

Press Release
14 December 2005

THE WESTGATE PARTNERSHIP WINS STRONG SUPPORT FOR DESIGN PROPOSALS

The Westgate Partnership has received encouraging feedback to its initial design proposals for the Westgate area of Oxford city centre with over 84% of respondents rating the overall designs as 'excellent', 'very good' or 'good' according to an independent survey.

The survey was conducted by Opinion Leader Research who interviewed people after they had visited a public exhibition of the design proposals at The Westgate Centre at the end of October. The quantitative study reveals that people rated it highly because they liked the design and feel it will benefit the redevelopment of Oxford.

Designed by two award winning architects, Allies and Morrison and Building Design Partnership, the outline design proposals on display included initial thoughts on the individual characters of the new buildings (existing Westgate, Market Building, Garden Building and the John Lewis department store), improved parking facilities in a new car park, new city centre homes, improvements to the public realm and how the buildings will connect with the surrounding streets. The latest sustainability standards are an important element of the proposals. In addition to a series of information boards and models of the new buildings, a newsletter summarising the proposals was distributed widely.

Jane McFarland, Group Development Manager for The Westgate Partnership explained; "The design proposals were widely seen as a significant improvement to the existing Westgate Centre and its surrounding area providing a modernised and livelier street scene which is more welcoming and accessible. People also approve of the fact that the proposals mean an improved retail offer for Oxford. It is great to see that so many of the people who provided us with formal feedback are enthusiastic about our vision."

“The consultation exercise has provided us with constructive feedback which we are reviewing and analysing and which is influencing the development of the design,” she continues.

In responding to the consultation exercise, The Westgate Partnership will be giving particular consideration to:-

- **Existing Westgate and Castle Street facade** – how the proposed glazed façade might be used for different aspects of public art.
- **Garden Building** – ways in which the green roof could be more visible and accessible to the public.
- **Market Building** – the introduction of greater variety and lighting into the design of the façade.
- **John Lewis Building** – the use of alternative materials and how these relate to the materials proposed in other aspects of the development.
- **Car Park** – the durability of the timber cladding on the Norfolk Street façade and the possible use of alternatives.
- **Residential** – the environment immediately adjacent to each residential area including the development of detailed proposals for paving, lighting and soft landscaping.
- **Public Realm** – how the landscaping proposals relate to the individual buildings and add to the overall character of the development.

In addition to the exhibition The Westgate Partnership held a series of public workshops where local residents, stakeholders and young people (aged between 12 and 18) were invited to attend presentations on the outline proposals and give their feedback on the emerging designs. Throughout the process people have been invited to provide comments on the proposals via a range of different mechanisms – direct to members of The Westgate

Partnership's professional team, by using a feedback response form, online, using a hotline number or writing to a FREEPOST address.

An executive summary of the Opinion Leader Research report and summary of the consultation process is available from www.westgateoxford.co.uk. Further information on the design proposals for the new Westgate is also available.

ENDS

The New Westgate

The Westgate Partnership's proposals involve investing in excess of £300 million in the redevelopment and extension of the existing Westgate Centre to provide a total of 750,000 square feet (69,700 square metres) of retail space. In addition to the new John Lewis department store, there will be a mix of retailers including national, aspirational fashion and lifestyle brands, smaller independent retailers, new cafes, bars and restaurants. New facilities will include Shopmobility, toilets, baby care and a crèche.

The Westgate Masterplan and consultation process

Following extensive consultation, The Masterplan for the re-development of the Westgate area of Oxford was endorsed by Oxford City Council's Strategic Development Control Committee in October 2004. The Westgate Partnership then reviewed issues raised during the consultation process and published a formal *Response to Consultation* document which was published in September 2005. The next stage involved consultation on the initial design proposals during October 2005. Detailed design work is now underway.

The consultation exercise is a continuing process and feedback can be provided online, or by ringing the hotline on 0500 855 371, or by writing to The Westgate Partnership, FREEPOST CAPITAL SHOPPING CENTRES, 40 Broadway, London SW1H OBU.

The Westgate Partnership

The Westgate Partnership, a joint venture between Capital Shopping Centres and La Salle Investment Management.

Capital Shopping Centres PLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Liberty International PLC, is the leading company in the UK specialising in the ownership, management and development of regional shopping centres. It specialises in retail-led town centre regeneration, providing mixed-use schemes which respond to the needs of particular locations. Its portfolio includes Chapelfield (Norwich), The Glades (Bromley), The Harlequin (Watford) and The Chimes (Uxbridge) all of which it owns and manages.

LaSalle Investment Management, one of the UK's largest investment fund managers, is responsible for the British Coal Industry Pension Funds' property portfolio, which includes The Westgate Centre.

Further media information:

Margaret Harwood, CSC Shopping Centres, telephone 020 7887 7029, mobile 07803 116380, email margaret.harwood@capshop.co.uk
OR Nicky Winch/Ruth Johnson of M&N Associates on 01483 415915
r.johnson@mnassociates.co.uk