

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

CABINET

DATE: 20 OCTOBER 2011

REPORT OF: STRATEGIC CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING, PARKS AND HIGHWAYS

LEAD OFFICER: HEAD OF POLICY AND DESIGN

SUBJECT: TWICKENHAM ACTION PLAN – REPORT OF OPTIONS CONSULTATION AND WAY FORWARD

WARDS: St Margarets and North Twickenham, Twickenham Riverside, South Twickenham

KEY DECISION?: YES

IF YES, IN FORWARD PLAN? YES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report to Cabinet the results of the consultation on options for the Twickenham Area Action Plan and to agree the general principles to be taken forward into the draft Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.2 The options consultation builds on the earlier Twickenham Barefoot consultation, the Twickenham Conference and the All in One survey. The report provides details and an analysis of the key findings from the consultation and seeks in principle agreement to the approach to be included in the Plan and as appropriate to further work. Information is also provided on implementation of some projects which is already being taken forward through the Outer London Fund.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet is asked to:

1. Agree broad principles for way forward on sites and policy principles as outlined
2. Agree the areas for further investigation and feasibility

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The production of the Twickenham Area Action Plan has involved over 2,000 participants so far including those who helped to identify the key issues at the [Barefoot Consultation](#) in July 2010, the [Twickenham Conference](#) in October 2010, the [All in One Householder survey](#) undertaken in November/December 2010 and the [All in One business survey](#) undertaken in January/February 2011.
- 3.2 The aim of the Options consultation phase was to explain to the public what might be feasible for Twickenham and gather views on a preferred approach. At the same time more detailed points could be taken into account in the next stage which is to produce the draft plan which is programmed for Cabinet in December 2011.
- 3.3 The Options Stage of consultation was carried out from 10th June to 22nd July, and was in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. The consultation was on a number of possible options for the regeneration of Twickenham town centre which were presented as three scenarios. Elements of these scenarios could be varied. The consultation comprised a number of public meetings and events, specific meetings for traders and young people as well as investigative meetings with key stakeholders including main landowners and Transport for London. During this time further feasibility work was carried out. A questionnaire survey produced 354 responses (2/3 online or electronic), and a number of separate letters were received.
- 3.4 The Full Report of Consultation gives details of the methodology and results of all of the consultation carried out during this phase; this is on line and will be available in the Members' Room. A summary of the full report is attached as Appendix 1
- 3.5 Main Findings**
- 3.6 Response to Objectives of the Area Action Plan and scenarios**
All of the objectives of the Area Action Plan received at least 75% support with the exception of the creation of a strong entrance to the town centre through the development of the Northern Approach (57% support). There was at least 70% support for improvements to the Twickenham retail environment by enhancing the existing retail offer through a programme of shop front improvements and a marketing strategy to attract new retailers, and consolidating the retailing in King Street, York Street and London Road. In addition, 68% support relocating the farmers market to Twickenham Riverside, 59% support encouraging new shop units facing Water Lane and 52% support encouraging more food and beverage outlets include new cafes / restaurants in York House, on the Riverside and Northern Approach. Scenario 3 which provided for transformational change was the most referred scenario with 41% supporting, followed by Scenario 1 (consolidation) with 32% and Scenario 2 (enhancement) with 27% supporting.
- 3.7 Analysis and conclusions:** these results indicate overall support for the concept of an Action Plan and the objectives as set out. Support for the different scenarios was quite balanced, but suggests that there is an appetite for more than minimal change; this was borne out by some of the discussions at the consultation events.

3.8 Responses to Development Proposals

3.9 Twickenham Station

The scenarios were the same for Twickenham Station as planning applications are already under consideration by the Council. The scenario, for a new station and mixed use development to include commercial, limited retail and residential uses and a new public square had 68% support, with only 22% against.

3.9.1 Analysis and conclusions

This suggests that there is in principle support for a redevelopment, though respondents were not asked to comment on a specific scheme. The site is already covered by the Development Management DPD policy on taller buildings and the Twickenham Station and environs SPD. It is suggested that the proposal site description for this site should be as the scenarios, and to include further design guidelines for this site within the AAP to reflect existing policy and to take particular account of the frontage to London Road and the relationship between this site and Royal Mail site.

3.9.2 It is therefore suggested that the TAAP proposal site description for the Twickenham Station should:

- Be as scenarios 1,
- Include site specific design guidelines to complement existing policy as described in 3.14 above.

3.10 Heatham House

3.10.1 35% support the relocation of youth facilities to the Royal Mail site while 45% did not support the proposal. This issue was also mentioned at the All in One event and the meeting with youth (with most people against a move).

3.10.1 Analysis and conclusions

There are clearly differing opinions on the relocation of the youth facility and this will only be acceptable if comparable facilities can be provided. However it is suggested that the option of relocation should remain open as there is the opportunity to provide a sustainable purpose built facility on the Royal Mail site. This would enable the restoration of Heatham House which is a listed building and provide the opportunity to bring a new use(s) into Twickenham to help the regeneration. The emphasis will be on retaining the facility within the town, considering the future of the sports fields (see under Royal Mail site below) and to ensuring that this important building is protected and enhanced.

3.10.2 It is therefore proposed that the TAAP proposal site description for Heatham House should include the following:-

- That in the event of a satisfactory re-location of the Youth facility the acceptable alternative uses of Heatham House would be residential, employment or hotel use
- That any future use preserves and enhances Heatham House and its setting

3.11 Royal Mail site

3.11.1 74% support Scenario 1 a mixed use development to include employment, community, leisure and residential uses and 76% supported Scenario 2 which also included provision for extended public open space along the River Crane.

3.11.2 Analysis and conclusions

The results indicate support for a mixed use scheme. The Council owns an area of land adjoining the Royal Mail site, south of the River Crane which includes the sports pitch used by Heatham House and it is important that any development takes a comprehensive approach to all the land to maximise the benefits of development. The site is already covered by the Development Management DPD policy on taller buildings and the Twickenham Station and environs SPD. It is considered that there should be further design guidelines for this site to ensure development reinforces traditional local character and that it relates appropriately to London Road and Heatham House and to any development on the Station site.

3.11.3 It is therefore proposed that the TAAP proposal site description for the Royal Mail site should

- Include the Council owned land
- Be as scenarios 2 for mixed use including community facilities(such as youth provision) and extended public open space;
- Include site specific design guidelines to complement existing policy as described in 3.14 above.

3.12 Station Yard

3.12.1 55% support the proposal for the Station Yard – for a residential / bus interchange or bus standing area. 30% do not support this proposal. Subsequent to the consultation advice from our transport consultants Peter Brett Associates and TfL is that there is little scope for an interchange on this site because of the restricted junction at London Road and the lack of direct access from the Station. It is considered that better interchange facilities could be provided by focussing on London Road/Arragon Road and that the idea of using Station Yard for an interchange area, while in principle attractive should not be taken forward.

3.12.2 Analysis and conclusions

In view of the above it is suggested that the site be proposed for residential use only.

3.13 Regal House

3.13.1 Scenario 2 for refurbished business space and hotel with use of part as possible cinema / leisure space, and scenario 3 was for possible cultural / entertainment / food and beverage uses on lower floors to create active street frontage on London Road were both well supported (69%). The owners of Regal House have confirmed a potential interest in introducing new uses.

3.13.2 Analysis and conclusions

In view of the overwhelming support for both scenarios suggesting the introduction of new uses to create a more active area it is suggested that the proposals site wording for Regal House should follow the approach set out in scenario 3.

3.14 Twickenham Riverside

3.14.1 Scenario 3 'comprehensive approach' (including mixed use redevelopment of the Santander block, development to the rear of the King Street frontage and relocation of parking from the Embankment) was the most popular with 39% supporting, followed by scenario 1 (including new public open space, children's playspace and community use or café) with 37%, and scenario 2 (including redevelopment of the Santander Block and creation of a civic space on King Street and development along the Water Lane frontage) 27%.

3.14.2 Analysis and conclusions

These results indicate that the support was quite balanced, although there is an appetite for more than minimal change. Some people liked parts of one and parts of another option and made further useful suggestions. It is clear that there are possible sub options which might be more feasible and/or desirable.

3.14.3 It is suggested that officers/consultants review all 3 options to consider possible configurations of development (including sub-options), uses, feasibility, transport issues and viability to allow a final decision to be made on the optimum approach to be put forward in the draft plan. This review will need to take account of any possible interim scheme currently subject of a feasibility study.

3.15 York House

3.15.1 There was considerable support for all of the scenarios which only slightly diminished as more possible uses were proposed. For scenario 1 - improved public access to York House Gardens there was 80% support. Scenario 2 which also included café / restaurant and events space, had 74% support and scenario 3 based on creating a community / cultural hub with café / gallery / restaurant space, exhibition and performance space and retention of some civic use had 69% support.

3.15.2 Analysis and conclusions

This suggests that there is considerable support for greater public use of York House, and scope for considering a wider area than just the House and Gardens. It is suggested that a proposal site should include use of the former road outside the Civic Centre for occasional events, which will allow this area to be reinforced as the "Civic and Cultural" quarter of the town.

3.16 Police Station

3.16.1 Scenarios including redevelopment of the Police Station were not generally supported, possibly because the public perceived this as losing the Police Station from the town. The potential longer term mixed use development site (police facilities re-provided elsewhere) to include retail uses on London Road (with or without residential to rear) was supported by 32% while 45% did not support.

3.16.2 Analysis and conclusions

There have been past discussions with the Metropolitan Police about the future of the Police station and whilst there are no immediate plans for a change, it is possible that within the 15 year time span of the Action Plan, the station could be relocated. If this were to be the case, it would be advisable to have a possible future use which would benefit the town. It is suggested that the Plan proposes that in the event of a satisfactory re-location of Police Station acceptable uses of the site would be include retail uses or other active frontage on London Road and residential to rear, fronting Grosvenor Road.

3.17 Telephone Exchange

3.17.1 Proposals for mixed use with active frontage onto Garfield Road to include creative industries / indoor market / niche retail / cinema were well supported by 62%, with only 13% against and 25% 'don't know' in response to this proposal. BT has indicated that they have no immediate plans to relocate from the site.

3.17.2 Analysis and conclusions

Despite BT having no immediate plans for release of this site it is possible that this may happen within the 15 year time span of the Action Plan. In the event of the release of the site it is suggested an active frontage would be required onto Garfield Road to include creative industries / indoor market / niche retail / cinema with residential to rear and fronting Arragon Road.

3.18 Holly Road Car Park and Farmers Market

3.18.1 There was more support (67% supported) for scenarios 1 and 2(retain as car park use and move the Farmers Market to the Riverside to free up space) than scenario 3 – adding an additional level of parking(36% support). Many respondents were against the relocation of the Farmers Market primarily because they considered any move might be a risk to the long term viability of the market. Further work indicates that there is spare off street parking capacity within the town, even on Saturday mornings when the market is in operation, so that in the shorterterm it is not essential to move the market to free up space.

3.18.2 Analysis and conclusions

With respect to the Farmers Market, with hindsight, this matter is rather detailed for an Action Plan and it is suggested that this specific proposal is replaced with a more general intention to encourage the establishment of part time permanent or one off markets or events in appropriate Civic Spaces within the town. This could then be applied to the area outside York House/Civic Centre (see above), Twickenham Riverside or other areas.

3.18.3 With respect to the additional storey on the car park it is proposed that the proposal to add an extra storey to Holly Road car park is not taken forward. This would not preclude reconsideration of this issue in a few years time if necessary.

3.19 Responses to Traffic and Pedestrian Proposals

3.19.1 The traffic and pedestrian proposals in scenario 1 receiving at least 65% support were for modest footway widening in King Street, the removal of street clutter and public realm improvements to the Northern Approach. 58% supported the closure of Water Lane, 50% support a review of parking and public transport and 27% support removing the London Road cycleway to allow for footway widening.

3.19.2 Of the traffic and pedestrian proposals in Scenario 2 71% supported the extension of shared surface along Water Lane (rather more than supported closure), 61% support the creation of a public space at the Kings Street / Water Lane junction, 58% support the extension of public realm improvements in the Northern Approach, 50% support landscaping of the central reservation, 46% (fewer than supported modest widening in Scenario 1) support more extensive widening of footways in King Street and 40% support the creation of a raised pedestrian crossing at junction of King Street and London Road.

3.19.3 The traffic and pedestrian proposals in Scenario 3 receiving most support were the relocation of parking from The Embankment to the rear of the Twickenham Riverside site (69%), improved pedestrian links between Grosvenor Road / London Road (61%), remodelling to give more pedestrian priority along Garfield Road (43%) but only 29% support the possible closure of York Street to through traffic.

3.19.4 Separate comments received within the questionnaires and at various meetings included concerns about sufficient provision being made for cyclists, concerns about servicing (particularly with respect to any restrictions to Water Lane and concerns about the implications of changes for disabled people). TfL indicated in principle support for widening pavements (with reductions to bus lanes) subject to more detailed modelling and if necessary adjustments elsewhere to maintain bus efficiency.

3.19.5 Analysis and conclusions

It is clear that further work is needed to detail, test and model proposals for transport and parking. Only 29% supported the possible off-peak closure of York Street to through traffic (except buses) to create an improved pedestrian environment in York Street (subject to no adverse impact on overall traffic movements), 46% did not support this proposal and 25% 'did not know'.

3.19.6 Initial work shows that there might be adverse impacts elsewhere in the town and limited benefits. However TfL have indicated that to carry out pavement widening in King Street it may be necessary for a more radical approach to traffic diversion. This will be investigated further.

3.19.7 It is proposed that further detailed feasibility work and modelling is carried out. The main areas for further investigative work are

- Station area improvements, including consideration of bus lanes and stops, provision for cyclists and taxis, improved junctions and site access
- King Street/York Street improvements including changes to bus lanes and stops, improvements for pedestrians, cyclists, servicing and consequent environmental improvements
- Water Lane/Church Street/Embankment – further investigation of opportunities to reduce turning movements and through traffic, consequent environmental improvements to public areas

3.20 Implementation

- 3.20.1 The aim is to take forward the emerging Action Plan as soon as practicable and environmental improvements will be brought forward in Twickenham within the current financial year, funded by round 1 of the Outer London Fund
- Replacement street lighting for those areas unaffected by proposed carriageway re-alignment
 - Landscape lighting of key buildings and features
 - Shop front improvement grant scheme
 - Enhanced parking signage
- 3.20.2 In addition funding has been made available for projects to promote the centre and arts and culture events.
- 3.20.3 The round 1 funding also includes funds for design development of the main thoroughfare and public space enhancements in line with the Twickenham Area Action Plan. In this regard the intention will be to undertake initial design work when the principles of traffic arrangements are agreed by Cabinet in December 2011. In order to progress this work promptly and ensure expenditure of the Outer London Fund allocation before March 2012 the appointment of consultants for this stage will be progressed during November 2011.
- 3.20.4 The Outer London fund round two bids will also include further projects within Twickenham including the implementation of the road proposals (which will also require TfL funding and possible use of Section 106 contributions).

4.0 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Twickenham Area Action Plan has been subject to extensive consultation in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, this is described in detail in the full report and summarised in the summary report attached as Appendix 1. There will be further statutory consultation on the Draft Plan towards the end of the year.

5 FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Cabinet on the 24th September 2011 agree to extend the contract with Broadway Malayan to complete the Plan as far as the pre-publication stage, the second phase of the contract to be for £51,185, taking the total contract to £107,656.50 (£56,471.50 already paid for phase 1). Funding will be from Environmental budgets and in the event that this is not possible, costs will be covered by the central contingency budget. The 1st round of the Outer London Fund is providing £496,000 towards implementation of initiatives in Twickenham.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The Twickenham Action Plan is required to be in general conformity with other Local Plans, the London Plan and National Planning Guidance.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 No specific risks have been identified.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT/CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Twickenham Area Action Plan will be subject to an Equality Assessment.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Twickenham Area Action Plan will be a statutory plan. As such, the local planning authority must have regard to the policies and proposals within it unless material considerations indicate otherwise and it will have considerable weight in the event of a planning application or with respect to some other relevant Council decisions relating to the areas covered. Some of the areas covered are Council owned and the effect of the Plan will impact on the future of these sites.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

- 10.1 The Twickenham Area Action Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Full Report of Options Consultation

12. CONTACTS

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