

Beckenham Town Centre Improvements: Update and Financial Position

as at October 2015

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Chairman – Beckenham Town Centre Working Group

Background

1. The London Borough of Bromley (LBB) received notification on 16 December 2013 that Transport for London (TfL) had approved the Beckenham Initial Scheme Design (Step 1) bid and funding of £310k was being allocated to cover Design and Development costs.
2. This funding was to be used to cover the costs of undertaking survey work and producing and consulting on an outline scheme design. This initial funding allocation also included the costs of working up a detailed design to contract stage drawings.
3. The original estimated cost of the concept scheme was £3.257m and in support of the bid the Bromley Council's Executive (on 16th October 2013) approved the allocation of £912k of local LBB money (£762k Capital Receipts & £150k Members Initiative earmarked reserves) to help fund the TfL allocation of £2.345m towards the improvements.

Design Update

4. Since the approval of funding for the design phase of the project, the Council has been working with the design team and external stakeholders to refine the scope, design and costings of the scheme. The outline design stage is now complete and the resulting design has been presented to both the Beckenham Town Centre Working Party (2nd July 2015) and Bromley Town Centre Member Working Party (1st October 2015) for their endorsement.
5. Work is now moving on to completing the detailed design stage prior to implementation, currently planned for mid-2016. It is still subject to final stage sign off by both TfL and LBB.
6. The concept design, upon which the original Step 1 bid was based, has been amended to reflect specific input from:
 - Urban Design London (TfL) Design Surgery June 2014
 - Traffic Modelling February 2015
 - Public Consultation 2014-15.
7. The design team have worked closely with stakeholders, including the Beckenham Town Centre Working Group, to refine specific design elements, and the revised design

has benefited from feedback from site visits the Group have undertaken. The proposed changes, many of which were requested by TfL, have resulted in a significantly improved scheme, which will enhance delivery and add to the original bid outputs and outcomes. Proposed changes and benefits include adopting a focus on investing in improving the origin and destination points in the High Street.

8. This has included upgraded treatment of the spaces around the Odeon Cinema, Sainsbury and Lidl forecourts, Beckenham Green, Kelsey Square and the Station forecourt; enhanced improvements at Beckenham Green that integrate the space better with the High Street and St George's Church.
9. It is worth noting that Beckenham Junction and Beckenham Green were cited as top priorities in the public consultation. Feedback from stakeholder site visits to Richmond and Twickenham have influenced the redesign of the crossing treatment, with improved quality of material on the footway and a simpler asphalt treatment on the carriageway.
10. The most substantial change from the original scheme scope is the proposal to replace the whole of the footway in the High Street instead of undertaking limited maintenance works outside of the junction areas. It is now proposed to upgrade the whole length of the High Street from the War Memorial to Beckenham Junction by replacing the existing footway surface with new high-quality paving.
11. It is also now proposed to resurface the whole of the road carriageway in addition to the work outlined above. The design team has worked closely with a number of other internal teams to ensure that the scheme is buildable, that the impacts (particularly on traffic) are understood and that the scheme meets local expectations.
12. The Borough's Highway Engineering team have scrutinised the designs to ensure that they meet all the necessary engineering design standards and detailing. A topographical survey was undertaken and the designs transposed onto the accurate plan. The team has advised on issues such as drainage, vehicle turning requirements at junctions and potential construction methodologies. The designs have also been subject to traffic modelling to investigate the impact on traffic and congestion, which shows that any journey time increases are within an acceptable limits and do not affect the heavily used A2015 Rectory Road.

Consultation and cost increases

13. As part of the design development process a series of public consultation events were carried out in Spring 2015. A summary of the consultation responses is available, along with the consultation's conclusions on the priority of improvement projects, which led to many of the design changes. This consultation confirms that the revised improvement scheme has significant local stakeholder support.
14. As part of the review the Council also undertook a detailed scheme costings exercise. This exercise identified the significant cost differences between the original Step 1 budget estimations and the more detailed Work Stage C revised scheme drawings. The design team have worked with the engineering team to attempt to reconcile the cost

differences and eliminate any unnecessary costs items. The revised scheme has been costed using the Council's Framework Agreement with F M Conway.

15. The main items driving the cost increases include:
 - Term Contract Price Inflation Increase (£400k)
 - Proposed replacement of all footway surfaces in the High Street (£250k)
 - Enhancement of surface treatment to origin and destination hotspots (£309k)
 - Full Carriageway Resurfacing (£272k).
16. The estimated cost of the revised scheme is now £4.697m, which represents an increase in costs of 44% on the estimated cost of the original concept scheme. Transport for London have agreed to review their funding support as part of the detailed design stage within an additional £950k funding envelope, making their maximum contribution to the improvement project £3.295m.
17. Subtracting the previous Council capital allocation of £912k made in October 2013, this leaves a potential funding shortfall of £490k. In addressing this, Council Officers are currently in discussion with Network Rail on integrating their proposed improvement works to Beckenham Junction Station, so these improvements can contribute to meeting the costs of the proposed improvements to the station forecourt and pedestrian linkages to the High Street.
18. Funding will also be sought from the Borough's LIP Road Resurfacing allocation to contribute the resurfacing of the High Street, which has previously been highlighted as a priority area following a condition survey.
19. Officers are also examining whether the allocation of S106 funding from the Glaxo Smith Kline's S106 agreement, which can be used for initiatives that promote employment opportunities, can contribute to the funding shortfall.

The Major Scheme

20. It should be noted that work is expected to start on the development in the next few months. The first contribution is expected to be paid to the Council 18 months from the start of the development. TfL acknowledge that additional funding will be required to cover the cost of the detailed design work as part of the Design & Development stage and they have allocated a further £32k in 2015/16 to cover this, bringing the detailed design budget allocation to £342k.
21. As was the case in Bromley North Village, it is proposed to use the Council's Highway "Term Contractor" F M Conway to undertake the detailed design for this improvement scheme. It is anticipated that this work will take approximately 5/6 months to complete. Further reports will be made to the Beckenham Town Centre Working Group, which is scheduled to meet on 10th December 2015.

Complementary projects

22. LBB approval was given on 2 September 2014 to allocate £47K of Section 106 (Tesco) funding to a number of key projects which are complementary to the main TfL funded scheme but which could be implemented in advance of the main scheme.
23. The bulk of this funding (£40k) was allocated towards to cost of design, manufacturing and installing a roof over the stone stage at Beckenham Green, with the balance being allocated for market facilities there. The S106 agreement requires all monies to be spent by 23 February 2016.
24. Initial work on the provision of market infrastructure has shown that the costs will be significantly higher than originally estimated. Approval is therefore being sought to reallocate the S106 funding, including the interest accrued (£1,026), from the stage roof towards the other works at Beckenham Green, the cost of which can be defrayed within the time limit set by the S106 deadline. It is proposed that the stage roof will still be delivered as part of the main improvement scheme.
25. To ease congestion and left turns for HGV vehicles at Beckenham Junction traffic lights, a new design for the junction has been completed and approved. This includes the designs for the signals ducting, drainage/levels, lines and signs; as well as the layout of the junction. These designs have been approved by TfL (approval was required because the scheme is part of the Strategic Route Network).
26. There is currently an issue with Virgin Media's cables in the footway. They dispute the fact the cables are not laid to the required depth and have refused to move them unless they are paid to do so. LBB is investigating the legal implications of this and the issue is causing delay. The result is that the works cannot now be completed prior to the December moratorium on works. Therefore, works will probably start on this junction in late January 2016 once the moratorium ceases.
27. One advantage of the delay is that when the works are carried out they are likely to be the final works using the permanent materials rather than a temporary surface which would have been replaced as part of the Major Scheme. This is dependent on the choice of materials being finalised, but will result in less disruption overall. The full programme of works is likely to be 6-8 weeks and temporary traffic lights will be in place during this period.

Source: Agenda item 7d, R&R PDS 27.10.15