

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

BECKENHAM TOWN CENTRE WORKING GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30 pm on 10 December 2015

Present:

Councillor Michael Tickner (Chairman)

Councillors Alan Collins, Ian Dunn, Sarah Phillips, and Stephen Wells

Marsha Berg, (Beckenham Business Association)

Jackie Groundsell (Chair, Beckenham Business Association)

Pam Notcutt, (Beckenham Society)

Alan Old, (Copers Cope Area Residents Association)

Dr John Parker, (Beckenham Society)

Steven Parkin, (Copers Cope Area Residents Association)

Marie Pender, (West Beckenham Residents Association)

Janice Pilgrim, (Kent Association for the Blind)

Peter Rice (Beckenham Cricket Specialists)

Manda Warner (Creases)

David Wood, (Beckenham Civic Society)

Stephen Wood, (LBB Committee Clerk)

Also present:

Paul Brown (Kelsey and Eden Park Conservatives)

Chris Cole, (LBB Environment & Community Services)

Councillor Alan Collins

Cheryl Curr, (LBB Environment & Community Services)

Councillor Ian Dunn

Kevin Munnely, (LBB Regeneration & Transformation Service)

Stephen Oliver, Regeneration & Transformation Service

Councillor Sarah Phillips

Councillor Stephen Wells

Terry Stanley (Beckenham Resident)

Sue Woodward (Beckenham Resident)

24	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
	Apologies for absence were received from Chloe Jane Ross, Gail Low, Julian Lewis, Jean Appleton, and Cllr Vanessa Allen.
25	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15TH OCTOBER 2015

	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. It was also agreed that the suggested amendments to these minutes sent to the Committee Clerk subsequent to publication (by Nick Goy), would be looked at and possibly incorporated in due course.</p>
<p>26</p>	<p>UPDATE ON PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS</p>
	<p>The update on Public Realm improvements was provided jointly by Kevin Munnelly and Stephen Oliver.</p> <p>LBB was pressing ahead with the detailed design in conjunction with FM Conway. The final detailed design was estimated to be completed by the end of March 2016. The final design would then be looked at by LBB and TfL for authorisation to proceed; further joint consultation would take place as required. The final design for the Public Realm would also incorporate the final plans for Beckenham Green.</p> <p>Stephen Oliver informed the Working Group that pavement samples had been agreed, and were going to be laid after Christmas. It was anticipated that a sample laying schedule would commence during the second week of January in the vicinity of Kelsey Square. This would afford the Working Group the opportunity to look at red brick and granite grey kerbing and note how this would look. The Chairman commented that he would like to see sample paving also laid at the Albemarle Road Junction.</p> <p>Mr Munnelly explained that it was standard practice for a sample of new style paving to be laid and then viewed by the public. Feedback would be encouraged, and a separate email account would be set up to receive comments. Cleanliness and durability would be two very important factors, and it would need to be ascertained if an enhanced or reduced cleaning regime was required. Marie Pender requested that a postal address be set up for responses as well as an email account, as not everyone used email.</p> <p>Mr Nick Goy asked if the current cost of the plans was the same as those outlined at the Citygate Exhibition in March 2015. He expressed the view that the updated version of the plans should be made available to the Working Group so that comments could be made. He was disappointed at what he perceived to be a lack of helpfulness from Julian Lewis when Mr Goy had contacted him directly at East Architects. It was pointed out that Mr Lewis was subject to contractual obligations with LBB, and would work only to the Council's directives. Mr Goy also queried the height of the raised tables at six junctions.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if any changes had been made since March 2015. Mr Munnelly responded that no significant changes had taken place except for minor details pertaining to crossing points, and that the website would be updated in due course; crossing points would</p>

be required to be flush with the footways. There would still be kerbs, but not changes of levels at crossing points.

Mr Munnely stated that blind or partially sighted people preferred tactile paving which extended up the footway and up to shop frontages, and wheelchair users preferred flat surfaces. Design teams had been meeting to discuss these issues, and it was noted that the crossing points had to comply with modern standards. Dr John Parker expressed the view that crossing points should be flush. Marsha Berg informed the Group that there had recently been an accident near the pharmacy at Village Way and asked if there was going to be a redesign at this location.

Mr Chris Cole advised that accidents were recorded, and would be available on a digital "Accident Map". He promised to forward the web link. There had to be a definite reason for any redesign, all of the issues concerning the accident having been assessed. The Chairman asked why it took so long for accident reports to get to LBB. Mr Cole stated that there were various reasons for this. Before the report was sent to LBB, the Police would need to complete their investigations and send a report to TfL

The Chairman asked Cheryl Curr to explain the work of BID companies. The group heard that a "BID" was a Business Improvement District that was business-led and business funded and which was formed to improve a defined commercial area. The benefits of BIDs were wide-ranging:

- Businesses would decide and direct what they wanted for the area
- Businesses were represented and had a voice in issues effecting the area
- BID levy money was ring-fenced for use only in the BID area, unlike business rates which were paid to, and redistributed, by Government
- Increased footfall
- Improved staff retention
- Business costs reduction
- Area promotion
- Facilitated networking opportunities with neighbouring businesses
- Assistance in dealing with the Council, Police and other public bodies

Businesses would decide on becoming a BID via a BID ballot. This would need to be agreed by 51% of those eligible to vote. There was also a rateable value criteria that could impact on the vote. BID funding would not affect the statutory responsibilities of the local authority. BID companies currently existed in Bromley and Orpington. The Bromley BID Company would be launched in April

	<p>2016.</p> <p>Mr Goy raised issues concerning value for money, the definition of “Term Contractor” and affordability. The Chairman explained that there was a distinction between “revenue” money and “capital” money. It was the case that LBB was revenue poor but capital rich. As this was a capital scheme it was affordable, and was supported by the Mayor of London. Mr Munnelly stated that VFM was key, and that a “term” contract was competitively tendered, would be costed again at the term rate, and would probably also be costed by TfL. In this case there were 2 contractors that had submitted tenders, and these were Conway and Lohac.</p> <p>Mr Stephen Parkin highlighted three issues that he would like to see resolved in the final design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses stopping opposite Tesco Express in Croydon Road causing traffic congestion which backed up to the roundabout • The bus stop and parking bay by Wimpey that caused traffic congestion • Absence of Loading Bays <p>Mr Cole gave assurances that these issues were being looked into.</p> <p>Manda Warner (Creases) asked how information would be disseminated to residents and businesses concerning disruption caused by forthcoming major works. Mr Munnelly gave assurances that a business liaison officer would be appointed to consult with local businesses, and there would be a weekly programme of updates. There would also be a regular E newsletter and regular meetings.</p> <p>RESOLVED that</p> <p>(1) up to date plans be uploaded to the Bromley Council website</p> <p>(2) Chris Cole would forward a web link for the “Accident Map” to the Working Group Clerk who would then disseminate this to Group members</p>
27	BECKENHAM GREEN DESIGN UPDATE
	<p>The Beckenham Green Design update was given by Mr Stephen Oliver, who distributed a design map for Working Group members’ attention. He stated that Beckenham Green was a priority within the major scheme. Paving would be laid to the perimeter of the park, and trees would be “up lighted” in an attempt to “activate” the space.</p>

	<p>The Design Team were looking at ways to locate infrastructure beneath the hard surface in front of the park to service the this area for markets. Marie Pender pointed out that the installation of infrastructure would also benefit church activities and other community events in addition to markets.</p> <p>A Working Group member asked what infrastructure was being considered and Mr Munnely answered that this would consist of electric points and water supply. Janice Pilgrim asked for the planter near the crossing points to be removed. Sue Woodward asked if the bus stop was staying. Mr Cole answered that it would be staying, but that it would be rationalised. He stated that currently the bus cage was too long, and that a one-bus cage would be sufficient. Mr Munnely suggested that the illumination of the trees could take place in advance of the main development. Mr Goy asked if consideration had been applied to providing water drainage which would benefit wheelchair users, and Mr Cole responded that this had been considered.</p> <p>Ms Sue Woodward queried what the “bullet like” images on the design map were, and it was confirmed that these were granite block remnants from installation of the stage. Members agreed that a key to the design map would have been useful. Mr Goy commented that seating should have backs and arms for comfort, and the Chairman stated that he preferred traditional hardwood seating.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Beckenham Green Design Update be noted.</p>
28	TOWN CENTRE TEAM/TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT UPDATE
	<p>The Town Team Update was given by Marie Pender and Cheryl Curr.</p> <p>It was noted that, concerning the Alley Way Design Project, the Town Team was meeting with the designer in the week following the meeting. It was anticipated that this work would be completed by March 2016. The Group heard that on December 12th 2015, Beckenham Town Centre was going to be assessed for the Purple Flag award scheme by an independent team of assessors and they would meet at the Police Station. The group was provided with an explanation of the Purple Flag scheme.</p> <p>Purple Flag was an accreditation process similar to the Green Flag award for parks and the Blue Flag for beaches. It led to Purple Flag status for town and city centres that met or surpassed the standards of excellence in managing the evening and night time economy (ENTE). It incorporated a comprehensive set of standards, management processes and good practice examples, all designed to help transform, the ENTE. Purple Flag was regarded as a positive</p>

	<p>initiative that would indicate an entertaining, diverse, safe and enjoyable night out.</p> <p>The assessment of Beckenham Town Centre would take place from 5.00pm on Saturday December 12th, through till 5.00am on Sunday December 13th 2015. The assessment would not be confined to drinking establishments, but would also encompass restaurants, the cinema, Beckenham Spa, CCTV operations, and a visit to a recital at a local church. Other areas that would be looked at would be the work of street pastors and taxi marshals. Data that had to be submitted as part of the application included crime statistics and hospital admissions within the defined Purple Flag area.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Town Team update be noted and that the Group be updated in due course concerning the application for Purple Flag status.</p>
<p>29</p>	<p>ALBEMARLE ROAD JUNCTION UPDATE</p>
	<p>Mr Cole informed the Group that the previous issue concerning the depth of Virgin Media cables had now been resolved, and that Virgin had agreed to re-lay the cables. It was clarified that the cables would be relaid at a greater depth so that they would not be damaged by traffic. It was noted that LBB would be making a contribution for the cost of this, but that this was not sizeable. The cost was covered by contingency funds, and would not affect the overall scheme budget.</p> <p>It was expected that HGV's would be better able to turn left coming out of Rectory Road, thus avoiding their use of the High Street.</p> <p>The Group discussed the timescale for the implementation of the works for the Albemarle Road/High Street junction realignment, and it was noted that there were two options to consider:</p> <p>(1) Undertake the junction re-alignment in 8-10 weeks' time--which would be close to Easter</p> <p>(2) Undertake the junction re-alignment as part of the Major Scheme later in the year.</p> <p>The Group felt that it would be better to undertake the work as soon as possible, and so the first option was agreed.</p> <p>Mr Munnelly pointed out that it could take 12 weeks for materials to arrive, and so action would be taken swiftly. It was also noted that satellite navigation companies would need to be contacted and advised of changes to the road layout.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the works for the junction realignment be commenced in 8-10 week's time.</p>

30	WAITROSE CAR PARK ENTRANCE UPDATE
	<p>The update on the Waitrose Car Park entrance junction was provided by Chris Cole.</p> <p>The Group heard that a traffic modelling report had been received back from Arcadis. The report looked at the implications of replacing the traffic lights at Waitrose with a roundabout. It was noted that if a roundabout was built, a pedestrian crossing would still be required, and there was likely to be some traffic congestion.</p> <p>The Chairman liked the idea of the roundabout, and was sceptical about it causing more delays than at present. He asked if traffic islands could be introduced instead of a pedestrian crossing. Mr Cole responded that a controlled crossing was required. Cllr Alan Collins asked if the roundabout would mean that traffic would filter into one lane, causing delays. He felt that the status quo with traffic lights was adequate.</p> <p>Mr Stephen Parkin was not convinced of the requirement for a roundabout and urged caution. The Chairman stated that change was required as the present junction arrangement often caused gridlock back to Thornton's Corner in the High Street and back to the Brackley Road junction in Southend Road. Marsha Berg suggested the idea of a zebra crossing nearby, stating that currently there was no crossing to get to the 54 bus stop.</p> <p>Mr Cole reminded the Group that safety implications were paramount. The Chairman asked if Mr Cole could arrange for the report from Arcadis to be disseminated to the Group for their consideration, and the item placed on the next agenda for discussion.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(1) that the traffic modelling report from Arcadis be disseminated to the Group for consideration</p> <p>(2) that the matter be incorporated onto the next agenda for further consideration</p>
31	ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION FOR OFFICE USE ALONG THE HIGH STREET
	<p>The Group discussed what they regarded as the alarming loss of office space due to the Government's introduction of a new permitted development right (PDR) which allowed the conversion of office space into residential accommodation without planning consent. The Group were very concerned at the number of Class O</p>

	<p>PDR notices that had already been confirmed, and were anxious to do what they could to mitigate future loss of office space. The Group were concerned that the PDR would result in a loss of employment and business opportunities for Beckenham, and would adversely affect the local economy.</p> <p>Marie Pender commented that the list of applicable buildings reported to the meeting which had already obtained Class O PDR approvals was not comprehensive, and that it may be the case that the situation for Beckenham High Street and surrounding streets was much worse than planning officers appreciated.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>(1) that an Article 4 Direction be pursued on a fast track basis to protect what office space is left</p> <p>(2) that LBB be requested to adopt very strong planning policies for Beckenham as a business and commercial centre</p> <p>(3) that LBB be requested to provide confirmation that Class O PDR applications would be subject to all relevant planning and building regulations, and that these would be fully and vigorously applied</p>
<p>32</p>	<p>UPDATE ON BECKENHAM JUNCTION RAILWAY STATION</p>
	<p>It was reported that Network Rail and South Eastern Trains had been invited to the meeting but had declined to attend.</p> <p>The Group examined a document entitled “Beckenham Junction Station GRIP 3 Report. This was a report that had been drafted in August 2014 by TTPP Construction Consultants for Network Rail. The estimated cost of refurbishment works at that time was £1.8m. The Group heard that TfL liked the design options, but no decisions had yet been made.</p> <p>Stephen Oliver referred to the design brief—the main issues highlighted on the brief by TTPP were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A flat roof which would offer benefits in terms of scale in relation to the existing building and in terms of costs and speed of construction. • Stock brick had been chosen for the external façade to match what was currently present. It was hoped that this would complement the original design of the station. A brick cavity wall would provide a background for fixing signage and a robust facing brick for high impact areas. A cavity wall would also minimize temperature extremes within the building. A

large glazed frontage would assist in creating a more open and welcoming entrance to the station.

Mr Oliver stated that the rail company would have to notify the Council of their final design intentions, and then the Council would have to decide if they would need a Certificate of Planning or if this fell within Network Rail's own powers.

Nick Goy stated that he did not like the way that glass and brick was used in the design. However, the Town Centre Team liked the glass frontage. Marie Pender queried the status of the document, and Mr Oliver stated that it was a scoping document but was not massively detailed.

Mr Munnelly suggested that the Group feedback to Network Rail and Southeastern Trains, and Mr Oliver stated that further updates would follow in due course. A member of the Group asked if the station was a listed building and the answer to this was no. It was noted that the train station was now located in a town centre Conservation Area.

Dr John Parker stated that he was appalled by the proposed design for the entrance extension. He did not support the option of a "glass box". He expressed the view that the visual aim for any extension should be sympathetic to the character of the existing building, and not an "off-the-peg add-on" as per the proposal, with its 1960's flat roof and dominant white fascia image. He felt that a glass enclosure was sometimes suitable, but not for Beckenham Junction Station. He asserted that the overall design should be modern, functional and harmonious with the existing building. His objection to an all glass façade was that it would not be transparent, because as planned it would have two small retail units, presumably a coffee shop and a news-vendor, each side of the entry doors. With glass surrounding walls these units could become an eyesore. He expressed concern that hard up against the glass walls would be: counters, storage units, display cabinets and racks, with adverts and notices probably pasted on the glass.

Dr Parker stated that these problems had occurred with the previous news-vendor. Timetables, travel information, etc., could add to visual clutter in a very small space. The inclusion of solid walls would contain and hide these items. Therefore the proposal should have a profile similar to the existing building, with adequate glazed entries and exits, matching brick walls and parapet gutter, with a slated pitched and hipped roof. There should be a modest station sign. This would be much more appropriate in architectural and conservation terms. Other members suggested that the station warranted a full restoration to include the restoration of the carriage porch, station chimneys and also the brickwork on the railway bridge. It was also suggested that rather than using glass and coffee kiosks, the entire

	<p>Victorian forecourt should be upgraded with suitable Victorian cobbles to enhance the buildings. Some Working Group members expressed the view that a quality heritage build on the site would add interest and visitor numbers to Beckenham.</p> <p>Mr Alan Old expressed the view that the scheme appeared to place more value on creating retail space at the front of the station, rather than using this space for passengers and that the original building was obscured by the brickwork 'cheeks' either side of the entrance. He expressed the view that the integrity of the original Victorian station building should be preserved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stripping away the relatively recent accretions to the structure such as roller shutters, boarded-up windows, ceramic tiles wall tiles, suspended ceilings etc. • cleaning the brickwork throughout, stripping back the paintwork on the window sills, lintels and jambs and celebrating the historic details. • enlarging the station entrance hall with a simple, glass structure that becomes a 'display case' for part of the original building: accentuating the historic brickwork and decorative details of the existing station building within the glass enclosure by uplighters set into the floor. • not locating two retail units at the front where they will clutter the entrance, but instead having one retail unit, situated in the existing staff room combining the new staffroom and mess room in the existing building at platforms 3 and 4. • Manda Warner asked if local businesses would get the opportunity to rent retail units at the redesigned station. Mr Cole answered that this would normally be subject to a tendering process. <p>RESOLVED that the Group provide feedback to Network Rail and South Eastern Trains, and that updates be presented to the Group in due course.</p>
33	HERITAGE PLAQUES
	<p>Mr Oliver held up an example of a Heritage Plaque. The Chairman asked if the Group were happy with the plaque design. A Working Group member remarked that it looked a bit large. The Chairman advised that the plaques would be laid into the footways and that more information about the point of interest could be included on a larger plaque.</p>

	Mr Munnelly stated that LBB wanted ownership of the plaques, but were keen for the Civic Society to engage. He asked if the Civic Society would assist with wording for the plaques, and Mr David Wood responded that they would.
34	ANY OTHER BUSINESS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED
	No other business was discussed.
35	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
	The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 17 th March 2016 at 7.30pm

The Meeting ended at 9.30 pm

This page is left intentionally blank