urban design london

Feltham Town Centre, LB Hounslow – LB Enfield, Design Surgery

Date   Wednesday 27ᵗʰ May, 12.30-13.30
Venue   55 Broadway, Pick Room, 5th floor Petty France, RBMj19173

Design Advisors

Fred Manson	Chair
Esther Kurland	UDL
Paul Dodd	UDL
Scott Lester	TfL
Brian Deegan	TfL, Principal Technical Planner; Cycling
Adrian McWhinnie	LB Hackney

Guests

Mark Frost	LB Hounslow
Christopher Deakins	LB Hounslow
Mathieu Proctor	LB Hounslow
Anthony DeSouza	LB Hounslow
Antoine Aubert	LB Hounslow

Observer

Bron Plaskowski	TfL
Daniel Nichols	TfL
Martin Rose	TfL
Zoe Vidion	TfL
James Parkinson	GLA

Note

The panel welcomed the opportunity to review this scheme at this stage. Feltham is on the cusp of experiencing substantial change to its transport network, including the removal of the level crossing at Bedfont Lane and refurbishment of town's railway station. These changes provide a significant opportunity for the borough to bring forward public realm led highway improvements which improve the quality and attractiveness of the town, whilst improving public transport provision in the form of better bus/rail interchange and more reliable bus journey times.

The borough has undertaken a substantial amount of work to date and presented a series of outline proposals for the town centre, the key elements of which are;
- Additional bus stops at the A244 Hounslow Road overbridge and new public access to the station from the north
- New pedestrian / cycle bridge across Bedfont Lane to reprovide access in light of the removal of the level crossing
- The removal of the existing zebra crossing to the south of the junction of Victoria Road, to be replaced with a signal controlled crossing. This is intended to alleviate traffic queuing along the high street

The borough also noted the importance of Victoria Road as a key walking and cycling route linking schools and businesses with the town centre.

The panel welcomed the proposals to improve pubic transport the interchange and provide improved access to the station. However the panel did not consider that the borough had a sufficiently clear vison for the future of Feltham town centre. The panel recommended that the borough clearly define the role of the town centre and how the highway works will seek to deliver on that vision. This would require the involvement of regeneration and planning officers and political direction to ensure that the substantial capital cost of the scheme provides a public benefit over and above the planned improvements to interchange. Town centres compete with each other for custom and investment, and

the quality and attractiveness of the experience for visitors and residents goes a long way in attracting people to Feltham over nearby competitors.

The panel were not convinced of the design approach taken at High Street and urged the borough to reconsider the approach to reduce severance and encourage links and pedestrian movement between the town centre and Feltham Green, the areas primary public space. The borough noted the importance of Longford river to the future of the town centre which currently turns its back on the water way. The panel urged the borough to look at the design of the streetscape in tandem with a public space strategy which considers the role and function of each space including Feltham Green and the neglected Longford river corridor, and opportunities to link them through great public space.

The panel noted recent successes at Hornchurch where carriageway narrowing, footway widening, street tree planting and the provision of a wide central median has radically altered the perception of the town centre as a place to shop and spend time.

The borough noted that Network Rail was preparing the designs for the new pedestrian / cycle bridge in discussion with the borough against tight timescales. The borough noted that timescale is too short to run a design competition, however, the panel stressed that it was vital that the bridge be both elegant and functional. A beautiful new bridge crossing here can provide an emblem of the regeneration of Feltham.

UDL