

Planning for Michael Street development sought without a partner



An architectural impression of how the Michael Street development might look.

News that NAMA is expected to apply for planning permission for the Michael Street development has been broadly welcomed by City & County Councillor John Cummins.

However, Cllr Cummins has concerns that the joint venture partnership proposed nine months ago has “not progressed as envisaged”.

Cllr Cummins, who held a number of high level meetings with Minister Michael Noonan during his Mayoralty to secure his support for the project said he expects NAMA to lodge a planning application for a revised 22,000 square-metre retail development with an adjoining car park in the coming months.

“BKD Architects in conjunction with Waterford City & County Council completed preliminary schematics for the site last year and NAMA are now going to procure a detailed design team to prepare plans for a final planning application,” he said.

Cllr Cummins admitted to some concerns relating to the lack of a Joint Venture partner at this stage. “The goalposts seem to have changed slightly in that NAMA are now going to progress a planning application without a developer.

“This strategy does come with an added risk in my opinion in that the design will be locked in without the ultimate developer having come on board. While there will always be scope to alter the plan slightly, wholesale changes would not be possible.”

Cllr Cummins added: “On the flip side a planning permission will give certainty and will make the development a lot more attractive to a potential developer. NAMA may also weigh up its options and decide to develop the site itself as it is doing in a number of locations in Dublin, though finding a partner is certainly the preferred option.”

John Cummins concluded: “This development is pivotal for the revival of Waterford City Centre and I welcome the decision by NAMA to progress to detailed design in preparation for a planning application – this shows significant intent of their behalf.

“For our part Waterford City & County Council are committed to bringing significant added value to the project with the development of the adjoining apple market and the creation of improved traffic flows to the proposed car park on Browne’s Lane.

“I look forward to continuing to pursue this matter until a satisfactory outcome is arrived at.”