

Massive town plans given the go-ahead

Officials to have last word

By HENRYK ZIENTEK
Business Reporter

DEVELOPERS have got the green light to forge ahead with a £175m scheme for Huddersfield.

Kirklees councillors yesterday voted to let planning officials take the final decision on outline plans for the massive Waterfront Quarter scheme.

It means approval will be granted towards the end of the year — providing agreement can be reached on how much developers will pay towards the cost of road improvements needed around the site.

After that, the developers will provide detailed proposals for each phase of the scheme, with work on the first phase getting under way next spring.

Developers plan a mix of offices, 487 flats and leisure facilities on land bordered by Chapel Hill, Manchester Road and the River Colne.

The proposal — one of the largest schemes ever for the town — includes a 50,000sq ft, 150-room hotel, almost 280,000sq ft of offices and 458,000sq ft of flats.

There will also be a cafe and restaurant, a creche and gym and parking for 1,027 vehicles.

The site is owned by Sellers Engineers — which plans to move to a new site — Kirklees Council and British Waterways.

Developers Ramsden and Colne Developments say the scheme, which also involves opening a covered section of Huddersfield Narrow Canal,

■ **THE HIGH LIFE:** The huge development of flats in the triangle of land between Manchester Road, Chapel Hill and the River Colne. The tallest building is around 19 storeys high

could create up to 2,000 jobs.

Iain Bath, of property consultants Knight Frank, which is advising RCD, said: "We are absolutely delighted with the decision.

"It means the scheme can move to the next level and allows the architects to start working on detailed proposals.

"It is a major move forward."

Sellers International chairman David Armitage, who also chairs RCD, said the decision was also welcomed by employees.

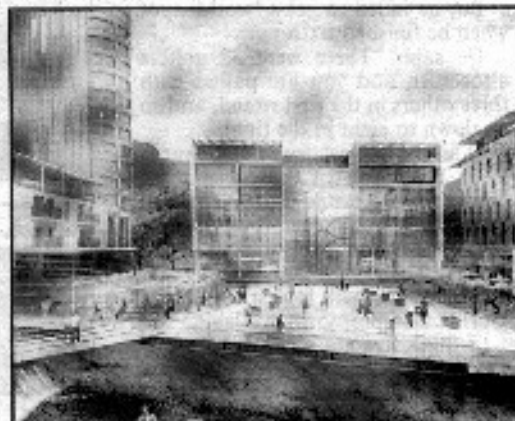
He said: "It gives a certain degree of security to the Sellers International group, particu-

larly to the engineering employees, who know that the move off site will go ahead.

"By June, 2008, we will have moved into a purpose-built factory in the Huddersfield area."

Councillors meeting at the Methodist Mission in Lord Street heard objections to the scheme from residents of Manchester Road, who said the new buildings would have an 'overbearing effect' and result in loss of light and views.

But consultants for the scheme said the layout and size of buildings had not been finalised.



■ **SPECIAL:** The architectural features of one of the smaller buildings around a paved square