

Joint Workshop for Environment and Community Safety; and Culture Tourism and Enterprise; Overview & Scrutiny Committees

London Road Central Masterplan; Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Tuesday 28 April 2009 Hove Town Hall Committee Room 3

Councillors Present: Ian Davey, Pete West, Mel Davies, Warren Morgan, Bill Randall, David Smart, Pat Drake, Mo Marsh, Amy Kennedy, Tony Janio

INTRODUCTION

1. Planning Projects Manager Alan Buck opened the meeting which was the first time a joint scrutiny workshop had been convened to consider and comment on a draft SPD. Comments from this session would be reported to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting on 7 May 2009 with the recommendation to start the statutory 6-week public consultation period in late May. Part of the public consultation would include a 3-day exhibition in the former Co-op department store in London Road.

2. This latest draft had been informed by initial consultations in Summer 2008 including 3 well-received external workshops and a workshop for Members in November.

3. The format of the meeting was; after the short presentation Members could make representations or ask questions of the Planning Projects Team officers at each station covering the six themes:

- Land Use
- Movement and Access
- Urban Design
- Public Realm
- Sustainability
- Community and Funding

4. Comments written down at each station would be taken forward to the Cabinet Member meeting. (summary below)

5. Issues raised by Members:

- a development company and a local community group are also producing a Masterplan
- a list of all the City's protected/locally important buildings would be useful
- advantages/disadvantages of re-routing north-bound traffic
- advantages/disadvantages of excluding through traffic from retail areas
- implications of a square at Ann St /Oxford St junction
- effects of road junctions on traffic congestion
- width of London Road carriageway and traffic queuing

- importance of improving air quality, relating to long-term exposure to pollution

SUMMARY OF REGISTERED COMMENTS BY THEME

Sustainability

- Welcome priority given to sustainable retrofit and refurbishment rather than demolish, eg. New England House possibly also Vantage Point (7.6).
- Desperately need 'greening' of the area to increase biodiversity and soften the area. Street trees, green walls, etc. – This comment felt important by another member: Green infrastructure felt very important – especially green walls.
- Encourage as much local energy generation as possible.
- Green infrastructure paragraph should be given higher priority in the sustainability section – i.e. moved nearer the top.
- Should be an exemplar 'green' area building on & extending the principles established by One Brighton.

Public realm

- Smaller retail units, not large supermarket. North Laine retail culture.
- Threatening public realm – needs addressing.
- Public art / communal spaces / all positive improvements.
- Quality materials.
- Embrace 'Lifetime Neighbourhood' concept – including access for people of all ages & abilities, public lavatories, benches, bike parking, etc.
- To create a boulevard in the London Road you will need to remove more of the traffic.
- Need to create central refuge/reservation to break up London Road – make it easier to cross and less intimidating for pedestrians.
- Shared space could transform Baker St + Providence/Elder Place.

On Street view:

- Blinds / awnings and restricting signage – good ideas!
- New Central Square worth considering!

Urban design

- 44 Cheapside – last remaining small house. Should be retained.
- Critical relationship between St Barts Church and St Barts School – taking away the school would affect use of Church.
- New England House should be demolished – enough money has already been spent on it.
- New England House is a good building and should be retained/refurbished.
- Elder Place + Providence Place has tremendous potential as a walking + cycling route with a high quality public realm.

Movement and access

- Relocate St Peter's railings to Western footway (1.1) Trafalgar St to Cheapside this would help enforce against illegal stopping that affects traffic flow.
- Provide info on casualties/locations – where are key concentrations?

- Abuse of LHT late into Cheapside to go straight on – physical measure or camera enforcement.
- Agree with reducing bus concentration at Iceland/Somerfield – disperse to
- Elder Place – make more shops and use as alternative route for traffic, if possible.
- Arrange bus/walking tours to help familiarise/experience the area.
- Future parking schemes – how do they impact on area?
- Will any relocation of Fire Station have parking – access would be through residential area!
- Relocate traffic to Union Rd to incorporate The Level more into London Rd.
- Need to reduce traffic levels overall to achieve improvements
- Elder/Providence Place – use for cycle routes.
- Unclear how traffic flows at current rates will sit easily with pedestrian facilities, etc.
- Consider shutting Ditchling Road along The Level & routing main traffic around The Level.
- The London Road Traffic Management Scheme was only partially completed. The scheme introduced the one-waying of Viaduct Rd for southbound A23 traffic. The result was the road became a race track. The northbound traffic was ‘temporarily’ re-routed through London Rd with the intention that it would be re-routed along a re-aligned New England St (once clear of St Barts School). Baker St became one-way westbound at the bequest of Trades Concerned about shopper access. It wouldn’t be very welcome to complete the re-routing of northbound traffic into New England St now the New England Quarter residents have added. However, London Rd will never be free of traffic and the aspirations of making it a nicer place won’t be achieved unless the traffic introduced in now removed. Perhaps as the LRTMS ‘can’t’ be completed it should be undone again, allowing northbound A23 traffic to again go up Ditchling Rd and west along Viaduct Rd. (Pete West)

Land use

- Would like to see development sites 3 and 4 developed together to continue the valuable use of New England House in a rebuilt design at a lower height level with more access for clients at ground level.
- New road via Providence Place/Elder Place for just car size vehicles. Entry at Cheapside just for ‘shopping’ with northbound through traffic straying on the A23.
- The masterplan should take a more visionary holistic approach. Despite the potential development sites comprising around 50% of the built environment of the designated area, there is no overarching vision of how it will be developed together towards agreed vision (Pete West).

Community and funding

- When normal sources of funding are not available, there is the need to look for other alternatives. Mutual ownership schemes via community/third-sector land and development trusts should be considered for New England House. Devon Council has a number of useful examples being implemented.
- Like idea of Open Market as a source of local trade.

- Area lost anchors but has mix of local, small shops that people use on utilitarian basis/for their weekly shop.
- George Street is good example of what side streets with continental feel can be like.

*Brighton & Hove City Council
City Planning / Planning Projects*