



Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning

Northampton Borough Council

9th December 2013

Town Centre

This year's decorations include a 50ft tree in the Market Square, a 40ft tree at All Saints and seven 30ft trees situated on Abington Street, outside The Guildhall, outside the Royal and Derngate, St Peters Way and Wood Hill plus light displays along the main shopping streets. The Town Centre BID in partnership with the Borough Council and local Town Centre businesses have installed around 180 Christmas trees.

Free parking in all Borough Council car parks from 3pm on Thursdays and all day on Saturdays in pay on foot car parks, Mayorhold, Grosvenor, St Michael's and St John's began on 21st November until Christmas, and the Black Lion Hill roadworks are due to be suspended to ease traffic congestion during the Christmas period.

Regeneration

The Borough Council's Planning Committee, at its meeting on 26th November, approved plans to develop Sixfields Stadium. The application, submitted by Northampton Town Football Club, will see the East Stand remodelled and extended to provide additional seating that increases capacity from 7,653 to 10,000. Other alterations include a new conference suite with banqueting hall, gymnasium, office space and food kiosks. There are also provisions for additional parking, improved access for people with disabilities, landscaping and a new access road off Edgar Mobbs Way. The expansion is the first stage of a multi-million pound redevelopment of the area which will support growth in the Enterprise Zone and bring forward more revenue streams for the football club. Additional planning applications for housing, local retail facilities and a hotel are expected to be submitted soon.

The Cabinet approved arrangements for the demolition of the Greyfriars building at its meeting on 13th November. The demolition will begin on 31st March 2014 after the opening of the new North Gate Bus Station. Detailed plans are now being put together for bringing the building down. The demolition project will be complex and lengthy, since Greyfriars is a six-storey building that includes office accommodation and a car park as well as the bus station. Once Greyfriars is demolished, this prime site in the centre of the town can be brought forward rapidly for redevelopment.

The refurbishment of Delapre Abbey can now go ahead, following the granting of planning permission. The project involves refurbishing parts of the main abbey building, including rebuilding the conservatory and opening the south wing for events and public access. The 18th century stable block will be turned into a new visitor and education centre, shop and exhibition space, and restoration and conversion of the Billiard Room into a restaurant and café for use by the general public and for special events.

The skyline is changing again as the Gasholders on St Peter's Way are demolished to make way for the development of the Waterside site.

On 17th October we were hosts to a team of business leaders and experts from SCET, a network of 250 French local developers. Ubifrance, the French Agency for international business development sent the SCET (Services Conseil Expertises Territoires) delegation to Northampton to find out more about what is happening in our town. The visit was organised by the Trade Commission of the French Embassy with Northampton Borough Council. Following a meeting at The Guildhall, the group were given a tour of Upton. The Upton development started over ten years ago and has been praised for using the highest standards in design. This can be seen in the layout of the streets, the materials used in the construction of the homes, awareness of environmental issues and considerations about creating a community within a historic county town.

Planning

The planning application for the redevelopment of Franklin's Gardens is now available online for anyone to view and comment on. The Planning Committee will meet in the new year to make a decision on the proposals. The proposals show how the stadium's North Stand would be redeveloped to bring the total capacity of Franklin's Gardens up to over 15,500.

Northampton Borough Council will take over a number of WNDC assets within the borough when WNDC closes on 31st March 2014. The Borough Council will lead on a number of major projects including St Peter's Waterside, development on the land owned by National Grid and the further phases of regeneration at Northampton Railway Station. The transfer demonstrates the Government's confidence in the Borough Council, to achieve the completion of all the outstanding regeneration projects. and will bring local projects back into the hands of local politicians, who are accountable to local people.

Councillor Tim Hadland

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning