presentations and updates to the groups consulted to date.