

Mr and Mrs P & G Robbs



02 March 2023

Environment, Transport and Compulsory Purchase
The Planning Inspectorate
3A Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

For the attention of: Ms Rachel Newman, Case Officer

Dear Ms Newman,

**The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (Twickenham Riverside)
Compulsory Purchase Order 2021.**

We are regular visitors to Twickenham who support the compulsory purchase of land and new rights in Twickenham Riverside.

Following a thorough democratic process by Richmond upon Thames Council for the development of Twickenham Riverside over the past 5 years, full planning consent was granted in November 2022.

Starting in 2018, a detailed brief for the site was developed with, and agreed by 11 resident stakeholder groups (including the Twickenham Riverside Trust). The brief encapsulated the requirements of a majority of Twickenham residents, notably the removal of a car park from the Riverside and the creation of a fully pedestrianised public events space, park and gardens.

The brief informed a high-level architectural competition overseen by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). The Assessors were carefully selected to include a wide range of expertise, local representation and knowledge. The competition attracted submissions from over 50 firms, many of high standing as reflected in the 5 short-listed proposals. Following a vote by Twickenham residents, Hopkins Architects and their team emerged as the clear winners.

Implementation of the winning scheme (and thus the brief) would require the inclusion of disparate parts of the site, including the Diamond Jubilee Gardens, to provide an integrated 'whole site' solution. A proviso by the Twickenham Riverside Trust, who have jurisdiction over the gardens on behalf of residents, was that an area at least equal in size to the current gardens to be provided with equivalent or better amenities.

This proviso has not only been met, but exceeded. The new gardens, children's play area and café/tea room are considerably larger and of a better standard than the existing. The area has been opened up to the riverside in a series of south-facing grassed terraces, planting and trees extending down to the riverside. Bio-diversity would be improved, a greater range of native trees introduced and grassed areas created that would replace the artificial (!!!) grass currently employed.

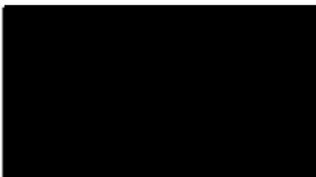
An inability over more than three decades to deliver a viable solution has resulted in appalling dereliction and a parking lot – apparently a long-standing embarrassment to the community. The proposed scheme offers a democratic solution by a leading architect delivering beneficial public use which has received overwhelming support. Richmond Council are delivering what the majority of Twickenham residents want – a new Riverside and heart-of-town.

This community project requires an integrated 'whole site' solution which can only be achieved by bringing together the constituent parts of the overall site through a Compulsory Purchase Order, including the sub-optimal area currently occupied by the existing Diamond Jubilee Gardens.

Without a CPO the approved scheme, supported by a majority of Twickenham residents, cannot be implemented.

My wife and I thus appeal to you to uphold this CPO for the overall benefit of the Twickenham community and its many visitors.

Yours sincerely,

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P and G ROBBS