

Subject:	Brighton Station Gateway		
Date of Meeting:	15th January 2013		
Report of:	Strategic Director Place		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Jim Mayor	Tel: 29-4164
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Ward(s) affected:	St Peters & N Laine / All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 The Brighton Station Gateway project has been under development since 2010. It aims to rationalise and improve circulation and access for people and vehicles at the main entrance points to, and in the area around, the city's main railway station. The project seeks to contribute towards a number of the Council's transport goals including assisting in economic growth, improving safety and security and enhancing equality of access.
- 1.2 This report outlines feedback from recent consultation on the proposed 'preferred option' for Station Gateway.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members consider the feedback from public consultation.
- 2.2 That members agree that more work should be done to better understand the impact of relocating the Station taxi rank to Frederick Place, and that the outcome of this work should be reported to Transport Committee in March 2013 to enable an informed decision as to whether to progress the preferred option to detailed design.
- 2.3 That members agree that further feasibility work be carried out on options relating to the Station canopy before a decision is made on this element of the scheme at March 2013 Transport Committee.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 In November 2010 Cabinet granted approval to undertake work that would lead to the enhancement of the environment around Brighton Station. The project sought a design solution that improved the station environment as a welcome, a place and an interchange, and the aspiration was supported by all parties.

- 3.2 A Vision and series of Objectives for the project were agreed with a representative group of Stakeholders on project commencement.
- 3.3 In January 2012 officers updated the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Cabinet Members Meeting (CMM) on the results of public scoping consultation. CMM agreed that the next 6 month stage of project development would incorporate development of design options that would be shared with the public in March / April to inform development of a preferred option, which would be shared with the public in July / August.
- 3.4 The project suffered a slight delay on the programme agreed at CMM. The delay resulted from the IBIS redevelopment of the Old Casino in Queens Road, which necessitated the current temporary rearrangement of traffic in Queens Road and Surrey Street. The changes commenced in April 2012, and it was considered prudent to delay consultation for a few weeks to avoid public confusion between the IBIS works and the Station Gateway project. As a result the options consultation was completed in June 2012.
- 3.5 At Transport Committee in July 2012, the results of options consultation were shared with members. Committee agreed that an amalgamated preferred option should be developed based on the positive and negative comments received relating to all the various options. This preferred option (with sub-options relating to issues such as local traffic restrictions and taxi arrangements) would be presented back to Committee in October, where members would make a decision as to whether the proposed preferred option should be progressed to full public consultation.
- 3.6 Officers worked with stakeholders between August and September to develop a preferred scheme for the space to the south of the Station that could form the basis of public consultation. At Transport Committee in October 2012, members agreed that this should form the basis of a final stage of consultation, and that officers should report back in January 2013 with the results of consultation.
- 3.7 At October Transport Committee members also agreed that a decision on the area to the north of the station should be put on hold, potentially until January, to give Southern Railway more time to ascertain whether it was feasible to deliver a dedicated cycle parking facility at the north of the station (on the basis that this aspect would have a significant impact on the design of the wider northern area).

Consultation: Overview

- 3.8 Consultation on the preferred option has subsequently taken place. A summary of the approach, issues encountered and feedback from the consultation process, is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.9 Compared with the previous stage of consultation, levels of feedback have been reasonably low. Most of the feedback has focused on the impact of moving the taxi rank into Frederick Place. A secondary focus of interest has been proposed changes to the station canopy. A third notable theme has been concern around proposed changes in Surrey Street.

Consultation: North Laine

- 3.10 Following Transport Committee in October 2012, further work was carried out with a selection of North Laine residents and businesses to refine proposals for a preferred North Laine traffic arrangement prior to consultation starting. Three workshops, which stemmed from invitations from the North Laine Traders and Community Associations, sought an arrangement that could accommodate the proposed taxi rank whilst maintaining local access in and out of the North Laine and avoiding through traffic in residential streets.
- 3.11 Efforts to identify a solution for the North Laine area are complicated by the inherent complexity of the environment and existing traffic management arrangements, the presence of a Royal Mail depot and Travis Perkins warehouse in the area (which necessitate additional servicing requirements to be considered) and the limited current abilities the council has to enforce moving traffic restrictions (by penalizing people for ignoring no entry signs etc).
- 3.12 The design team still feel that a taxi rank in Frederick Place is possible in practical terms. However, consultation to date has shown that relocating the taxi rank to Frederick Place has created a number of concerns and knock-on implications in the North Laine area. Work is currently being undertaken to better understand and evaluate these concerns, and where possible, allay them or identify alternative approaches.
- 3.13 In many ways, consultation has highlighted that the local changes associated with accommodating a taxi rank in Frederick Place are at least similar in terms of scope, complexity and community concern as those associated with recent changes to the transport network in the Lanes, a distinct project that has taken several months to progress. On this basis it is recommended that additional time is taken to properly investigate, quantify and where possible resolve concerns around North Laine, and to report back to Transport Committee in March 2013. This additional work should enable members to make a more informed decision as to whether to proceed with the Frederick Place taxi rank.

Consultation: Station Canopy

- 3.14 The preferred option proposes making better use of the existing public area directly outside the station building. This is encouraged by tackling the poor environment created by the existing station canopy. The current canopy structure is of debatable quality. English Heritage observe that "Its modern opaque polycarbonate roof glazing makes the station forecourt appear darker than was intended and it largely obscures the upper storeys of Mocatta's terminus building".
- 3.15 English Heritage suggest that a firm proposal to remove the canopy would need to be developed alongside a strategy to repair and restore the Mocatta building façade. The extent of restoration works (and therefore cost / viability) is currently unknown. English Heritage suggest an alternative approach could be reglazing the canopy with a material that lets more light through and painting the woodwork around the glazing a lighter colour. Several other consultation responses,

including a response from the Conservation Advisory Group, express a preference for reglazing / enhancing rather than removing the canopy.

- 3.16 Whilst the core Gateway scheme could be progressed without any change to the canopy, and any change would require the support of other partners, the design team feel that removing or improving the canopy would make a significant positive impact on the environment directly outside the station building. Without further investigation, it is unknown whether reglazing the existing structure would be more cost effective than undertaking any restoration work to the Mocatta building. It is recommended that this investigation is undertaken to enable an informed decision on the best way forward on the canopy element of the scheme at March 2013 Transport Committee.

Consultation: Surrey Street

- 3.17 There has been a relatively low, but still notable level of concern relating to the proposed changes in Surrey Street. The preferred proposal sees Surrey Street narrowed for much of its length to slow traffic, improve the environment for residents and resolve some existing issues in the street (such as informal use by taxis and people in cars picking people up from the station). At the northern end of the street the two lane width is maintained. Along with a built out bus stop and provision for dedicated pub servicing, the arrangement seeks to maintain traffic flow and minimize congestion.
- 3.18 Concerns raised include the potential for the arrangement to increase air and noise pollution (accentuated by the relocated bus stop) and congestion. The design team do not feel that the proposal will lead to congestion, and reconstructing Surrey Street should improve existing levels of traffic noise for residents. A definitive response on localized air quality impacts cannot be provided without detailed modeling work. However this can be undertaken and reported back at March 2013 Transport Committee, and measures could be taken to mitigate against any localized air quality impacts at the detailed design stage of the project. On this basis it is recommended that the Surrey Street element of the scheme proceeds in line with the current proposal.

Consultation: General

- 3.19 Whilst a few additional comments and concerns have been raised during the course of consultation, none of these are considered to comprise a serious objection to the wider preferred option. Where relevant these wider comments would be considered during the next stage of design.

Northern Gateway

- 3.20 As of early December, Southern Railway have yet to confirm firm plans for the cycle parking facility. Therefore it is not possible to update on opportunities for wider northern gateway improvements.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 To date the project process has been undertaken in line with the Community Engagement Framework and Standards, from incorporating workshops with

representatives from various communities affected by the station environment to the sharing of consultation information in this report. The Preferred Option set out in this report has been developed in close consultation with a representative group of stakeholders prior to wider public consultation.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The Brighton Station Gateway project has a budget of £90,000 in 2012-13, which is an allocation from the Local Transport Plan.

Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw Date: 21/12/12

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 In carrying out consultation the Council is under a general duty to ensure that any consultation is fair. This means that consultation must be carried out at the stage when proposals are being formulated, adequate time and information must be given to consultees to ensure that they can provide a proper response, and any consultation responses must be properly considered in reaching the decision.

The Council is under a legal duty as a public authority to consider the human rights implications of its actions. Parking and traffic restrictions have the potential to affect the right to respect for family and private life and the right to protection of property. These are qualified rights which means they may be restricted where this is for a legitimate aim, necessary and proportionate.

Lawyer Consulted: Carl Hearsom Date:21/12//12

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 An EIA will be undertaken during the design process to ensure the new scheme is accessible to all.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The enhancement project will promote sustainable transport, and particularly overcome current barriers to walking and cycling in the vicinity of the station. Sustainable construction practises and materials will be used where possible. The improvements will enhance the built environment and, through albeit indirect links to the greenway, contribute towards enhanced natural habitats and wildlife conditions. By improving the station as a welcome to the city and improving the immediate environment for businesses, the scheme will contribute to enhancing the local economy at a micro and macro scale.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Stakeholder consultation has identified the need for any improvements delivered by the Station Gateway project to enhance real and perceived safety in the area, especially later in the day. The design process will seek to deliver this objective.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The main risk associated with the current stage of the Station Gateway project is uncertainty around the impact of proposed changes associated with the relocated taxi rank in Frederick Place on the wider North Laine area. Therefore it is recommended that further work is undertaken in this area so that concerns and risks can be properly quantified ahead of any member decision.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 By tackling the poor quality of the existing public realm around the station, the project will overcome issues impacting on public health including air and noise pollution. The project will also enhance living and working conditions and contribute towards a healthy and sustainable place and community.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 Enhancing the station as a place, interchange and welcome will contribute towards the Corporate Plan objectives of tackling inequality and creating a more sustainable city, whilst the design process will contribute towards the objective of engaging people who live & work in the city.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Moving forward with the full proposal without further work to better understand impact on the North Laine could lead to a scheme being delivered that had negative side effects.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Further work to fully understand the impact and implications of locating a taxi rank in Frederick Place (and to a lesser extent options relating to the station canopy) will enable members to make a properly informed decision as to the best way forward for the Station Gateway scheme.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Station Gateway Consultation Summary

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None