

WORKING TOGETHER ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO STIMULATE DEVELOPMENT

The current economic climate and the effects of the credit crunch on the property market were discussed at a recent meeting between officers of Bristol City Council and representatives from Bristol Property Agents Association.

One of the points discussed was that of the difficulty in the current market of implementing planning consents granted at a time when the economy was growing and property values increasing. Both parties recognised that these existing consents and also emerging schemes, may not be economically viable in the current climate.

The Council has always been sensitive to the deliverability of development, and in the current economic climate sees the need to pay particular attention to this. Therefore in these difficult market conditions the Council have committed to look at ways to enable investment and development to continue in Bristol and are prepared to reconsider and discuss previously granted planning consents if it can be demonstrated that the previously granted consent is uneconomic to implement. To this end discussions could address:

- The uses granted permission in mixed-use schemes
- The overall package and timing of s106 planning contributions
- Pre-commencement planning conditions
- The timing of development

It is important to note that each case would be considered on its merits and no commitment can be given by Bristol City Council officers that any changes proposed will be agreed. However the BPAA and GWE Business West wish to encourage this initiative and welcome this response by the Council in this difficult economic climate. In the first instance the BPAA and GWE Business West would ask its members or their clients to contact Gary Collins, Major Scheme Coordination Manager at Bristol City Council on (0117) 922 3762 or gary.collins@bristol.gov.uk. The opportunity to have discussions about historic planning consents leading to pre-application discussions for a new planning application will be available.

Bristol City Council, Bristol Property Agents Association and GWE Business West have previously worked together to assist development and produced the Bristol Planning Protocol which was launched in September 2007. This new initiative is a further commitment by the parties to work together to the benefit of Bristol.