



PRESS RELEASE

24 January 2007

PHOTOCALL: 11am, January 25, Elephant and Castle, Fegg Hayes Road, Fegg Hayes. Community representatives and partners will celebrate by holding the sign to be erected on site.

COMMUNITY CELEBRATES DEMOLITION OF EYESORE PUB

An eyesore pub has been demolished after being bought by RENEW North Staffordshire.

The former Elephant and Castle pub on Fegg Hayes Road, had been a magnet for anti-social behaviour and a source of complaints in the local community for many years. Vandals have repeatedly broken into the building and used it as a place to congregate and cause nuisance.

RENEW North Staffordshire bought the pub after Councillor Peter Kent-Baguley campaigned to address the problems associated with the burnt-out building, whilst highlighting to RENEW and the City Council the opportunity of the site as a place that could be used to benefit the estate as a whole. New uses for the site could include the development of new housing, or some other community use.

The masterplan drawn up for the future development of Fegg Hayes and Chell Heath during 2005 highlights the site and city council-owned land alongside it as a potential opportunity to improve the estate.

RENEW North Staffordshire, in partnership with Staffordshire Housing Association will now ask the local community what they would like to see done with the former pub site and the next door land during consultation over the coming months.

Hardial Bhogal, director of RENEW North Staffordshire said: “We bought the pub because it was clearly a priority for local people and because it will give us and our partners an opportunity to improve the neighbourhood in the future.”

Councillor for Fegg Hayes, Peter Kent-Baguley said; “I have worked tirelessly throughout my time as councillor in Fegg Hayes to ensure the people are listened to and this eyesore of a building be demolished. I am delighted that something has finally been done and this building, that has been an utter blight on the residential area, has finally gone.”

Stoke-on-Trent elected mayor Mark Meredith said: “We are committed to improving quality of life on the city’s suburban estates.”

As a member of the community, chair of Fegg Hayes residents’ association and a member of Fegg Hayes and Chell Heath community steering group, Marie Mitchell is delighted that something has finally been done about this site. She said: “The Elephant and Castle used to be a really good community pub years ago, but it had been empty for many years and since then it has caused misery for the whole community.”

Ends

You are invited to send a photographer and reporter at 11am, January 25, Elephant and Castle, Fegg Hayes Road, Fegg Hayes. The photocall will attended by Joan Walley MP for Stoke-on-Trent North; Stoke-on-Trent elected mayor Mark Meredith; ward members Cllr Peter Kent-Baguley, Cllr Ann James, Cllr Angela Miller; Ian Lowe from Stoke-on-Trent City Council; and Phil Brundrett, programme manager RENEW North Staffordshire.

Photographs will be available after the event.

For further information contact or Michael Howard at Staniforth on 0161 919 8034, Michael.howard@staniforth.co.uk, or Linda Isted at Staniforth on 0161 919 8030, Linda.isted@staniforth.co.uk.

Notes to editors

1. RENEW North Staffordshire is the housing market renewal pathfinder for Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Biddulph East. Our aim is to help make North Staffordshire a thriving, diverse conurbation where people want to live, work, invest and study. We do this by working with communities and partners to:
 - balance housing supply and demand
 - retain and attract population
 - provide quality housing that meets the aspirations of existing and new residents
 - transform the environment and make the best of our heritage and green space
 - support economic regeneration.

2. The RENEW North Staffordshire team can be contacted by the public on 01782 232024 or renew@civic1.stoke.gov.uk. Further information can be found on the website: www.renewnorthstaffs.gov.uk.