

Twickenham Rediscovered: Retail and Business Workshop

Monday 22 August 2016

**Lead Facilitators: Sean Gillen, Economic Development Manager
and Andrea Kitzberger-Smith, Planning Policy Manager**

Chairs: Paul Chadwick, Director of Environment and Mandy Skinner, Assistant Director, Commissioning Corporate Policy and Strategy

General Points

Feedback from the sessions will be captured and along with all presentation materials will be published on the Council website. All workshop attendees who leave an email address will be sent a link to the relevant webpage.

Asking a question at a workshop does not preclude anyone asking questions later or in writing.

Not all questions will be able to be addressed in the workshops, but all questions will be captured and the responses will be sent out electronically and available online.

1. Does the Council have a view on how much money they have spent and how much money they want to get back?

We have not decided the answer to this. The Council paid £6.5 million for part of the site (the area known to some people as the Santander buildings). If a private developer was to develop the site, they would want their £6.5 million back plus profit and extra on top. The Council is not a developer and could take a loss or aim to break even. The current proposition is to recoup the £6.5 million. It should also be a scheme that includes community benefits. A decision on this will be taken by Councillors at a Cabinet meeting within the next few months.

Ultimately we must go through the workshop process first, then revise the brief, and test different proposals against their financial viability and the additional community benefits they could bring. Obviously there are many views and different ideas amongst the community. For example, some options would bring in a return quickly, others slowly or not at all.

2. Does this mean we are less likely to get any community space? Do you know how retail would work on this site?

The discussions tonight will help us to cost out options. For example, business units may be seen to be less valuable than restaurant space economically. If having a community space means that the council gets back £6 million rather than £6.5

million, but it also means there are wider benefits for the community and a longer-term positive economic impact for the town – that's something we would consider and think about very carefully.

3. Are we stuck with Mr Terry as the architect for this site?

The Council has commissioned Francis Terry. We are going forward, through this consultation period to give the architects a much better brief.

4. Could I give the Councillors a framework for getting the £6.5 million back? This would include rates, parking residential etc. There are so many things that can be done to get rates back. Please can you do that?

As we go through this process, we will gather the real and tangible aspects / elements of a proposal, which we can then test financially. The 'framework' will become clearer and more refined through this process. We will be clear on the tests and measures by the end of the consultation period.

5. There are businesses in Twickenham which need regeneration to happen here. There needs to be an increase in footfall and we should try and increase footfall by developing this site. By either under or over developing the site, you won't achieve that. You need something to draw people in. It's a valuable site and it's the only site in the town centre which could do this.

Noted.

6. Will some of these issues be covered in the Community Spaces and Diamond Jubilee Gardens workshop?

Yes.

7. There must be a minimum of three schemes put before us for us to have a look at.

Noted.

8. If you spent £6.5 million on that space, you should aim to make that money back on that part of the site alone. Please leave the river frontage as it is - you didn't pay for that area of land. You owned it already.

Noted.

9. Will the information you are gathering now go to Francis Terry? What happens to the information which is about Twickenham more generally?

We will write up and collate all of the feedback given here tonight. We will also look at the information provided at the other workshops and this will help to inform a new

brief for the site. The comments given on Twickenham town centre more generally are still important as they provide context which is important for the site itself as well.