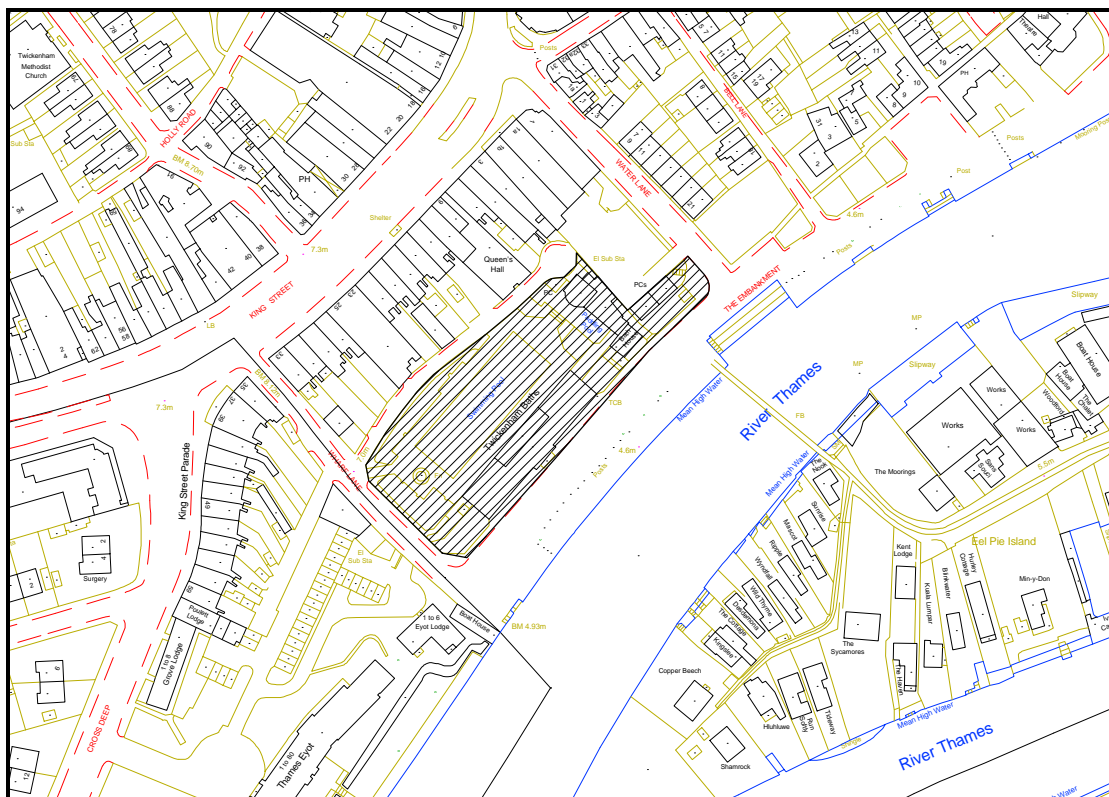


LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

**01/0540/FUL
TWICKENHAM SWIMMING POOL
THE EMBANKMENT
TWICKENHAM**

**CENTRAL TWICKENHAM WARD
Contact Officer:
R Summers x7450**



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Proposal: Demolish first floor swimming pool changing rooms. Modify ground floor swimming pool changing rooms as first floor open terrace. Modify ground floor (The Embankment level) for use as new public WCs, coffee shop, tourist office and boat booking office. Demolish existing public WCs. Retain existing bathhouse building for existing voluntary social services. Lay out remaining land as public park with tree planting, grass area, steps and paved paths and terrace.

Applicant: K R Hathaway for The Committee

Application received: 8 March 2001

Consultations:

ADV, Site Notice, CAAC

1-6 Eyot Lodge Cross Deep

1-33 (odd) King Street

Queens Hall King Street

1A, 1B, 7A, 13A, 15A, 17A, 19A-33B (odd) King Street

35-59 (odd) King Street Parade (inc flats)

1 and 2 Poulett Lodge Cross Deep

31 Church Street

1-21 (odd) Water Lane

Cooper Beech, Kingslee, The Cottage, Desdemona, Wild Thyme, Wyndfall, Ripple, Mascot, Sunrise, the Nook, Boathouse, Woodford, The Moorings, Eel Pie Marine Centre, Eel Pie island Slipways, Works adj, The Moorings, Eel Pie Island

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Help a Neighbour in Distress Scheme
Hobby Horse Group for Children
Riverside Drop in Centre

Main development plan policies:

UDP ENV 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 19, 24 and 43, REC 5, HEP 16, TRN 23, RIV 1 and 4, Proposals Sites T1 and T14; UDP - First Review ENV 1, 9, 15, 26 and 28, BLT 2, 9, 11 and 16, TRN 2, CCE 21, Proposal Sites T1 and T14; Twickenham Riverside Conservation Area Study; CA8; Conflict with Development Plan; Archaeological Priority Zone

Present use: Former swimming baths/voluntary uses/WCs

Site, proposal and relevant history: The application site is located close the edge of the River Thames and to the rear of the south side of King Street in Twickenham. It comprises the former swimming baths site and includes the building occupied by HANDS (Help A Neighbour in Distress Scheme) and a day nursery and the public WCs on the corner of Water Lane. The site is owned by the Council.

The proposal seeks to remove the top floor of the principal building and create a roof terrace from it with railings to the edge of the flat roof. The ground floor would be converted to a tourist information centre, public lavatories and a boat hire and booking office and the front elevation would be altered to form a series of arched openings. The pool would be filled in and converted to a riverside park. Steps are shown on either side of the main building giving access to the new open space. The current uses on the site would be retained. The public WC land would become open space. Existing trees are shown to be retained and new ones planted, particularly in front of the building.

Submitted drawings, not part of the application, seek to show the possibility of a foot bridge link to Ham via Eel Pie Island and a new pool on the site with new buildings, events square and a shopping mall to the rear of King Street. These are illustrative only and go beyond the site boundaries of the current application and cannot therefore be given any weight under this submission.

The applicant has appealed against non-determination by the Local Planning Authority within the statutory 8 weeks and therefore the Planning Inspectorate will make the final decision.

Public and other representations:

English Heritage asks that a condition be attached to protect the archaeological potential of the site.

Conservation Areas Advisory Committee - The Panel welcomed the proposal although it represented a lost opportunity for this key site. The layout was rather formal (municipal) in general feeling - the back of buildings in King Street should be more effectively screened, preferably the scheme should include a good building worthy of the site. The Committee eagerly awaits further details.

The **Eel Pie Island Association**, the **Friends of Twickenham Green**, **HANDS**, 20 letters from individuals and a petition from the applicant with over 1200 signatories, have been received and support the application for the following reasons:-

1. It will solve the problem of the site, which has been an eyesore for so long.

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2. Leisure uses will provide the public with activities properly related to the site's location.
3. Will allow voluntary groups to remain on site.
4. Will not exacerbate traffic problems.
5. Sensitive to river side location.
6. Impact on flood plain appears neutral.
7. Removal of obstructions on corners of the site will improve sight lines.
8. Removal of top floor improves setting of site.
9. Will encourage more people to come to the site and thereby benefit Twickenham.
10. Will meet the objectives of the Unitary Development Plan and the Thames Landscape Strategy.
11. Will better relate to riverside location.
12. Retention of mature trees on site.
13. Reflects the public's desires for the area against other schemes.
14. The ladies' WCs should be sited with the men's and include a disabled WCs.
15. Will provide a medium term solution whilst other ideas are considered.

Professional comments:

Land use

The application site, and adjoining land, is the subject of a proposal in the Unitary Development Plans. This Proposal T1 can usefully be summarised by stating its objectives as 'Enhancement of the riverside and shopping areas, leisure uses, housing, limited improvements to rear servicing, car parking and public conveniences'.

The current application, whilst arguably meeting some of these elements, clearly does not meet them all and has therefore been advertised as a Departure from the Development Plan. As the land is owned by the Council the proposal would have needed to have been referred to the Secretary of State under the departure regulations. However, the application is now under appeal and the Inspectorate will make the decision on the proposal.

Examining the application against the Unitary Development Plan it should first be noted that it does not include all of the site subject of Proposal T1 in that the adjoining land to the north-east is excluded and no pedestrian access is being promoted directly from the shops in King Street nor is improved rear servicing provided.

However, the proposal does respond to other important aspects, namely a part removal of the unattractive baths building, the introduction of potential leisure/recreational uses with a boat hire business and café, and the local park with viewing platform above and behind. Main trees are also retained and others proposed.

It is difficult to argue that the current proposal has a negative impact on the area either visually or functionally. The removal of part of the building should improve the appearance of the conservation area although there may be some limited adverse impact as the rear of King Street is exposed to a modest extent. The exact detailing of the elevational changes to the ground floor facing The Embankment needs further work but the concept is supportable. The introduction of boat hire and café uses coupled with the park above can reasonably be considered as leisure uses although how intensively any of them would be used is more difficult to assess. The reintroduction of the public WCs is to be welcomed.

The key issue is whether this proposal will in some way prejudice the full development of Proposal T1 as set out in the UDPs. If it is felt to do so then that is a material factor in the consideration of this case.

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This issue has been carefully examined and the conclusion reached is that it would not prejudice the full implementation of Proposal T1 at a future date. The current application does not result in any new structures being built on the site, indeed it clearly seeks to reduce the amount of building mass. The filling in of the pool does not prejudiced future development of this area in the same way that, say, a new building would.. Moreover, the application proposal does not include the whole of the T1 Proposal site which leaves that land available for other uses.

In essence, whilst this proposal does not conform to the whole of Proposal T1 it does not prevent a more comprehensive development taking place as envisaged by the UDPs.

Other matters

Archaeology can be dealt with by a condition in this case given English Heritage's advice.

The Embankment would still provide vehicular access but it is considered to be unlikely that the proposed uses, given their limited sizes, will generate much more traffic than currently uses the route. Rear access would also be available if required.

A park could generate noise and activity close to flats to the side and rear of the site. However, the site has a lawful leisure use upon it and it lies in the middle of the town centre and therefore I do not consider that its use would be materially unneighbourly given this context.

Conclusions

This application provides some of the requirements of the Unitary Development Plan site brief and could not be said to prevent the future implementation of the whole of T1 in such a way that I feel able to recommend its refusal. There are certain aspects identified above that should be of some benefit to the community. These have been considered in the preceding paragraphs.

I therefore recommend **that had an appeal not been lodged against failure to give a decision within the statutory period the Local Planning Authority would have granted planning permission subject to the conditions and informatives listed below and subject to no adverse direction from the Secretary of State.**

Standard conditions:

- BD04 - Details to a specified scale - '1.20' 'shop fronts and railings to roof'
- BD12 - Details to be approved of materials
- DV01A - Boundary fencing - building occupation - '1.8m' 'north-west and south-east'
- DV18A - Refuse arrangements
- LA11A - Landscaping required hard and soft
- LA21 - Protective fencing - large sites
- LA30 - Landscape works - implementation
- LB12A - Archaeology
- RS004 - Extraction equipment for restaurant
- RS01A - Restricted hours/notice - all week - A '8am and midnight' B '9am and 11pm'

Standard informatives:

- IE05 - Noise control - building sites
- IH06 - Damage to public highway
- IL10 - Building regulations

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- IL12 - Approved drawing Nos - 'OS extract, TRPP/9 and 10 received on 27 March 2001'
- IL16 - Relevant policies and proposals - 'ENV 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 19, 24 and 43, REC 5, HEP 16, TRN 23, RIV 1 and 4, Proposals T1 and 14' 'ENV 1, 9, 15, 26 and 28, BLT 2, 9, 11 and 16, TRN 2, CCE 21, Proposals T1 and 14'

Background papers:

Application forms and drawings
Letters of representation
Letter from English Heritage
CAAC minutes
