

Development Forum off to a flying start

THE very first Development Forum featured a dozen or so people in a semi-formal meeting with the agreed aim of ensuring that Sheffield continues to position itself as a 'development-friendly' city.

It was hailed as a great success and a sound springboard to a more co-operative, positive and dynamic property sector in this region.

At the outset it was agreed that each meeting would cover just a small number of issues so that they could be examined in detail. This meant that the discussion flowed and saw those in attendance having frank and open debates about the burning issues that affect their daily working lives.

An example was how planners could draw on the national and international experiences of private sector practices and developers in finding realistic and practical ways to tackle climate change in new developments.

The Forum has several aims: to bridge the gap between the development functions of the council and the private sector; to enable experts to have input and share their experiences on the day's main development issues.

It is also determinedly not several other things: it is not a talking shop, not a place where grievances are aired, not a retrospective critique of council decisions.

Instead the Forum is a place for those involved in the property sector to ensure there is a mutual awareness of the chal-



David Fletcher, director of business investment at Creative Sheffield, summarises the inaugural meeting of the city's first Development Forum, a public/private sector initiative backed by Sheffield City Council, the Chamber of Commerce and Creative Sheffield

lenges ahead and for the public and private sectors to be firmly aware of the constraints on each other's working environments. All attendees agreed this was the start of a very positive and constructive environment that should prove valuable to the city as a whole.

This and future Forum meetings will examine more closely any improvements that can be made to a plethora of points, from specific issues such as the disposal of council land and property to over-arching themes and matters that affect all, including the Sheffield Development Framework. As an 'off-line' opportunity for debate this proved ideal.

The fact is that the city has been in dire need of a proper and professional meeting point that drew together the two sectors which often find themselves on opposing sides of a debate without the necessary insight into each other's stance.

Future meetings will again draw on a few large and weighty matters, such as sustainability, heritage buildings, the marketing of the city, tall buildings and even flood risks.

The people giving input into future meetings will be rotated so as to ensure the matters to hand benefit from the input of those with relevant experience.

Attendees from the private sector included representatives from Halliwells, Arup, DLA Piper, Turner & Townsend, St Paul's Developments, Shepherd Developments and Bond Bryan Architects.

As an opener to what is expected to be a robust dialogue, this first Forum was an encouraging start.

It is hoped strongly that other professionals from within the development sector will be happy to enter the fray and to ensure the city benefits from their wisdom and experience.

REFURBISHMENT BOOST FOR NEEPSSEND



Kelham House on Neepsend Lane has been refurbished at a cost of £1m

ONE of Sheffield's up-and-coming commercial zones has received a major boost with the refurbishment by Yorkshire developers S Harrison of Victorian offices on Kelham Island, Neepsend.

Kelham House has been the subject of a £1 million renovation as part of the major redevelopment of the Neepsend area by Harrison and others.

The structure of the period building has been retained and the insides modernised to provide what agent Guy Rusling describes as "the perfect combination of contemporary office facilities in a heritage building".

Joint agents Guy Rusling and Knight Frank are already reporting keen interest in the range of office suites available either for lease or purchase.

Harrison's Charles Vyvyan said: "Kelham House is located in one of the city's most vibrant regeneration areas which has quickly established itself as an attractive destination for business and for city living. The

refurbishment of the landmark Kelham House will certainly add to its appeal."

He believes that the excellent pedestrian, road and tram links and proximity to the city centre and the new inner relief road are major features of the location which will attract businesses to relocate.

Kelham House provides a total of more than 7,000 sq.ft of office accommodation across three storeys with the flexibility to let on a whole building, whole floor or individual suite basis. Businesses can choose to take suites from 450 sq ft or individual floors from 2,350 sq ft. Says Charles Vyvyan: "Certainly Sheffield businesses will recognise the opportunity that Kelham House offers to get in early on what is destined to be one of Sheffield's attractive office locations."

A brochure is available detailing the accommodation via agents Guy Rusling (0114 281 9990) and Knight Frank (0114 2729750). Harrison has also launched a website www.kelhamhouse.co.uk for those requiring more information.



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