

ALTON AREA MASTERPLAN

INTERIM CONSULTATION REPORT
FEBRUARY 2014

HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE FUTURE
OF YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD



Alton Area Masterplan Interim Consultation Report

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1. Introduction

This Interim Consultation Report presents the findings from the Options consultation and engagement programme which ran as part of the Options stage of the Alton area Masterplan in September and October 2013.

The masterplan options were developed to address the challenges and opportunities facing the Alton area. Different options for how parts of the Alton area could change were developed and local people were asked to comment on these proposals. Local residents' views helped decide which components of these options were developed further, alongside other considerations outlined below. The main components of the options included: •

- Three options were presented for the revitalisation of Danebury Avenue Town Centre
- Three options were presented for the revitalisation of the park centre at Portswood Place.
- Three options were presented to provide higher quality homes on Danebury Avenue
- Ideas were presented to improve the new central park, new public space and new local connections

The consultation period lasted six weeks and took place between 14th September and 28th October 2013. The purpose of the consultation sought to determine the local communities' views on the proposals for the Alton area.

The consultation and engagement programme included the following ways in which residents provided feedback on the Masterplan:

- an open consultation event for all residents, including a presentation from the Masterplan team;
- a standing exhibition and manned drop-in sessions at the Library;
- a presentation to the Roehampton Partnership;
- attendance at Roehampton Forum, Roehampton Trust, Roehampton Area, Housing Panel and Putney Society;
- other engagement activities for specific groups (which included young people, schools events, businesses, etc.)
- separate meetings with statutory and other stakeholders and service providers
- a booklet and questionnaire to be sent to all residents in the Alton area.

The questionnaires distributed with the options booklet, which were also available online, was just one of a number of ways in which feedback was collected as part of the options consultation.

At the start of the Masterplan process, some 'pre-consultation' engagement with local people and organisations was carried out, which suggested that in order to undertake an effective programme of consultation a proactive and flexible approach to consultation would be required, that didn't solely rely on the submission of a written questionnaire.

Therefore the development of the preferred option took into account not just the feedback received through the questionnaire, but the comments and feedback received through the numerous other forms of engagement which were carried out.

The comments and feedback recorded through each of these methods of engagement was considered along with the views of elected members, Council officers, and the expert views of the appointed Masterplan team, to develop the preferred option. The development of the preferred option was also informed by a financial appraisal process, and existing planning, conservation and heritage policies.

An additional 8 week period of consultation will take place as part of the preferred option consultation until 6th April 2014, providing further opportunities for all residents to comment on the preferred option proposals. Again this consultation and engagement programme will seek the views of residents through a variety of ways including an exhibition and manned drop-in sessions at the library, an information booklet sent to each household in the Alton area, an open day session, attendance at community meetings, sessions and events, and the team will be visiting each household living in a property directly included in the redevelopment area.

2. Consultation process – Who we spoke to and how we spoke to them

During the option consultation process a comprehensive engagement programme was undertaken to ensure all relevant community stakeholders were able to input into the masterplanning process.

The consultation and engagement programme included the following ways in which residents provided feedback on the Masterplan options:

- 7 drop-in sessions run at Roehampton library
- Attendance at 32 community groups, meetings and forums
- 257 postal / online questionnaires
- 11 written responses from community organisations and Council departments
- All consultation materials were available online.
- Regular updates about the Masterplan process have been provided via:
 - Roehampton Voice
 - Brightside
 - Homelife
 - E-Newsletter to those on consultation database

A newsletter specifically explaining the consultation process and addressing 'frequently asked questions' was also sent to all households and businesses in the Alton area in December 2013.

The questionnaire was only one way we collected feedback from the community. We spoke to many community groups and we received formal written responses from the following organisations:

- Roehampton Methodist Church
- The Roehampton Forum
- Putney Vale Residents Association
- Putney Labour Party
- The Integrated Youth Support Services
- WBC Parks and Leisure Services
- WBC Planning and Environmental Services
- The Putney Society
- Roehampton University
- Danebury Avenue Post Office
- Western Area Housing Team
- Royal Parks
- Library and Information Services

We also spoke to the following community groups. Their feedback was recorded and considered in the development of the preferred option:

- Alton Primary School – staff and parents
- Heathmere Primary School – staff and parents
- Regenerate
- Wandsworth Youth Council
- Lennox Community Centre Parent and Toddler Group
- Eastwood Children's Centre Parents Voice Group
- Roehampton University Students Union
- Putney Vale Parents and Toddler group
- Alton Activity Centre Parent and Toddler Group
- Roehampton Trust
- Focus Hall Committee
- Regenerate RISE
- Roehampton Methodist Church Over 60s café
- Eastwood Nursery Parents' Group
- Eastwood Children's Centre
- The Base Youth Centre

- Student Parliament – ARK Putney Academy
- Minstead Sheltered Residents Association
- Minstead Sheltered residents living at 2 - 26
- Lennox Sheltered Residents Association
- Finchdean House Residents Association
- Roehampton Older Peoples Task Force
- Queen Mary's Residents' Association
- Danebury Avenue Surgery
- Ibstock Place School?
- Danebury Avenue Surgery Patients Advisory Group
- Mosaic Jewish Primary School

Approximately 400 individual comments were recorded at these events, which had a combined audience of over 1,100 people (though this includes an element of duplication of attendance). These comments have been distilled and summarised into the feedback contained in part 5 of this report.

3. Options Questionnaire

A questionnaire was sent out to all residents along with the options booklet. This questionnaire was also available online. The questionnaire sought the views of respondents on each element of the Masterplan options (Danebury Avenue town centre, Portswood Place, homes along Roehampton Lane, a new Alton Park), plus transport and movement. Within each of these elements, respondents were asked to indicate which of the individual proposals they support. Questions were also asked about other issues such as the needs of particular groups, what people would most like to see change, and any other issues.

An analysis of the responses received through the questionnaire is provided below.

In total 3,800 questionnaires were distributed with the options booklet. These questionnaires were:

- Hand delivered to properties on the Alton managed by the Council
- Hand delivered to properties on Clarence Lane managed by the Council
- Hand delivered to Housing Association and freehold properties on the Alton
- Hand delivered to businesses on Danebury Avenue, Roehampton High Street and Portswood Place
- Hand delivered to community buildings and schools on the Alton
- Posted to non-resident leaseholders who own property on the Alton
- Available at Roehampton library for interested local residents
- Distributed to community groups and residents associations at meetings

4. Who returned the questionnaires?

In total 257 questionnaires were returned. This equates to 7% of those distributed. Of these questionnaires:

- 87% of the questionnaires returned included address information
- 97% of the questionnaires with completed address information were from respondents within the Roehampton and Putney Heath ward
- 91% of the questionnaires with completed address information were from respondents within the Alton estate
- 16% of the questionnaires returned with completed address information were from respondents within the redevelopment area (as defined by the subsequent preferred option). This equates to 10% of all households in the redevelopment areas.

5. What you told us – questionnaire & consultation feedback:

The sections below describe the feedback received on each element of the Masterplan, as taken not just from the questionnaires, but from the other engagement and consultation events. The preferred option took into account the views from all of these methods of consultation and engagement.

5.1 A Revitalised Town Centre

This section includes a summary of the consultation responses and feedback we received regarding Danebury town centre, from both the questionnaire responses and the feedback received from other consultation exercises.

When asked what people would like to see at Danebury avenue town centre, we were told that:

- 74% of respondents (and 64% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see new shops if the town centre area is redeveloped
- 73% of respondents (and 68% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see improved streets and open spaces if the town centre was redeveloped
- 54% of respondents (and 54% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see new buildings providing services such as health, library, youth services etc. if the town centre was redeveloped
- 47% of respondents (and 46% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see new homes if the town centre area is redeveloped
- 45% of respondents (and 36% of those in the redevelopment area) would like to see new workspaces and employment if the town centre is redeveloped
- 34% of respondents (and 25% of those in the redevelopment area) would like to see a community arts centre if the town centre is redeveloped

- 16% of respondents (and 18% of those in the redevelopment area) would like to see student housing if the town centre is redeveloped.

The feedback we received from other consultation & engagement events told us the following:

- Consultation feedback indicated that there is support for a broader and better retail offer and environmental improvements at Danebury Avenue Town centre
- It is generally acknowledged that the current residential and retail buildings are out-dated, visually unappealing and run-down. However some people would prefer to refurbish existing housing stock rather replace it, as this will be less hassle and more cost-effective
- In the questionnaire responses 8 respondents specifically mentioned Allbrook House. Of these 7 stated Allbrook House should be demolished and 1 respondent stated that it should be refurbished. Elsewhere in the consultation process there was a balance between those who would like to see Allbrook House demolished, and those who would like to see it retained
- Comments suggest that there needs to be initiatives to tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour in the area. This includes the provision of police, security and street cleaning
- Feedback indicates the town centre in particular needs to focus on young people in terms of providing for youth clubs and the community arts centre
- The proposal for student housing had limited support in the town centre. Residents feel there is enough student housing elsewhere and there needs to be a focus on affordable housing for existing residents.

5.2A Revitalised Park Centre – Portswood Place

This section includes a summary of the consultation responses and feedback we received regarding Portswood Place and the proposals for a new 'park centre', from both the questionnaire responses and the feedback received from other consultation exercises.

When asked what people would like to see at Portswood Place, we were told that:

- 54% of respondents (and 43% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see a new leisure centre as part of a redeveloped Portswood Place
- 50% of respondents (and 54% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see a new multi-use community hall as part of a redeveloped Portswood Place
- 47% of respondents (and 57% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see new older-persons housing as part of a redeveloped Portswood Place

- 43% of respondents (and 39% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see new housing as part of a redeveloped Portswood Place
- 25% of respondents (and 32% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see a new school as part of a redeveloped Portswood Place
- 17% of respondents (and 18% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see new student housing as part of a redeveloped Portswood Place.

The feedback we received from other consultation & engagement event told us the following:

- That the development of community services and a leisure centre at Portswood Place are a priority for local people in the area. This is seen as a positive development for people of all ages
- There were some suggestions for new and improved retail provision at Portswood Place
- The feedback suggests that the majority of residents and other service providers are not in favour of relocating Alton primary school. Residents believe there are no benefits to moving the school and that it is already in a good location
- There is also some interest for healthcare and service provisions such as a doctors surgery/medical centre amongst residents. This is a proposal that is strongly support by local providers
- The consultation feedback told us that new housing should be in focused on meeting the needs of older people at Portswood Place
- Residents also expressed concerns over the constraints imposed by the Conservation Area and heritage considerations if the grade II listed bungalows were impacted.

5.3 Higher Quality Homes

This section includes a summary of the consultation responses and feedback we received regarding the ideas for higher quality homes linked to Roehampton Lane for the Danebury Avenue neighbourhood, from both the questionnaire responses and the feedback received from other consultation exercises.

When asked what ideas residents support regarding higher quality homes, we were told that:

- 54% of respondents (and 43% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see new, better laid out homes to replace existing buildings
- 53% of respondents (and 29% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see a re-landscaped connection to Roehampton Lane
- 50% of respondents (and 61% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see new residential buildings on vacant sites

- 33% of respondents (and 36% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see the sports centre relocated to Portswood Place
- 29% of respondents (and 14% of those in the redevelopment area) stated that they would like to see the children's centre and nursery relocated to a new location within Alton West.

The feedback we received from other consultation & engagement event told us the following:

- That there is strong support for new homes in the area. Residents told us that the comprehensive development of the area with new and better homes will improve the area as the existing housing has significant weaknesses in terms of their internal and external layout.
- Some respondents have suggested only refurbishment of existing housing is needed rather than demolishing existing buildings. There are concerns that new housing will create overdevelopment and will require additional infrastructure in the area.
- There were some concerns regarding the relocation of facilities such as the nursery and sports centre, given their use by residents of the estate and surrounding areas.
- Improved landscaping and better pedestrian connections are seen as positive for residents in the area. However there are some concerns that new homes provided would be at the expense of current green spaces.
- There are issues surrounding the future housing mix and some residents reported fears that the gentrification of the Alton will price out affordable homes for existing residents and more houses will be sold to private buyers in the area.

5.4A New Alton Park

This section includes a summary of the consultation responses and feedback we received regarding the ideas for a new neighbourhood park and new connections, from both the questionnaire responses and the feedback received from other consultation exercises.

- 66% of respondents stated that they support a new connection to Richmond Park
- 66% of respondents stated that they support improved footpaths, street furniture and street tree planting
- 54% of respondents stated that they support outdoor play areas
- 50% of respondents stated that they support an upgraded connection to Roehampton Lane
- 49% of respondents stated that they support landscaped gardens
- 48% of respondents stated that they support woodland areas

- 46% of respondents stated that they support a space for gathering, events and performance
- 45% of respondents stated that they support water gardens or wetland gardens
- 38% of respondents stated that they support woodland landscapes

The feedback we received from other consultation & engagement event told us the following:

- The majority of residents see that overall the enhancement of the park as a positive idea. Green spaces are one of the most valued parts of the estate and should be retained. Improving green spaces and providing facilities and activities for all types of groups is generally welcomed.
- There is strong consensus that the proposed connections to Richmond Park are a positive idea. Ideas for improved footpath, streets and cycles lines are popular as this will improve access and make the area more usable for residents.
- However there are some concerns from residents living close to the proposed link regarding the impact increased numbers of pedestrians and cyclists will have.
- Residents have expressed concerns over maintenance of some of the proposals at the new Central Park. Some landscaping ideas appear to be overly ambitious especially high maintenance ideas such as water and wetland gardens. There are also concerns that these ideas are likely to attract antisocial behaviour, litter and fly tipping.

5.5 Transport and Connections

This section includes a summary of the consultation responses and feedback we received regarding the ideas for new transport and connections, from both the questionnaire responses and the feedback received from other consultation exercises.

Regarding the new connections through Highcliffe Drive to Clarence Lane:

- 40% of respondents indicated they do support new connections
- 24% of respondents indicated they do not support new connections
- 4% of respondent stated this connection should be bus only

Regarding the new connections out to Priory Lane via Danebury Avenue

- 28% of respondents indicated they do support new connections
- 24% of respondents indicated they do not support new connections
- 8% of respondents stated this connection should be bus only

The feedback we received from other consultation & engagement event told us the following:

- The majority of respondents appear in favour of improving connections in the area to allow for better transport flow and public transport links.
- The option ideas for the Danebury Avenue Barrier appears controversial from respondents of the consultation. There is fear that this will increase traffic flow, road accidents and noise pollution.
- Respondents mention that this could be dangerous for the nearby school. However there is some support of limited access to barriers, at certain times or buses only.
- The general consensus agrees with the adequacy of the bus services, where there are already connections to several surrounding areas in London. However, these are less reliable and frequent at peak times and some destinations can be limited. There are some suggestions to extend and improve bus routes.

5.6 The needs of particular groups (children, young people, children with families, older people and households)

- The feedback suggested there is a need for investment in services and facilities that cater for the whole of the community, in particular young people. These include youth centres, recreation, and sport facilities. Several comments suggest a need for children's play facilities as the area is currently lacking any sort of amenities for this age group.
- Some respondents feel that accommodation for families with children and for the elderly population are particularly important in the Alton area.
- A strong consensus suggested that the area in general needs to be better maintained and with a cleaner environment. Respondents advocate that the upgrading of green spaces is important for all types of residents in the area. Several comments highlight the important of street furniture: seating for the elderly and lighting.
- A number of comments received suggest that new housing stock in a key priority for change in the Alton area.

5.7 What would you most like to see change at Alton west?

- A number of comments received suggest that new housing stock in a key priority for change in the Alton area.
- Several respondents advocate the need for better selection and quality of provision of retail in the Alton area, especially in local centres such as Danebury Avenue Town Centre and Portswood Place.
- There is a strong consensus for community and leisure facilities to provide in the area and this will be a key important asset when redeveloping Alton area.

- Several comments indicate that an overall improved appearance of the area is needed. Comments suggest a change in architectural character. Upgrading landscaping and open space is also an important asset.
- Feedback also indicated the need for an area management scheme to maintain a clean and safe environment. Residents suggest better waste management and instatement of police and security facilities to tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping.
- Responders would also like to see Improvements in the transport network if redevelopment of the area is to take place.

5.8 Other comments made

Overall strategy/scale of development

- Building height is a concern for residents and was suggested that it shouldn't exceed a certain number of storeys.
- There are some concerns regarding the impact on the Roehampton Conservation area
- The provision of student accommodation is not popular in Danebury Town Centre and Portswood Place
- There are concerns regarding the obstruction of sunlight and overcrowding in the area.
- There are some concerns over the overall cost of the proposals.
- Some respondents said that the Alton area needs to follow a similar improvement to the new Queen Mary's hospital.
- Development proposals should take a holistic view on the Alton area to ensure improvements do not have a detrimental effect on other parts of the estate
- A number of respondents asked why the proposals did not include Alton east, and that improvements were needed on that part of the estate aswell as Alton west.

Housing redevelopment

- The new build housing needs to serve existing residents
- There are concerns open spaces will be replaced: i.e Village Green

Public realm and open space

- There are concerns open spaces will be replaced: i.e Village Green
- Some of the proposals are likely to attract vandals and youth groups hanging around.

Movement

- Some residents suggest there should be further provision of car parking in the area

- Issues with access: suggestions of widening road junction at Danebury Avenue to allow traffic to flow more easily through the estate
- Concerns that access through Richmond Park will create 'through traffic' in the area
- Transport options need to be revisited if additional people live in Roehampton, given new resident buildings are being proposed
- Suggestions for extended tube, tram and rail links into Roehampton to improve access into the area.

Other issues raised

- There were suggestions for extended tube, tram and rail links into Roehampton to improve access into the area.
- More residential and students integrated into the wider community
- There is concern over the location of the current library located in Danebury Avenue Town Centre.
- There is concern over the relocation and future of 166 Roehampton Lane
- Residents in general are keen to see positive change. Most were open to the possibility of redevelopment and regeneration.
- Several responders are keen to see a total redevelopment of the area. However. There was concern from some residents that they do not want to see a large scale of change.
- A number of respondents stated that the regeneration should also cover Alton east. Petersfield Rise and the Alton club were mentioned as in need of improvement.

6. Next Steps

Following the close of the options stage of formal consultation the Masterplan team have assessed the consultation feedback received from the local community. The findings have been included, along with the views of elected members, Council officers, and the expert views of the appointed Masterplan team, to develop the preferred option. The development of the preferred option was also informed by a financial appraisal process, and existing planning, conservation and heritage policies.

The preferred option consultation period runs until 6th April 2014. Residents and local stakeholders can learn more about the preferred option, and give their feedback by:

- Attending a drop-in session being run at Roehampton library every Monday until 31st March 2014 between 4pm and 7pm
- Reading the information booklets sent to every property on the Alton and available at the Western Area Housing Office and Roehampton library.

- Viewing the preferred option presentation and model on display at Roehampton library until 6th April 2014
- Attending the open day session being held at the Eastwood Children's Centre on Saturday 1st March 2014 between 2pm and 5pm.
- Speaking with a member of the masterplanning team. During the preferred option consultation period the team will be visiting every household living in properties directly included in the redevelopment area.
- Speaking to a member of the masterplanning team at local community meetings, sessions and events.
- Viewing the plans online at www.wandsworth.gov.uk/roehampton

Once this preferred option stage of consultation is complete the masterplanning team will again consider the community feedback alongside external stakeholder comments and financial concerns. This feedback will be incorporated into the ideas included in the final masterplan.

It is expected that the final masterplan will be finalised in summer 2014.