

LSDG Open Meeting 13/09/10 - Notes

Comments

- How will starting with the city park help to spread change?
- It must create a true crossroad between the area of the city to the north and areas surrounding, such as Holbeck and Hunslet.
- The park could be envisaged as pearls on a string.
- Global Warming – we must get people engaged and enthused about the many associated issues.

- We need to make this area of Leeds in to a place where people WANT to live.
- If we create a highly sustainable community this will create a desirable place to live.
- The idea of bringing food production in to the city centre is good.
- Any development has to be of the same quality as surrounding areas (such as Chapel Allerton or Headingley) – in order to attract residents in to the centre.
- We need to ensure we mitigate the effects of existing ‘boundaries’ and that we don’t create any new edges or boundaries.

- Assets such as Temple Works need to be used to their full potential.
- Traffic – People drive to Crown Point Retail when it’s so close to the city centre retail, would be nice to walk there.
- How do we get through traffic out of the South Bank? How can we encourage people to use the Gyrotory and John Smeaton Way instead?

- Be willing to spend a significant amount on infrastructure, it will be worth it long-term.

- Crown Point is a strange case as it is an out-of-town retail park which is “in-town”

- Crown Point Retail Park is very lucrative with lots of visitors. Could be one of the key reasons for people to visit this area of the South Bank. Could we facilitate for and encourage people to use a multi-storey car park elsewhere and then walk between Crown Point and the city centre? However there are issues with the size of products purchased at Crown Point and walking!

- We should improve public transport within the centre of Leeds. Clarence Dock is an excellent resource to the city, yet it is hardly used because of poor links.
- Could we introduce a tram line such as those in Christchurch New Zealand and Oregon? These are a one track line, connecting important sites within the city. They are very cost effective.
- The city bus in Leeds has been a success, so why not build on this with a tram line?

- Should we also consider transport links further? Could Crown Point become a high speed rail interchange, the existing track cutting is still evident here?
- Also on a grander scale – Could we relocate a government department to the South Bank to spur regeneration, in the same way ‘Media City’ has in Manchester?

- Talked recently with Richard Boothroyd about how to make a larger vision, on the same lines as we are now talking, we need to work together when there are many separate developers involved.
- Could we create a sustainable development corporation? Developers and land owners could join together and create a long term sequencing and vision.

LSDG Open Meeting 13/09/10 - Notes

Comments

- If there is a definite plan of action this will attract long term investment as it creates a more certain future.
- A corporation which acts as a framework to bring people together to create a long term plan will definitely be beneficial. It's a bit of a chicken and egg situation.
- We need BIG ideas.
- We need both big ideas and separate developers to create a framework within which a diversity of developments can sit.
- We need to think about infrastructure as the key big idea. For example a new school within the area will change people's perceptions of the area first and then families will be attracted to living in the area.
- We could think about creating a specific identity for this area of the city, something to market Leeds. Maybe it could be similar to a media city, which would attract businesses.
- Next step should be to do a capacity audit to look at possible densities for offices and residential etc.
- Then we should look at several scenarios from low to high density and provide many options.
- Academic Rigour!
- The BIG idea could be a bad idea! Thought we left this sort of thinking behind in the 1960's.
- Individuals are already active, with small projects being done now to improve Leeds. Many of these are tourism based, community based or Eco based.
- There already exists a diversity which is exciting.
- We should aspire to create a framework with a mesh of fine grain within.
- Leeds is a town (perception) not a city. The distance between the centre and surrounding residential areas is walkable, so why have family housing built within the city centre?
- The New area would double the size of the city centre. However it won't alter the town mentality.
- We need to change people's perceptions – the city rim (Holbeck etc) is seen as a bad area, but it isn't really.
- Agrees – a fine grain of ideas sewn together is better than one big idea.
- Leeds is not a town! It is a complex city centre. Compare it to Manchester.
- We need to improve transport to the locations which are assets to the city, Clarence Dock for example.
- The river and roads create physical and psychological barriers. How can we mitigate the effects?
- The media city idea is interesting.
- In terms of function/s, Leeds is a city.
- If there was an area this size of farm land it would be easy to develop. There is maybe only one owner so it's like a blank canvas. In the city centre there is a complex web of ownership.
- If we get the city centre right then less of the green belt will be eaten up.
- Could we approach the development of this area like Edinburgh New Town?
- Leeds has grown on entrepreneurial spirit not government departments' work!

LSDG Open Meeting 13/09/10 - Notes

Comments

- People are still upbeat about development.
- We need some way of bringing together like minded people to work together on infrastructure to start with.
- If we have different architects working on different areas within the 'net' we will create a rich diversity.
- Who holds the key to unlocking the good ideas for road layout etc?
- In the past factories were built with homes nearby – a good model of development?
- We need small wins and joined up thinking. Start with the small changes which will facilitate further change.

- Agree – we need to find some way of bringing the big contributors together.

- We should be thinking long term. What should we put in place (the big idea or framework) that will last long in to the future as areas are slowly developed?

- Big idea Vs. Small scale – They're not mutually exclusive.
- We should think of the long term development in increments. Build up through a series of joined up actions.
- What comes first?

- What does Leeds want to be? A nice provincial city or an international city?
- Yorkshire is one of the worst regions for keeping graduates living in the city.
- We need to make the area attractive to entrepreneurs.
- Flooding – Is flooding a problem or a creative opportunity? We could move the river and create a park where it existed. Is this too big an idea?
- We could think about reversing the development process – at the moment it is roads then buildings then green spaces. Maybe it should be green first (cycle and walking routes etc) then built, then services.
- Einstein: Insanity is to go on doing the same thing and expect a different result.

- Could we create a Leeds Harbour which would attract development and residents?

- Response to the above = average

- In the past Leeds was an exemplar of future cities the 'Motorway city of the future'.
- In the past roads came first. Should we now alter our mentality?

- Flag up the cost of such huge changes to the road infrastructure.

- Not too hard to change, relatively cheap to put some grass seed down on existing road.

- We want to ensure that this doesn't all come together to create a Stalinist BIG plan.
- We need unique ideas and variety. To do this we should be open to ideas and be involved not critical and passive.

- 7 years ago got together with the council for the development of Yorkshire Chemicals site on Kirkstall road. Over this time most of the people involved with the project had moved on.
- The economics of long term planning and sitting on empty land is not good.
- The planners won't deal with a project until the ideas are all joined up. But with people leaving the project due to the extended time scale this was rather difficult.
- A corporation would help to pull people together and would stop a weak link pulling apart the whole.

LSDG Open Meeting 13/09/10 - Notes

Comments

- We need a base infrastructure which can be circulated to all developers then they're all working on the same canvas.
- In terms of flood defences – no need for huge walls! Although, land does fall away from the river, so something needs to be done to protect these areas.
- Local Authority = master plan. Entrepreneurs = fine grain.
- Development of the area should be in small chunks because when the people within the council changes and rules change, the work done could fall apart. Political timescales are not long enough and are a huge constraint to the long vision.
- However 20 year vision is good, so long as it isn't impossible (due to the above).
- The council plans work with the four key developers to create a whole. This is heading towards the ideas we're talking about.
- It needs public sector leadership. But who informs the public sector?
- There are many areas to improve!
- The vision for Leeds is a vehicle for change. So far the vision for Leeds could be any city, it lacks identity. We do need one or two big ideas to create a cohesive city with an identity.
- We're heading towards Armageddon – on 20th October there will be significant cuts in money.
- Thinking about the long term vision now is good timing.
- Feels like we're not even half started, there's only so much one set of people can do. We're all in it together so we should work together and maximise our resources.
- Martin Dean (Leeds initiative) would encourage a merger of ideas.
- Timing – Leeds missed lots of opportunities in the past as it's taken too long to decide anything.
- Demand – We really need to make the city centre attractive!
- It's time to plan for when the cash flows again.