

» **EXCLUSIVE** We are given access to innovations to involve the public in major development

Brookfield future – the first steps



VISION: An artist's impression of what the new facilities may look like

THE developer behind the Brookfield Riverside masterplan is continuing his bid to remain "open, honest and frank" by giving residents the chance to comment on the plans.

On Monday, a consultation on the blueprint for the Greater Brookfield area of Cheshunt was launched.

The *Mercury* was given exclusive access to the innovative ways the developers are employing to get as many people as possible in the borough to voice their opinions.

James Barham, managing director of Bayfordbury Estates, based in Hertford, said: "We believe that in talking to local residents about our proposals, we can deliver the right scheme for both the local residents and business community."

Social networking sites Twitter and Facebook are being used, as well as the company's own website. It is hoped that these methods will open up the plans to a different section of people who may not otherwise comment on the scheme or do not have time to complete a form.

Traditional consultation methods will also be used, with leaflets delivered to residents living in the four wards surrounding the development site.

Not only will people be able to comment – they will also be given the opportunity to pose questions and offer suggestions to the developers.

For example, the developers are currently asking for suggestions as to what residents would like to see in the amphitheatre, which forms part of the new riverside plaza.

■ **GEMMA GARDNER**
Deputy chief reporter

Mr Barham said he wanted to continue "to be honest, to be frank and be open".

He said: "I hope people understand what we're trying to. It's because we believe in this scheme that we want to hear what people have to say."

The development would create a new shopping experience for the borough and a diverse leisure experience to help wrestle back much of the £600m currently being spent by Broxbourne residents outside the borough.

There will be at least 2,000 jobs created, a 100-bedroom hotel, 300 new homes, a health and fitness centre, cinema, bowling alley and crèche. Roads and public transport will be improved and new pedestrian links created.

The results of the consultation will be passed to Broxbourne Council. A report will then be sent to Government, which will appoint an independent inspector to examine the plan.

Should the scheme be given the go ahead, building work is expected to start in 2013 and the complex is due to open in 2016.

The *Mercury* will be talking to developers throughout the process. Keep up to date at hertfordshiremercury.co.uk.

Visit twitter.com/AskBrookfield, www.greaterbrookfield.co.uk or www.facebook.com and search for Ask Brookfield.

gemma.gardner
@hertsessexnews.co.uk

Council's borough vision unveiled

THE council's vision for the future of Broxbourne borough has been unveiled this week.

■ More jobs, housing and leisure facilities are promised as well as a pledge to help the ailing town centres of Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross.

■ Broxbourne Council is looking for residents to comment on the document, known as the core strategy, before it is submitted to the Government.

Once submitted the Government will appoint an independent inspector to examine the document before the council can adopt it.

The blueprint identifies the main challenges and key

drivers of change for the borough over the next 15 years.

■ The plans include proposals to regenerate neighbourhoods by building high quality sustainable homes on sites where they are well connected to facilities by public transport, walking and cycling.

■ The council hopes to build 240 new homes each year with a number of these being affordable homes for borough residents to buy or rent.

■ New retail and leisure spaces will be built with the construction of the Greater Brookfield complex and Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross town centre strategies will help the established

centres remain a focus for shopping and community life.

■ The blueprint sets out plans to create new jobs by looking at the existing employment areas and at Greater Brookfield and Park Plaza.

■ A clause will ensure that development in the borough enhances its surroundings and reduces its impact on climate change.

The green belt, Lee Valley Regional Park and other important open spaces, landscapes and historic areas will be protected and enhanced with infrastructure, including schools, rail and bus links and utilities, will be developed to support regeneration and growth.

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