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PLANNING AHEAD FOR THE WESTGATE DEVELOPMENT

Following planning approval in March 2007 for the extension and redevelopment of the Westgate Shopping Centre in Oxford, The Westgate Partnership has appointed Simon Ward as Marketing and Community Relations Manager for the new development.

Based at Westgate shopping centre Simon will be communicating with tenants, residents, special interest groups and stakeholders on what will be Oxford's largest retail development comprising some 90 new shops, a John Lewis department store and a new car park. The scheme includes 127 city centre apartments – 50% of which will be affordable.

The new Westgate will play a significant part in regenerating the West End of the city, providing jobs, promoting economic revival and creating attractive public spaces, walkways, artwork and buildings in keeping with the unique character of Oxford.

Work on the new development will begin in 2008 and is scheduled for completion in 2011.

Simon joins from the UK's largest planning company RPS, based on Milton Park, Abingdon, where he ran marketing activities focusing on Planning, Architecture and the Environment. Prior to RPS, Simon worked for the Oxford Institute of Legal Practice; consultancy Oxford Economic Research Associates and public relations firm Bottle PR, where his clients included National Lottery firm Camelot.

Commenting on the appointment, Richard Cable, Director of Capital Shopping Centres speaking on behalf of The Westgate Partnership, said:

“Prior to the granting of planning permission, we undertook a three year consultation period, listening and responding to the views of local people and stakeholders. As we begin to move the project forward, Simon's appointment will enable us to keep local communities and businesses both informed and involved in what will be a visionary development for the West End and for the City of Oxford.”

- ENDS -

Editor's Notes

The mixed use scheme to regenerate the Westgate area includes:

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- A shopping area of approximately 750,000 sq ft (69,675 sq m), (including the existing centre) with 90 new shops, bars, restaurants and cafes, together with a wide range and variety of shops including a John Lewis department store, aspirational fashion and lifestyle brands and smaller independent retailers.
- Facilities will include Shopmobility, toilets, baby care, a crèche and a children's play area
- 127 new city centre apartments, 50% of which will be affordable homes
- A total refurbishment of the existing Westgate Centre to ensure that it blends seamlessly with the new buildings and with its surroundings, particularly Oxford City Council's proposals for the redesign of Bonn Square
- A prominent new three storey glazed entrance for Oxford's County Library
- A variety of street facing shops, kiosks, and cafes to bring new vitality to Castle Street and Norfolk Street
- A roof-top garden at the heart of the development, providing a local habitat for wildlife and a unique location for a restaurant operator
- An extensive landscaping strategy for the streets and green spaces around the development, including enhancements to the existing Paradise Square and the area alongside Castle Mill Stream
- Design to achieve "Very Good" ratings for BREEAM for Retail and EcoHomes, with proposals to provide approximately 12% on-site renewables, rainwater collection, green roofs and naturally ventilated malls
- Over 2000 jobs will be created when the new retail offer opens, increasing the number employed in the centre to around 3,300. In addition, there will be around 2,000 jobs during construction. The Westgate Partnership will support a programme of skills training in conjunction with the City Council, local colleges and job centres
- Accessibility for all including provision for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and taxis
- A new 1,335 space multi-storey car park to provide better, safer parking facilities including wider parking bays, clearly marked pedestrian walkways, enhanced lighting, CCTV and help stations
- A significant investment in delivering improved public transport.

The Westgate Partnership

The Westgate Partnership is a joint venture between Capital Shopping Centres and Coal Pension Properties Limited. Capital Shopping Centres PLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Liberty International PLC, is the leading company in the UK specialising in the ownership, management and development of regional shopping centres. It specialises in retail-led town centre regeneration, providing mixed-use schemes, which respond to the needs of particular locations. Its portfolio includes Chapelfield (Norwich), The Glades (Bromley), The Harlequin (Watford) and The Chimes (Uxbridge), all of which it owns and manages.

LaSalle Investment Management, one of the UK's largest property investment fund managers, is responsible for the Coal Pension Properties' property portfolio, which includes The Westgate Centre.

For further information, please see www.westgateoxford.co.uk or contact:

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