

MEETING NOTE

SUBJECT	South Kensington Station (SKS) redevelopment Consultative Working Group (CWG) Meeting No. 4
VENUE	Games Room, Ampersand Hotel, Harrington Road; and South Kensington station and surrounds.
DATE	Thursday 18 February 2016, 1 pm – 5 pm

ATTENDEES	<p>TfL Team: Jeremy Castle, Commercial Development, Transport for London (JC) Scott Anderson, Senior Property Development Manager, TfL (ScottA) Christopher Phiniefs, Principal Project Sponsor, LUL (CP) Richard Zavitz, Project Sponsor, Station & Interchange Development (RZ) Edward Butler-Ellis, Strategic Communications, TfL (EBE) Jennifer Henderson, SCU Project Engineer, LUL Justin Holland, Buckley Gray Yeoman (JH) John Smith, Director, John Smith Architects (JS) Nick Sutcliffe, Director, HardHat (NS)</p> <p>Local Representatives: Amanda Frame, Kensington Society (AF) Michael Bach, Kensington Society (MB) Edward Davies-Gilbert, Knightsbridge Association (ED-G) Caryl Harris, South Kensington & Queens Gate Association (CH) Sophie Andreae, Brompton Association (SA) Bob Mabon, Brompton Association (BM) Traci Weaver, Thurloe Residents Association (TW) Eva Skinner, Onslow Neighbourhood Association (ES) Susanna Trostdorf Onslow Neighbourhood Association (ST) Guy Bondonneau, South Kensington Station Tenants (GB)</p>
MINUTES	<p>1. Welcome</p> <p>NS from HardHat welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies from Jan Langmuir, Laura Mosedale and Robert Berg. Each</p>

participant around the table then introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes were reviewed and agreed.

3. Step Free Access (SFA)

CP and EBE gave a short presentation on the status of the SFA programme. Main points from presentation: SFA improvements from street to District and Circle line platforms and the museum subway to be delivered by 2022 jointly with the around station development (Thurloe Street). Delivery of the SFA for the Piccadilly line platforms around 2025/26 and aligned with the Piccadilly upgrade programme (New Tube for London).

AF asked if financial restrictions were at the heart of the decision on phasing. It was confirmed that the phasing approach was influenced by the Autumn Statement and outcome of the Spending Review and the consequences of a reduced grant. As a result TfL has to assess opportunities to raise funds by other means, including the around station development. In addition it was explained that delivering SFA would be disruptive and by coordinating the delivery with the Thurloe Street development, the disruption can be reduced.

EBE added that the recent Council debate on SFA resulted in a very clear statement being delivered by the leadership that there would only be Council funding via Section 106 developer contributions and not from the Council's own resources.

AF asked about the Mayor's recent emphasis on SFA. EBE explained that there was a TfL SFA partnership programme exploring co-funding with Boroughs but RBKC would not be one of them. AF stated that the CWG members can lobby councillors to get them to change their position.

MB asked how much would be required by way of funding. He cautioned that developers had to pay for all nature of requirements from the same bottom line. He stated that the Council had a huge parking income reserve which could only be spent on transport related projects. But spending the reserves would in his opinion require the Council to break the habit of a lifetime. AF requested details of the timing and costs, ballpark figures and the element needing to be co-funded. MB reiterated the opportunity cost of relying on developer contributions – if you pay for

SFA you can't fund other things.

MB asked for clarity on the costs of the elements such as for the lifts to the District & Circle Line platforms.

EDG asked why the scheduled date for Piccadilly Line lifts was so much later.

AM asked about the options for SFA within the ticket hall. She noted that she understood the design and construction linkages with SFA and Thurloe street development.

CP to provide indicative costs for the delivery of SFA at South Kensington.

4. Station maintenance programme – arcade roof repairs

Scott Anderson (ScottA) updated the group on the outcome of the meeting with Ed Morton and SA on site.

Scaffolding will be erected in April to install the working platform after which a detailed inspection of the roof will be possible.

Following the visit the Council confirmed that clear glass will be acceptable without needing a listed building consent.

EDG welcomed this as a step in the right direction. SA said that the meeting with Ed Morton had clearly been helpful for TfL. TW asked how long the scaffold would be up for? ScottA said it would be a few months. EBE clarified that the installation would be carried out during nighttime engineering hours and not during the school holiday period.

SA informed the meeting of the discovery of the original front of the station between the arcade and the bullnose. During the site inspection, the group was able to look down on the original brick arches during the inspection of the roof. EBE had a picture of the end façade of the original station which would be shared.

5. Station upgrade proposals – design update

CP introduced the presentation on the Station Capacity Upgrade and confirmed the modern approach as better able to highlight the revetments. The approach was contrasted to the revetments at High

Street Kensington which are largely hidden by the traditional canopy. AF commented that the revetments at Notting Hill Gate were very visible but full of advertisements.

JS gave a presentation on the approach and latest design for the canopy, overbridge and the link into the ticket hall area.

AF asked if one side of the canopy is bigger than the other? JS explained that the supporting columns are aligned for a clear view and passage from the bottom of the stairs. The front edge aligns with the platform edge and the other edge aligns with the stairs.

AF asked about the gap to the revetments and EDG asked how wide it was. The latest design has a gap about 1 metre from the revetments.

AF asked what the purpose was for the additional stair at the end of the platform. JS explained that the over bridge links the new platform to the steps up from the Piccadilly Line interchange subway. MB asked where else this happens and when will it be used? JS said that this stair was purpose designed for the flows to and from the Piccadilly Line and will be primarily used during the AM peak.

JS highlighted the columns would be placed every four bays which would ensure the revetments would be clearly seen. The CWG agreed that the revetments are the best historical feature at the station.

BM asked about advertising. CP said that options would be carefully considered. EDG pointed out that advertising is changing with screens rather than posters.

MB asked what would happen to passengers in the rain with gap in front of the revetments, particularly with the seating shown in the arches. JS confirmed that placement of benches and signage to be considered during design development.

SA suggested that the space in the arches could be used to link to the museums and institutions. CP said there were discussions with V&A on this. SA suggested the sponsors of the exhibitions could pay for the advertising displays of the institutions.

AF expressed a first preference for no advertising, if not then static instead of lit screens. CP confirmed there would be a sensitive approach.

MB echoed that the advertising revenue stream was a tension with the listed building proposals.

ScottA said that a protocol for advertising would be developed.

CH suggested following the approach of Conde Nast's World of Interiors publication where all advertising has to go through a vetting process which makes it a desirable location. MB suggested segmenting the estate with a canvass to reflect the local setting.

ES asked about the exit onto Thurloe Square. RZ confirmed exit to be used only for emergency evacuation, not for congestion relief, and not as an entrance.

AF asked how the emergency exit will work. Jennifer Henderson, project engineer, confirmed that there would be push bars to leave the overbridge and then push bars to exit to the street.

AF asked why there was the 'dog leg' on the stairs down onto the island platform which would put people off using this route. JS said this was necessary in order to work around the current station ops rooms located on the platform. AF suggested looking again at improving it so that it would be used.

JS said that when the ops room is relocated to the ticket hall level there will be a clear line of sight from the subway stairs to the over bridge.

JS moved onto the link from the new platform back to the ticket hall. He explained that there would be a glazed side to allow views of the revetments. This was welcomed.

JS explained the significant increase in the space from the removal of the booking office. The ticket machines would be relocated to the original space at the bottom of the stairs from the arcade.

MB asked for large easily readable indicator boards showing train departures to be located at the ticket hall level.

ST asked where the ops room staff would be relocated to. JS confirmed that this would be at the ticket hall level in the reconfigured space.

ST asked about the new lift being in the way on the passage from the ticket hall. JS agreed that in a new station this would not be done but the

distances from gateline and stair would both be acceptable. The lift could not move because it needed to land on platform below and be out of the way of the future lift to the Thurloe Street exit.

MB said it was useful to understand the constraints and AF asked for updated CGIs for the ticket hall area.

SA suggested that the design should link the arcade with the ticket hall by incorporating consistent design elements.

6. Programme timeline and public presentation

AF asked about the progress towards an application. RZ said that there had been another pre-app and the letter would be shared.

EDG asked what the opinion of officers was and it was explained that the opinion was more towards a pastiche approach. AF said that this was another illustration of the problem with pre-app advice and residents may disagree, as in this case stating “We are with you on what you have done”. AF added that she would try to get them to understand this view.

Venues for a presentation to the wider members were discussed and the Oratory and Christie’s were suggested.

7. Retail strategy presentation

ScottA gave a presentation illustrating the potential retail offer for the future to serve local residents, office workers and visitors.

1. Services – In response ES said that the proposals seemed good and ST agreed. MB said it was vital to avoid the position where the Council is now writing off areas as lost to fast food. TfL has the opportunity to curate its estate as some of the other stronger landowners have done, to get a better balance. EBE explained this was challenging because out of the bids for a recent vacant property one was for a stationery firm and the other 25 were for convenience food.

ST pointed out that retail for visitors was already abundant. Also Brompton Road has three wine merchants already and we don’t need any more.

2. Restaurants – In response MB said that there was already infinite

choice. SA said that the chocolate shop was a good addition because it is elegant and smart and contributes in a positive way to the area. SA added that the museums were also getting restaurants inside them as income generation. MB said there needed to be more balance. SA said the Hour Glass on Brompton Road was a good example of local English cuisine.

3. Food retail – In response BM said there was too much already. MB said that if you do a survey of the area you will see there is already a lot.

4. Fashion – MB said that Brompton Cross should not be a model as it is a brand that draws people to a high spending format from across London. There is a place for fashion along Pelham Street but upmarket means people coming by car. SA and ES agreed that the traffic situation in Pelham Street would be an issue and deliveries would be difficult.

For the arcade CH suggested a focus on arts and books, picture galleries.

BM reminded the group of the previous Brompton Association proposals for Thurloe Street. SA agreed that Conservation Area status is a key consideration.

ScottA said there will be a presentation at the next meeting on the arcade shop fronts from BuckleyGrayYeoman. There will also be an in depth retail report from a retail expert.

8. Site Visit

The meeting concluded with a site visit around the inside and exterior of the station. The group looked at the ticket hall, the revetments, the arcade, Pelham Street and Thurloe Street. The visit concluded at 5 pm.