



# WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH TERRY'S CLOCK TOWER?

an  
OPEN FORUM  
on Wednesday  
21st January 2015  
at 7:00pm  
at  
St.Chad's Church  
Campleshon Rd  
South Bank  
York YO23 1EY

How do you think  
Terry's Clock Tower  
should be used in  
future? Come along to  
this meeting and say!  
All welcome.



**Open Forum on  
TERRY'S CLOCK TOWER**

Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2015,

at  
St Chad's Church,  
Campleshon Road, South Bank

Revised Report:  
Paragraphs 3.1, 4.3, 5.1 and 5.2 amended

## **1 Introductions and Background**

1.1 Approximately 40 to 45 people were present at the meeting. Apologies were received from Ward Councillors and others. The meeting was welcomed by David Meek, Church Warden for St Chad's, and opened by the Chair of York Environment Forum (YEF), Phil Bixby, who explained the role of YEF in the event and introduced Alison Sinclair. She explained she was chairing the meeting as the former Chair of the York Open Planning Forum (YOPF), now merged with YEF, because it was the kind of meeting held in the past by YOPF. It would deal only with the future use of the clock tower on the Terry's site and not with wider planning matters relating to redevelopment of the site. Her personal interest in the clock tower stemmed from having lived within sight of the tower for many years, with neighbours who had connections with the factory. As a former employee of English Heritage, she had been responsible for referring the former factory buildings to EH in 2005 for designation as listed buildings. She quoted the statement of the tower's significance from the Statutory List Description:

“This building is one of a group consisting of headquarters offices, factory, clock tower, Time office block and liquor factory, which were all built at the same time. The complex is a strong group in architectural terms, presenting a unified style which reflects the strength and importance of the corporate image of Terry's chocolate firm. The buildings also have a strong historic interest, representing the most complete surviving expression of the importance of the confectionary business in York, and confirming on a national scale, York's high status in the business.”

1.2 The clock tower was identified in the Development Brief for the Terry's site as:

“... the most visually recognisable feature ....” (Development Brief, para.7.17); and as “... landmarks and symbols for York” (Development Brief, para.7.4)

## **2 The Significance of the Clock Tower**

2.1 A statement of the significance of the Clock Tower to him personally was given by David Meek, former electrician member of Terry's maintenance staff. He described the original purpose of the clock tower which had served to house not only the clock and its works but also as a water tower with a cast iron tank on the roof, and as boiler house.

2.2 Two members of the York Clock Group described the national importance of the clock at the time the factory buildings were closed. Terry's clock was one of probably only two of its kind in operation in the UK when the factory closed. It was known as an electric turret clock and was operated by an electrically driven mechanism known as the Gents' “Waiting Train” system. It was of considerable technical interest as so many other examples of this type of clock had been lost or had their operation replaced by more modern systems. It has four 8-foot faces, one on each side of the top stage of the tower which also housed a cast iron water tank.

2.3 The significance of the clock tower as a symbol of the City of York and of the economic importance of Terry's as a nationally prominent chocolate manufacturer and major local employer was acknowledged. The significance of the visual and familial link between the clock tower and Goddards, a National Trust property and former home of the Terry family, was identified.

### **3 Audience Discussion**

3.1 The Chair introduced Helen Graham, Research Fellow in the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds, who had been conducting a research project 'York: Living with History', exploring how decisions about heritage are made in York and how decisions might be opened to greater public participation. Helen led a general discussion of the significance of the tower to members of the audience, inviting people to consider two questions: "why is the clock tower significant to you?"; and "what should happen to it?". Before the meeting Helen asked the same questions via the York: Living with History blog and York Past and Present facebook group. Very similar memories and ideas were expressed in both online spaces and in the meeting <sup>(1)</sup>

3.2 The following were listed as reasons of personal significance:

- The clock is York's Big Ben
- It belongs to the people of York
- It is iconic, a landmark and a symbol
- It offers unparalleled views of the City and its setting
- It acted as the 'kitchen clock' for local residents
- It holds childhood memories eg. of riverside adventures; and "having more faces than the Terry's clock"
- It served as a fire watch tower during the Second World War
- It is visible from Goddards and demonstrates the family link with the factory

### **4 Proposed Uses**

4.1 Guidelines set out in the Development Brief for the Terry's site included uses for which no provision have yet been made, eg. for community use, art and heritage:

"Heritage Link,

Terry's heritage within the City is highly valued, and needs to be retained and translated into real benefit to the local community potentially in some form of heritage attraction or permanent public art record of its history" (Development Brief, para.4.26).

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<sup>1</sup> The York: Living with History blog: <https://livingwithhistory.wordpress.com/>  
York Past and Present facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/yorkpastandpresent/>  
The York: Living with History project is part of a wider research project 'How should decisions about heritage be made?' and is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Connected Communities programme.

4.2 The developers' proposals for conversion of the tower to residential use through the installation of flats were shown at the public exhibition of their plans at the end of November, 2014.

4.3 Peter Goodchild, Director of Garland (the Garden and Landscape Heritage Trust), outlined a proposal for the clock tower which he had put forward when the Terry's site had first come on the market. His Trust would be interested in creating a 'Heritage and Landscape Discovery Point' at the top of the tower. He suggested a lookout point and viewing gallery over York and its surrounding landscape from where the topographical evolution of York including key historical features such as the glacial moraine, the Roman settlement, the Knavesmire and the racecourse could be explained. The heritage of the factory would be included as an integral part of such an exhibition.

4.4 The Chair reported a suggestion forwarded by Peter Brown, Director of York Civic Trust (whose apologies were recorded), from "a satellite of the Northumbria University Art Gallery" for an art gallery in the tower.

4.5 Reference was made to proposals by an independent party for the reintroduction of chocolate-making to an adjacent building.

## **5 Audience Suggested Uses**

5.1 In audience discussion of uses which would celebrate and maximise the significance of the tower, the following points were made:

- The clock should work; while the clock is stopped, the tower is dead
- The clock should be repaired and restored, and re-started
- There was strong opposition to total conversion of the tower to flats, although there was limited support for a mixed use with part residential or commercial use, and part public access
- More creative ideas should be explored by the developer
- The appearance of the tower should not be altered
- There were opportunities for community involvement with activities in the tower

5.2 The following is the list of suggested uses:

- There should be public access to the tower which should include public space
- There should be a public access to a view point and viewing gallery at the top of the tower
- There should be an art centre, exhibition space and /or museum
- A museum could tell the story of chocolate-making and /or the history of horse racing
- A restaurant

- The tower should provide a link with local business
- Sports facilities - including scuba diving in the water tank (!)
- Part of a Terry's / Goddards / chocolate tourist trail linked to the City centre using mini-buses and the river

## **6. Conclusion**

6.1 The meeting concluded with an invitation to anyone who wished to be kept informed of future developments to sign the contact list. The meeting would be written up and circulated to participants, with copies sent to the developer and to the City Council.

6.2 Thanks were expressed to the Church and Parochial Church Council for making the church available; and to all participants especially those who had helped make the meeting run smoothly.

The meeting concluded at 9.00 pm.

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