

KENT MESSENGER

Planning

06.11.08

I am impressed the council leader has announced a lot more time for consultation over "The Tower" (Gravesend Messenger, Oct 16).

This is just one bit of the regeneration of the town centre - it's a huge £150m scheme. Rightly, there is a lot of discussion about it. The development agreement was signed by the previous Labour administration.

They signed up "with pleasure" (look at the minutes) to the planning committee being obliged to consider the developer's proposal for 223 dwellings on St Andrews Gardens. This was supported by the Conservatives. The council cannot, on its own, now withdraw from the commitment to 223 flats.

The consultation will show the alternative to the tower is a ghastly and gigantic nine or 12-storey block across the Gardens, obstructing everything in sight. Under the current plan, it is tower - or blight, as I describe this thing.

The next few months will give everyone the chance to consider these, and the wider question: do we want regeneration of the town centre? The hard fact is the only thing on offer at the moment has to include A Building. So there are three options as I see it: the tower, the blight... or nothing if the planning application is refused both locally and by a government appeal inspector.

Please will as many people as possible make their views known: this is critical to this town in the long term.