

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 4TH SEPTEMBER 2008

EXECUTIVE – 15TH SEPTEMBER 2008

Report by the Economic Development Officer on the results of the public consultation
exercise on proposals for the regeneration of the centre of Roehampton

SUMMARY

This report provides information on the latest public consultation exercise on the proposal to regenerate the centre of Roehampton. An exhibition with 10 panels outlining particular draft proposals was held in Roehampton Library from 14th - 25th July 2008. Details of this were contained in a "Regenerating Roehampton" newsletter distributed to every business and residential property in Roehampton ward on 12th and 13th July 2008. The exhibition was staffed by the Roehampton Regeneration Manager and an officer from the Housing Department for some of the time. Comments were invited by 31st July 2008. It is estimated that some 1,000 people attended the exhibition and over 350 comments forms were taken, of which 65 were completed and returned.

27 comment forms were received with unfavourable comments because the regeneration plans do not include specific provision to relocate the Roehampton Youth Club Supporters' Association, otherwise known as the 'Boys' Club'. However, there is provision for a youth club and leisure uses in the plans. The comments about the Supporters' Association are also considered premature as the draft proposals, at this stage, are primarily about the amount and distribution of uses and not individual users.

38 other comment forms were returned. Of the 38 who stated a preference, 3:2 were generally in favour of the regeneration plans.

None of the comments received suggest that the essential features of the master plan, as summarised in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this report, should be materially changed.

Nevertheless, further work is proceeding (described in paragraphs 23 to 26 of this report) to refine the proposals to enable an outline planning application to be submitted in mid-September 2008.

Approval is sought for the submission of an outline planning application on the basis of the refined master plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Regeneration and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to support the recommendations in paragraph 3.
2. If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve any views, comments or recommendations on the report, these will be submitted to the Executive for its consideration.
3. The Executive is recommended:-
 - (a) to note the results of the recent public consultation exercise and the work being carried out, described in paragraphs 22 to 26, to finalise the regeneration plans for the centre of Roehampton;
 - (b) to approve the submission of the outline planning application and supporting material, subject to any changes resulting from on-going work and discussions with the Greater London Authority and the Borough Planner's Service to refine the proposals, provided that any such variation is in accordance with the principles of the master plan described in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this report; and
 - (c) to instruct the officers to report back on progress, as necessary.

INTRODUCTION

4. Previous work has been carried out to prepare plans to regenerate the centre of Roehampton, which have been the subject of two previous rounds of public consultation. Savills were appointed to build on the earlier work and prepare and submit an outline planning application for four sites in central Roehampton in order to help regenerate Roehampton. In June 2008, the Executive agreed (Paper No. 08-424) to approve the draft master plan to redevelop the four sites, consult with the local community and to authorise the preparation and submission of the appropriate planning application and supporting material. Authority was also given to the Economic Development Officer, in consultation with Savills and the officers concerned, if considered appropriate, to vary the draft master plan to take account of responses from the consultees, provided that any such variation is in accordance with the principles of the draft master plan.
5. The consultant's master plan now includes the following new uses (and their scale) on the four sites:-
 - (a) 281 residential units (comprising 129 one bed units, 129 two bed units and 23 three bed units);
 - (b) supermarket of 2,720 square metres (m²);
 - (c) retail units totalling 1,100 m²;
 - (d) health facility or employment generating uses, amounting to 830 m²;
 - (e) offices totalling 600 m²;

- (f) space for a new youth club, the housing office and Police totalling 600 m²;
- (g) library totalling 630 m²; and
- (h) 462 parking spaces (262 for residents and 200 for shoppers).

6. Key features of the master plan are:-

- (a) a new medium-sized food supermarket designed to ensure that a lot more local expenditure on food shopping is retained within the area. It will generate greater footfall in Danebury Avenue which in turn will generate more businesses for the smaller traders who will occupy the other retail units;
- (b) new retail units for existing traders to move into before their existing premises are demolished;
- (c) a new Library, café and community facility to be positioned at the focal point of existing streets to encourage visitors from the north and south of Roehampton Lane;
- (d) the overall amount of residential accommodation to increase from the 87 residential units there at the moment to 281 units;
- (e) approximately one third of the units would be affordable housing to provide a choice and mix of housing in the centre of Roehampton and so as to be able to offer current residents in the area the opportunity of moving back into the finished development;
- (f) two thirds of the housing to be provided would be private housing, in order to improve the overall mix and choice of housing in Roehampton. If practicable, the Council will investigate options to assist local residents to acquire units in the completed scheme;
- (g) new residential units would have private amenity space and access to shared communal space. Additional amenity space would be provided by balconies;
- (h) a new landscaped public space or square for outside community events and perhaps a small market similar in size to the existing 'green' with active street frontages to all new buildings around this public space or square;
- (i) a secondary public space would link this development with the new Sports Centre and University;
- (j) the Boys' Club would be relocated to a position close to the Roehampton Sports Centre and University to maximise the potential for sharing facilities;
- (k) the amount of employment generating space would triple;
- (l) other employment generating space (including a health centre, if this is required by the Wandsworth Primary Care Trust);
- (m) all new commercial units would be serviced from Danebury Avenue and the new supermarket would be serviced by means of an enclosed loading bay from Danebury Avenue with no reversing required on Danebury Avenue;
- (n) domestic refuse collection would be from street frontages;
- (o) buildings would rise to a maximum of six storeys and the new blocks would follow the existing urban grain along Danebury Avenue and step down at the edges to reduce the impact on day-lighting;

- (p) all parking would be provided at basement or at first floor level; and
 - (q) buses will continue to run through the square but the impact would be reduced by a 'home zone' treatment to the surface.
7. This report brings members up to date with progress since then and, in particular, the results of a further public consultation exercise held in July.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

8. A public consultation exercise was held during July 2008 to gauge public opinion on the draft proposals, to include in an outline planning application.
9. An exhibition consisting of 10 panels illustrating and describing the proposals was held in Roehampton Library from 14th - 25th July 2008. Details of this were contained in a "Regenerating Roehampton" newsletter distributed to every business and residential property in Roehampton ward on 12th and 13th July 2008. Copies of "Regenerating Roehampton" were also available in the Library. The Director of Housing also wrote to all tenants in the three blocks and the Borough Valuer and Estates Surveyor wrote to all the Council's commercial tenants informing them that the latest proposals would be on display in the library. A letter was also sent to all local schools informing them of the exhibition and inviting teachers and pupils to attend.
10. The exhibition was staffed by the Roehampton Regeneration Manager at the following times:-
- | | | |
|---------------------|---|------------|
| Monday 14th July | - | 10am – 2pm |
| Friday 18th July | - | 10am – 2pm |
| Saturday 19th July | - | 10am – 2pm |
| Tuesday 22nd July | - | 10am – 2pm |
| Wednesday 23rd July | - | 3pm – 7pm |
| Friday 25th July | - | 10am – 2pm |
11. An officer from the Department of Housing was also in attendance at the following times:-
- | | | |
|---------------------|---|------------|
| Monday 14th July | - | 10am – 2pm |
| Saturday 19th July | - | 10am – 2pm |
| Wednesday 23rd July | - | 3pm – 7pm |
12. The public were encouraged to visit the exhibition to learn about the Council's proposals and to comment on them. Comment forms were available and contact details for both the Roehampton Regeneration Manager and the Department of Housing provided so that visitors to the exhibition could make comments when the exhibition was not staffed.
13. Roehampton Forum members were invited to attend the exhibition after their meeting on 18th July 2008 when a representative from Shephard Epstein Hunter (the architects engaged by Savills to prepare the scheme) was available to outline the proposals and answer questions.

14. Officers also attended Roehampton Business Forum meetings on 12th June and 17th July 2008 to discuss the proposals. At the former, an architect also attended to explain the proposals and answer questions.
15. In addition, the plans had been outlined by the architects at the Roehampton Partnership meeting on 18th June 2008 and an Extraordinary Partnership meeting was then held on 15th July 2008 when Partnership members, and the public, were able to walk around the four sites, accompanied by the architect, to learn more about the proposals. This was followed by a question and answer session in the Library. A separate report (Paper No. 08-654 elsewhere on this agenda) provides further information on these Partnership meetings.
16. From 28th – 31st July the exhibition moved to the SureStart building at 166 Roehampton Lane SW15 (Roehampton).

RESPONSES TO THE EXHIBITION

17. It is estimated that some 1,000 people attended the exhibition and over 350 comment forms were taken away. The closing date for receipt of comment forms was 31st July 2008. A full set of the received comment forms is available in the Members' Room. 65 comment forms were returned by or shortly after the closing date. Any further comments received after this report has gone to print, will be reported verbally to the meetings of the Committee and the Executive.
18. 27 comment forms were received containing unfavourable comments because the draft proposals do not include provision for the Roehampton Youth Club Supporters' Association, often referred to as the 'Boys' Club'. The 'Boys' Club' is a licensed social club. These comments from members/users of, or relating to, the Roehampton Youth Club Supporters' Association are considered premature, as the draft proposals are primarily about the amount and distribution of uses and not about particular or individual future users. In material respects, the Supporters' Association is being treated in the same way as other occupants of the centre of Roehampton, in that the Council has not made a commitment to any non-public organisation, business, or individual or other current or prospective user, to be accommodated within the regeneration plans, as it is presently too early to allocate space in a future possible development. Nor have detailed plans been prepared to relocate any of the tenants, owners, residents, businesses or other users, who would or could be directly affected by the draft proposals, if they are agreed and then implemented. However, it should be noted that the draft proposals do include provision for a youth club and space for leisure uses, so the Supporters' Association are capable of being incorporated within the plans. It is presently envisaged that whether or not this materialises, would be determined in consultation with and pursuant to the terms of legal documentation to be agreed with the selected development partner, at the appropriate time. As a consequence, and subject to Members' views, it is proposed to respond to the Supporters' Association as set out in paragraph 24 (c) below. It is further

proposed that Officers meet with the Supporters' Association to discuss their requirements

19. Specific comments made are summarised in the Appendix to this report. The table below summarises the responses about the regeneration scheme draft proposals, but excludes the 27 unfavourable responses received from members/users of, or relating to, the Roehampton Youth Club Supporters' Association, for the reasons set out in paragraph 18. Those 27 unfavourable responses are nevertheless included in the full set of comment forms available in the Members' Room. Members will no doubt give them due consideration and appropriate; as they will to all of the other responses received.

For or against	Number		%
Generally in favour	21		55
Generally not in favour	14		37
Unclear	3		8
Total	38		100
Place of residence			
Lives on one of the sites	6		16
Lives on Alton Estate	15		39
Lives in Roehampton	10		26
Lives elsewhere	6		16
Unknown	1		3
Total	38		100
Location of respondents	In favour	Not in favour	Not stated
On one of sites	3	3	0
Alton Estate	9	6	1
Roehampton	4	3	2
Elsewhere or not stated	5	2	0
Total	21	14	3

20. Given the time and effort that went into preparing and publicising the exhibition, coupled with the meetings that were attended, it was disappointing to receive a relatively small number of formal written comments about the draft proposals. The number responding has fallen compared with the two previous consultation exercises held in the autumn of 2006 and 2007, when 1,219 and 345 people replied respectively. However, given the radical nature of the regeneration proposals, including the redevelopment of all four existing blocks, it is heartening that those respondents that expressed a view about the draft proposals were, by 3:2, in favour. This ratio seems broadly to reflect the views of those people that spoke to officers who were in attendance at the exhibition. Moreover, it is also worth noting that the two previous public consultation exercises resulted in the largest preferences being shown for the more radical redevelopment options when these options were presented (See Paper Nos. 07-234 and 08-45 reported to the Executive on 19th February 2007 and 21st January 2008). Members will appreciate that if the 27 comments received from members/users of, or relating to, the Boys' Club were included in the above

table, the table would show a majority against the draft proposals; but should refer to paragraph 18 above.

ACTION TAKEN TO REFINE THE REGENERATION PLANS

21. None of the comments received suggest that the essential parts of the master plan need to be materially changed. Nevertheless, the officer team and consultants are continuing to refine the outline planning application for the regeneration plans in response to the feedback received.
22. Areas currently being addressed that impact on the planning application are:-
 - (a) **supermarket:** the consultants' retail impact assessment confirms that there is significant leakage of spending from the Roehampton catchment area to other areas. The proposed improvement of shopping facilities will enable Roehampton to perform better as a local centre, will have no adverse impact on the established shopping hierarchy in the Borough and will secure a more sustainable pattern of shopping. Despite some adverse comments about the supermarket, this proposal remains an essential element of the regeneration proposals;
 - (b) **housing mix:** no adverse comments were made about the proposed housing mix so work is progressing to complete the housing 'Toolkit' to prove the planning case for the proposals for 281 residential units, with 31% being affordable. The affordable element would be split 60% tenanted and 40% low cost home ownership. There would be 129 one bed units; 129 two 2 bed units and 23 three bed units. There would be 52 tenanted units, 35 low cost home ownership and 194 for outright sale. It is proposed that the tenanted and low cost home ownership units would be managed by the Housing Department, possibly under contract to a registered social landlord similar to the "Hidden Homes" deal with Notting Hill Housing. The exact split of the 3, 2 and 1 bed units between tenure types has not yet been determined. However, it is suggested that the tenanted units should be split between 2 and 1 bed units, with the 3 bed units either being for full sale or low cost home ownership;
 - (c) **Harbridge Avenue:** it is proposed to widen Harbridge Avenue by 5 metres to reduce traffic impact on residents and improve access for the supermarket and new residents on the site of Allbrook House. The size of the supermarket has been scaled back to accommodate this;
 - (d) **access and parking:** the consultants are drawing up a detailed 'Transport Statement' to accompany the planning application showing how the scheme will work for all forms of existing and new traffic generated and showing relevant traffic management (including both on-street and off-street parking) arrangements;
 - (e) **junction of Danebury Avenue and Roehampton Lane:** there would be some widening of this junction to create 2 lanes to exit from Danebury

Avenue. Further meetings with Transport for London are planned to finalise this and the 'Transport Statement';

- (f) **sustainable development:** the consultant team is preparing a lot of additional supporting material with regard to sustainability issues (including flood risk, energy assessment, including renewals, air and noise quality, daylight and sunlight, archaeology report); and
 - (g) **open space:** further work is being carried out to show that the proposals will increase the overall area of landscaped green space in the centre of Roehampton. These are being designed to be of a better quality and more useable than the current largely unused green space. The intention is to create a pedestrian-friendly square lying at the heart of a regenerated Roehampton. In particular, the proposals include much needed improvements to the stark concrete vistas of Laverstoke Gardens and around Allbrook House and the Co-op.
23. The officer team and consultants have met with the Greater London Authority representatives to discuss the strategic planning and transport issues. Overall, they welcomed the proposals and asked a number of specific queries and outlined certain topics that need to be addressed in the planning application. These include matters relating to housing and affordable housing; retail and other uses; design standards; open space; public realm; internal layouts; architectural quality; access; sustainable development; energy and transport. These issues have been, or are being, addressed.
24. Other areas being addressed that have an impact on the regeneration plans are:-
- (a) **access to the library:** the Director of Leisure and Amenity Services has confirmed that he is satisfied, in principle, with proposals for servicing the library and refuse collections in Danebury Avenue;
 - (b) **Roehampton Youth Club Supporters' Association:** the Supporters' Association have also threatened a Judicial Review. The Borough Solicitor has written to the Supporters' Association explaining that there has been no decision specifically to exclude the Supporters' Association from the draft regeneration plans; that their views will be considered by the Council before any proposals are finalised and before any planning application is made (see paragraph 18 above);
 - (c) **businesses:** it is proposed that the Economic Development Officer matches the Director of Housing's action (see paragraph below) and writes to all the businesses and organisations (including the Roehampton Youth Club Supporters Association) located in the area inviting them to meet with officers to discuss the proposals and record their relocation requirements, in the event that demolition of the blocks proceeds. It is intended to complete these meetings by late October 2008, with any non respondents being further contacted in the weeks following;

- (d) **primary care centre:** a letter has been sent to the Wandsworth Primary Care Trust (PCT) seeking confirmation of their intentions. No reply has yet been received. It is understood, however, that the PCT's preferred option for a replacement for the present GP surgery is a poly clinic based at Queen Mary's Hospital. Therefore, proposals for the Co-op site have been made less specific about including a primary care centre;
- (e) **viability:** the viability assessment will be re-run in the light of the current view of costs and valuations once the regeneration scheme has been finalised;
- (f) **non-derogation leases:** 59 (out of 113) Deeds of Variation have been completed by the Borough Solicitor and a further 39 are progressing. The 15 or so who have refused to agree to Deeds of Variation, have been sent further letters from the Head of Professional Services, mentioning the possibility that the Council is likely to consider appropriating the relevant sites for planning purposes and inviting them to reconsider their position. The letters point out that leaseholders would be unlikely to receive more (and may well receive less) if they do not agree Deeds of Variation in advance of an appropriation for planning purposes; and
- (g) **“portable discount scheme”:** officers are considering proposals for a scheme to give existing tenants on the Alton Estate or nearby estates the opportunity to purchase one of the new units by means of a portable discount freeing up another flat on the estate for re-letting.

COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

- 25. In addition to the Roehampton newsletter that was circulated to all properties in Roehampton Ward, the Director of Housing wrote to the 87 tenants and leaseholders living in the three blocks identified for demolition in the regeneration plan setting out the background and confirming to residents the times when Housing staff would be in attendance at the exhibition. A total of 15 residents from the three blocks attended and spoke to Housing staff regarding their preferences together with their concerns and aspirations should rehousing be required. Generally, they were in favour of the scheme, but naturally apprehensive about the prospect of rehousing. A full range of options were discussed with residents and household details noted for future reference. Due to the relatively disappointing level of attendance, the Director of Housing has written to the remaining 72 residents inviting them to make appointments with officers for home visits to discuss the proposals and record rehousing requirements in the event that a block decant was necessary. This process is expected to complete early in September 2008 with any non-respondents being further contacted in the weeks following.
- 26. The Committee will no doubt be interested to know that a short presentation is to be made by officers this evening (4th September 2008) to representatives of the accredited resident associations attending the Roehampton Area Housing Panel on the proposals contained in this report, with a special focus on the housing related issues.

COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

27. Generally, the proposed highway and traffic arrangements appear to be satisfactory but detailed modelling and design of the Danebury Avenue junction with Roehampton Lane will be necessary in conjunction with Transport for London. Further consideration will also need to be given to some of the servicing and parking arrangements at the detailed design stage. Very careful consideration will need to be given to the surface treatment and street furniture where Danebury Avenue passes through the Square to ensure pedestrian safety.

COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

28. The financial viability of the scheme is, of course, dependent upon market conditions at the time that procurement is completed, both in terms of the construction market, but also residential and commercial sales. Due to the current level of market uncertainty, it is important that up-front costs relating to the site acquisition are minimised until site marketing has been undertaken to reduce the level of abortive costs.
29. The last estimates suggested that the capital receipt at the end of the development could be in the region of £25 million although for this to be achieved, it would be necessary for the Council to incur all the up-front capital costs, plus annual re-housing and lost interest costs during the development period in the region of £12.5 million. Once the regeneration scheme has been finalised, the financial assessment will be re-run again by Savills to incorporate the latest market position.
30. The current costs of the planning consultants and site survey costs can be met from within the Renewals Fund. The original tender submission assumed an earlier planning application. Any further delay in the submission of the application that results in additional work being required of the consultant will increase their costs, adding to the overall expense of the scheme and could potentially require a budget variation request.

CONCLUSION

31. Work is continuing to refine the proposals and it is recommended that approval be given for the submission of an outline planning application on the basis of the refined master plan. The results of the latest round of consultation will be contained in the next Regenerating Roehampton Newsletter and circulated widely. Similar material to that produced by private developers will be prepared to help to continue to promote the scheme.

The Town Hall,
Wandsworth,
SW18 2PU

MIKE BROOK
Economic Development Officer

27th August 2008

Background Papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

1. Roehampton Centre - Proposed Development: Shephard Epstein Hunter, May 2008. Available from Mike Brook Tel 020 8871 6202 or email mbrook@wandsworth.gov.uk.

All reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, regulatory and other committees, the Executive and the full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk/moderngov) unless the report was published before May 2001, in which case the Committee Secretary, Mr. M. Newton (020 8871 6006); email: mnewton@wandsworth.gov.uk can supply it if required.

COMMENTS MADE ON THE REGENERATION PROPOSALS

1. The Roehampton Partnership comments focussed on:-
 - (a) **green space** - the green behind the library plays a key aesthetic role, is in keeping with the design and layout of the rest of the Estate and it helps offset the starkness of the concrete of the existing buildings around it. As the new library will be built on part of this green space some green space will inevitably be lost. However, the overall scheme would provide more and better greenery. It was agreed that more work would be done on landscaping to emphasise the quality and quantity of green space to be provided as part of the outline planning application;
 - (b) **access** – members of the Partnership sought details on access and how the scheme would work operationally, especially at peak times with deliveries for the supermarket. An access statement is being prepared which would show in more detail how access arrangements would work and how parking would be managed; and
 - (c) **retail space** - four shop units are proposed in the new development on Site E whereas there are at least eight businesses currently trading along Danebury Avenue who might want to remain in the centre. The proposals can be phased so that all businesses can remain in the centre during the regeneration and not move elsewhere.

2. Other specific comments made on the comment form are summarised below:-
 - (a) some members and users of Roehampton Youth Club Supporters Association, commonly referred to as the 'Boys' Club' are concerned that the proposals do not include re-provision for their facility within the regenerated centre for Roehampton, or anywhere else for that matter;
 - (b) a number welcomed the proposal for a new library and ask for it to be bigger than the current library with a wider range of services;
 - (c) a 'landmark building for the library shielding the square from Roehampton Lane is a good idea';
 - (d) but some said the new library should not be sited on the green space;
 - (e) high architectural standards are required;
 - (f) would prefer existing buildings to be refurbished;
 - (g) the proposals will result in too much extra traffic – a point made by a number of people;
 - (h) pleased that overall heights of buildings will be reduced;

- (i) supermarket not needed;
 - (j) supermarket and community café – the area needs these services, mentioned by a number of people;
 - (k) a good new supermarket is supported;
 - (l) purpose build youth club to get youth on board and engaged is good;
 - (m) important to get correct balance of tenants in new scheme;
 - (n) concern that small businesses will ‘lose out’;
 - (o) ‘exciting’ plans would give this area a social and economic boost;
 - (p) good idea to incorporate café into new library;
 - (q) demolition of Allbrook House welcomed;
 - (r) the buildings scheduled for replacement very much need to go;
 - (s) could there be a footbridge over Roehampton Lane;
 - (t) new buildings could be higher;
 - (u) ‘community space’ should accommodate artists and small businesses;
 - (v) the plans create a community square is appealing;
 - (w) improve Roehampton Lane and bring King’s Head and Montague Arms back into use;
 - (x) adequate arrangements must be made to rehouse tenants;
 - (y) ‘great idea long overdue’; and
 - (z) the plans are ‘looking good’.
-