

New Chinatown

Statement of Community Engagement

Introduction

North Point Global conducted a thorough programme of engagement in and around the Chinatown area to ensure as many local people and businesses as possible were aware of and had the opportunity to discuss the New Chinatown proposals. Initially we focussed on creating a strong brand and consistent visual style that would help us engage people effectively and communicate the core aspirations of the project.

The title New Chinatown was chosen as it stated in a simple and respectful way where the project was and what it was seeking to achieve. We felt it was important to respect the historic identity of the area and not try to create or impose a new marketing brand.

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NEW CHINATOWN

The engagements methods and media utilised included:

- Face to face with key stakeholders meetings
- Proactive media release and targeted briefings
- Eight page dual-language English/Cantonese newspaper for distribution to local residents, businesses and public venues
- Staffed public Exhibition
- Informal public display at local community venue

Key stakeholders meeting

The process of engagement with local stakeholders began prior to the commencement of formal pre-planning consultation. During the bidding process for the site North Point Global and their design team met with a number of key stakeholders and adjacent landowners to better understand site context, development potential and local aspirations. Amongst the organisations and individuals that we met during this phase were;

- Brendan Gleeson - One Vision Housing
- David Jones - Pine Court Housing
- Colin Ling - Chinese Wellbeing
- Wendy Dixon - Frenson Ltd
- Chris Bowen- LMH
- Mark Lawler / Erika Rushton - Baltic CIC

At the commencement of the pre-planning consultation these conversations and briefings continued with a series of face to face ,meetings and briefings with;

- Riverside Ward Cllrs
- Cllr Gary Millar (Chair Elect Chinatown Forum)
- Individual businesses and other adjacent landowners
- Rope Walks CIC
- Liverpool BID Company
- Chinatown Heritage Centre group /Sound Agents
- Professor Gregory Lee - Chinatown Museum and Study Centre project

Working with Chinese Wellbeing we held a lunchtime meeting with a number of the key stakeholders/community leaders in the Chinatown area on Friday 10 July. This took the form of a presentation by lead Architect Antonio Garcia from Blok Architects and input from International Operations Director, Pablo Garcia from North Point, followed by a question and answer session.

Key stakeholders meeting

The session included a full exhibition display of the plans and a run through of the plans on a tv screen.

All attendees were given a design pack with full information on the plans/designs for the New Chinatown proposals. Additionally, attendees were invited to ensure that their communities were aware of the public exhibition taking place on Sunday/Monday 12/13 July.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the following:

- Che Gong Tong
- Liverpool Chinatown Business Association
- The Chinatown Business Forum
- Wah Sing Community Association
- Pagoda Community Centre
- See Yip Community Association
- Hoi Yin Community Association
- Liverpool Chinese Gospel Church
- Chinese Wellbeing
- Pine Court Housing Association



Proactive media campaign

Working with our communications consultants Archetype and Liverpool City Council, we delivered a proactive media campaign to promote the scheme and also encourage attendance at the 2 day public exhibition. The campaign consisted of two targeted media releases and face to face briefings for key journalists at the Liverpool Echo and BBC Radio Merseyside. The release was sent to a comprehensive media database agreed with Liverpool City Council covering local, regional and trade media including;

- The Liverpool Echo
- BBC Radio Merseyside
- BBC North West
- Radio City
- Juice FM
- Bay TV
- ITV Granada Tonight
- Your Move / Move Commercial
- Place North West
- Business Desk
- Liverpool Confidential
- Estates Gazette
- Property Week
- Architects Journal
- Building Design
- Business Daily

The press release received extensive coverage across local and regional print, on-line and broadcast media as well as specialist property, regeneration and architectural press. In terms of public engagement extensive coverage in Liverpool Echo, Radio Merseyside, BBC North West, Bay TV and Liverpool Confidential was helpful in promoting both the scheme and the public consultation event

Coverage was overwhelmingly positive as reflected in the comment dialogue on both Liverpool Echo and Liverpool Confidential web pages.



Eight page community newspaper and posters.

Due to the condensed time period available for community engagement and publicity North Point decided to use a direct approach to informing and engaging local residents and businesses. We designed and circulated 7,000 copies of an 8 page community newspaper to residential and business properties across Chinatown, Liverpool 1 and the Cathedral Court residential communities. Additionally, they were distributed to public/community facilities, including FACT, Pagoda, Radio Merseyside, Bluecoat Arts Centre, Toxteth library, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, Baltic Creative, Constellations, Women's Organisation, local restaurants, cafes and retail businesses.

These were full colour tabloid-size newspapers written in English and Cantonese and containing extensive information about the scheme. The newspaper included full colour photos/visualisations of the plans and outlined the ethos behind the scheme and the aspirations for the new Chinatown area. One full page was given up to advertising the public exhibition.

The full page advert utilised the same artwork that was used for 30 AO size posters displayed in a number of city centre locations which promoted the public exhibition.



Public Exhibition

A 2 day public exhibition was held at Studio 2 in Parr Street on Sunday 12 and Monday 13 July 2015. The exhibition was open from 11am to 8pm both days, to ensure flexibility to enable maximum attendance.

This exhibition showed a full onscreen layout of the proposed scheme. Separate displays, showed the history of the area and how the culture influenced the thinking behind the design. Further displays pictured the aspirations of the scheme in terms of how other cities showcased their Chinese heritage and culture.

A large tv screen ran a short film designed by the Sound Agents, showing still and audio-visual montage depicting the history of Liverpool Chinatown..

The exhibition was staffed by North Point , Blok, Archetype and The Good Neighbourhood Company, between them, providing a full range of expertise in design, planning, development, communications and neighbourhood issues.

A total of 140 people attended over the course of the two days, including local residents, the business community, job seekers, students, property owners/developers and interested parties from as far afield as Cumbria and Wales.

The overall response was extremely positive and many people took the time to complete a short questionnaire on the proposals.

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NEW CHINATOWN

Our plans are based on a positive vision for the area and the desire to create a commercially vibrant, attractive and successful Chinatown. Underpinning that are several core aims to bring more people, more businesses and a high quality new destination to the area. We'd like your feedback and ideas as we develop our thoughts in more detail and work up a planning application to be submitted to Liverpool City Council.

Do you agree with our plans to bring a new residential population to the area by creating around 800 new one, two and three bed apartments as a key part of the project?

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree

Comments

Another one of our key aims is to create a commercial heart to the project with up to 200,000 sq ft of new shops, restaurants and offices and a Chinese retail hub with the potential to create 1,000 new jobs. Do you agree with this proposal?

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree

Comments

Would be good to prioritise services for local residents instead of business that attracts outsiders. e.g. clubs, restaurants, etc

The design philosophy for the scheme has been influenced both by the traditional Chinese art-form zhezhi (paper folding) and by the dragon shape of the development site. Do you agree with the proposed architectural style which is both Chinese influenced and also contemporary?

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree

Comments

I would do it as pedestrian friendly as possible, and chinese inspired greenery

The scheme currently proposes a mix of middle height and taller buildings progressing from North to South with the tallest buildings at the southern (Wedding Shop) end of the site? Do you agree with the overall approach and the proposed height of the new buildings?

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree

Comments

Another key part of our vision is the creation of new public spaces, green areas, roof gardens and better pedestrian connections to and through the area to create an attractive, accessible and green development. Do you agree with this approach?

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree

Comments

Easy maintenance spaces and easy to maintain free of trouble

In addition to the apartments and conventional office and retail spaces, we are also proposing to create a substantial number of live-work spaces throughout the scheme. These are spaces that provide both accommodation and commercial/retail space designed for Chinese businesses wanting to get a foothold in the UK. Do you agree with this aspect of the scheme?

☒ Agree ☐ Disagree

Comments

Yes, but without creating a ghetto type

Finally this project is envisaged as a key part in a wider strategy to regenerate Chinatown and create a world-class destination. What else would you think the area needs to make it a more attractive and exciting place to live, work or visit?

Comments

Peaceful, green and with identity.

Thank you

Name

Address

Email

Public Exhibition

A full set of responses is included in Appendix A.

In addition, conversations included:

- The idea of opening up one or more rail/subway links, in particular James Street station.
- A lot of interest in where the funding for the project had come from and was it all in place.
- Timescales for planning, starting on site and completion estimates for all three phases.
- Will there be space for a temple or/and a memorial to Chinese war veterans.
- Will Nelson Street be opened up for vehicular access.
- Will other areas of Chinatown be included in subsequent phases of development?
- What will be the nature of the proposed commercial and retail element of the New Chinatown scheme
- There was very broad agreement about the proposed mix of uses and generally positive comments about the design approach. A small number of people expressed concerns about building height and visual impact on the Anglican Cathedral.



Pagoda Exhibition

Since Tuesday 14 July the main display screen has been exhibited in the Pagoda Community Arts Centre, accompanied by questionnaires and multiple copies of the community newspaper, affording visitors to the centre the chance to have a look at and comment on the scheme. This facility will remain in place until further notice.



Ongoing engagement

We view the engagement that has taken place during the pre-planning phase as being an initial investment in relationship building as well as valuable dialogue that has helped us to refine and shape ideas for the next phases of design and delivery.

Further discussions, meetings and briefings are earmarked to continue during and beyond the planning process. Many of these will focus on ideas and comments raised during this process including;

- Approach to design detail, lighting and commercial signage
- The opportunity to create a new public cultural / visitor attraction within Chinatown
- The suggestions for memorial(s) for Chinese Service personnel and / or the repatriated Chinese seamen
- Improved commercial / community space for local organisations
- The possibility of including major Chinese-themed public art element into scheme
- Opportunities to work with the Chinatown HLF scheme and ideas to integrate New and Old Chinatown
- The possibility of including a pagoda or temple within this scheme or on an adjacent site within the area
- Consolidating proposals for local employment, apprenticeships and supply-chains

Moving forward North Point Global are fully committed to becoming a partner within the proposed Chinatown Forum and strongly welcome the creation of this body as a means of realising the unique potential of this part of Liverpool City Centre.

