

**RENEWAL AND RECREATION
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

BECKENHAM TOWN CENTRE WORKING GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30 pm on 6 November 2014

Present:

Councillor Michael Tickner (Chairman)
Councillor Ian Dunn
Councillor Sarah Phillips
Marsha Berg
John Clark
Richard Comaish
Nick Goy
Ian Muir
Pam Notcutt
Dr John Parker
Steven Parkin
Marie Pender
Janice Pilgrim
Chloe Ross
Tony Stanley
Amanda Wallis
Cliff Watkins
David Wood
Cheryl Curr, (LBB Environment & Community Services)
Ayesha Malik, (LBB Regeneration & Transformation Service)
Kevin Munnely, (LBB Regeneration & Transformation Service)
Graham Walton, (LBB Corporate Services)

1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
	The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited those present to introduce themselves. Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Vanessa Allen, Alan Collins, Stephen Wells and Russell Mellor and from Jackie Rowsell.
2	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4TH SEPTEMBER 2014 (ATTACHED) AND MATTERS ARISING
	In minute 5(B) it was noted that the “m” was missing in “much” in the second paragraph of the section on lighting. The chairman noted the statement that lighting should be discreet and not too dominant and commented that the new lighting in the Bromley North Village scheme was rather dominant. It was agreed that the same lighting should not be used in Beckenham.

	The notes from the meeting held on 4 th September 2014 were confirmed.
3	BECKENHAM JUNCTION STATION PROPOSALS
	<p>(A) Southeastern Proposals</p> <p>Nina Peak, Partnership Manager, Southeastern Railways, was not able to attend the meeting as planned. The Chairman requested that the Working Group's disappointment be recorded.</p> <p>The station was owned by Network Rail and leased by Southeastern Railways, who were developing plans for the refurbishment of the station buildings. Southeastern had clearance to proceed with initial surveys. Nina Peak had sent some initial sketch drawings and a statement for circulation. For Southeastern, the main issue was to improve the booking hall and facilities for the increasing numbers of passengers (currently some 2.5million per year), but they were aware of the local concerns about maintaining the heritage of the station. The proposals were not primarily about increasing retail units at the station - one additional outlet would be created. Tables for a coffee shop were indicated in the booking hall. The notes indicated that Southeastern were also looking to provide better walking routes and information outside the station building.</p> <p>The key issue was the design of the front elevation, and their approach was to maintain views of the features of the original building by adding a glass box at the front. It was suggested that this would be more effective if the extension was completely glass, without the brick elements at each side. Most Working Group members supported the approach of keeping the new and old elements distinct and separate, although a number felt that the extension should only be constructed in matching materials and with a sympathetic traditional design. All were agreed that a higher quality design was required.</p> <p>Other comments included –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could the chimney structures be brought back into use with wind turbines?; • The gents toilets needed more than one cubicle; • Details were required of proposals for the Waitrose side of the station – it was suggested that a ticket machine was required there. <p>Officers were in contact with the Railway Heritage Group and the</p>

Working Group's comments would be passed to them.

Southeastern Railways would be invited to a future meeting.

(B) Station Forecourt – East Plans

The second major scheme submission to TfL had included some budget for the station forecourt, and East had prepared some sketch plans for how the forecourt could look; copies were circulated. East proposed moving the bus stop closer to the tram stop and removing clutter. Their sketches indicated an increase of two parking spaces, although this had not been checked in detail. The following comments were made –

- More clarity was needed for pick up and set down arrangements.
- The arrangements for taxi marshalling at night needed to be looked at.
- The walking route towards the tram stop should be covered if possible.
- Some people liked the “Beckenham” sign with individual lettering, while others felt a more traditional approach was needed.
- There was a potential pinch point where the pavement narrowed at the station end of the eastern parking bays.
- The bicycle parking needed to be more secure and to be covered.
- Bicycle parking could be used as in the Sydenham scheme in place of bollards to protect pedestrian areas.
- Seating needed to be organised, preferably with groups of traditional benches rather than random stone blocks.
- Better transport interchange between trains, trams and buses was supported, but not devoting more of the forecourt to a bus terminal.
- Installing a pedestrian refuge in Rectory Road near the junction with The Crescent should be investigated.
- A similar approach was needed for the northern side of the station.

4	BECKENHAM TOWN CENTRE MAJOR SCHEME
	<p>(A) Project Update</p> <p>The Working Group received a project status report – the project was currently running on target. Information from topographical surveys and utilities surveys had been received and was being used in developing the designs. It was expected that TfL would finish their work auditing the traffic models within the next week or two. A report from the Bromley Cycle Group was awaited – this would be chased up at the next Town Team meeting.</p> <p>Officers suggested that the design approach was progressing well for the main stretch of the High Street, but more work was needed to develop the major elements at each end; TfL were encouraging a more radical approach. Some Working Group members had reservations about this, and commented that the roundabout currently worked well for traffic and should not be changed. Another member raised objections to the use of speed humps and squared-off corners, and reminded officers to ensure that surface water drainage was provided for in the designs. It was confirmed that there were no speed humps – only very gentle gradients to provide for improved pedestrian crossing facilities as in the Bromley North Village scheme, and that the corner designs had been tested for swept paths.</p> <p>The Chairman stated that East and relevant professional officers should be represented at all meetings of the Working Group. Officers explained that East were present at most meetings, but more regular attendance had not been factored into the budget.</p> <p>The Chairman reported that Manor Road had been incorrectly labelled Manor Way on one of the plans on the website.</p> <p>(b) Roundabout Options for Traffic Model Testing</p> <p>Five potential options for the roundabout were presented for discussion. The Working Group was encouraged to set aside the traffic issues for the moment and consider the junction from a pedestrian's point of view, and as an important setting for listed buildings and the war memorial. One of the issues was the limited space outside the cinema, which created bottle-necks and did not allow people to assemble there. Members suggested that there was plenty of pavement space on other sides of the junction in front of Barclays and the Post Office.</p> <p>TfL had already made clear that a solution with four crossings through the centre of the roundabout would not be acceptable. While a traffic light controlled junction could work for traffic, it was unlikely that it would be a good solution for the town in other respects. It was</p>

	<p>noted that three options for the roundabout area would be drawn up by East to be tested by the traffic model in the new year.</p> <p>Most members favoured options that kept the roundabout largely unchanged. While some welcomed making the war memorial more accessible, others suggested that its isolation protected against vandalism and metal theft. A lowered surrounding wall was one possibility.</p> <p>Most working group members agreed with the view that imaginative thinking was required for the options to be tested with a focus on improvement for the pedestrian environment outside the cinema and post office.</p> <p>It was noted that the cinema had recently been refurbished on the outside. The Chairman invited everyone to attend the Remembrance Day ceremony that coming Sunday, at which he would be laying a wreath. A member reported that he thought the lights were not working – this would be checked. It was confirmed that all 19 memorials in the borough under the Council's control had been cleaned ready for this year's services.</p>
5	TOWN TEAM UPDATE
	<p>(A) Noticeboards</p> <p>The Chairman asked whether the notice-boards were being kept up to date it was suggested that blocks were needed to reach the top of the boards. A member suggested that the boards should be open for everyone to use.</p> <p>(B) Alleyways</p> <p>A small amount of feedback had been received from the consultation leaflets, most of it positive. The Chairman reported comments received from Councillor Stephen Wells. He was in favour of better lighting and the naming proposals, but he also supported gating some of the alleyways to improve security and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. A discussion had been held on gating at the Safer Neighbourhood Panel, where the sentiment had been largely against gating as it increased the perception of crime, could lead to people being stuck on the wrong side of the gates and many existing gates were left open anyway. Where the alleyways were vehicular accesses the gates would need to be set back to accommodate vehicles.</p> <p>(C) Mayor of London High Street Fund</p> <p>Applications for grants of up to £20k could be made to the Fund. The Town Centre Team was looking to make an application.</p>

6	UPDATE ON CONSERVATION AREA CONSULTATION
	The Conservation Area consultation period had finished about ten days previously, and a report would be presented to Development Control Committee.
7	TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT UPDATE
	The Town Centre Manager circulated an update on her activity since the last meeting.
8	ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED)
	A member raised an issue about a shop-owner on Croydon Road wanting an improved pavement.
9	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
	The next meeting would be held at 7.30pm on <u>Thursday 11th December 2014</u> – subject to East being able to attend.

The Meeting ended at 9.32 pm