

Summary Statement

Teresa Read

Twickenham Riverside has been a political football for many years. However, this time I have seen a new level in the game.

Unfortunately, the current proposers of the plan have sent out incorrect information to residents. I received an email addressed to me personally although I had not given out my email for this sort of use, so I wonder how many others have been sent photographs of the derelict Council-owned car park with the implication that it is the highly prized Diamond Jubilee Gardens, the site to be developed.

Of course, the old car park is part of the overall site and "affordable housing" will be built there. The Council has left it in a terrible state for a long time, collecting rubbish, and closing off the much-needed service road which is needed by many vehicles. This has been especially a problem in the last few years when the area floods and cars become stuck in the water, having driven down Water Lane and finding themselves in dire straits.

The destruction of the Diamond Jubilee Gardens will not be forgiven by many local people. It is a haven away from the drab high street and the fume filled roads; the destruction of so many trees will definitely destroy the Council's "green credentials". We will not only lose an historic site (many famous people have lived there) but we will lose most importantly the "lungs" of Twickenham as the seventy or so trees that will be destroyed will result in carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere when they are chopped down and dug up – and we have councillors who are supposed to care about climate change!

This prime site with a wonderful view of the Thames will not provide "affordable homes" but homes that few in the area will be able to afford. Overall, it will be a disaster for Twickenham and I should think that a cost-benefit study into the Council "scheme" would be very negative.

The key points are:

1. The council's proposal does not re-provision the Diamond Jubilee Gardens in a as good as or better way. The council's proposal does not provide a new garden in "a single form" as required, nor does it provide "that the minimum surface area of the Gardens that needs to be re-provided (c.2250msq) is positioned so as not to be affected by flooding". These were both requirements of the Design Brief.
2. The CPO not being granted does not prevent the development of Twickenham Riverside proceeding. The Water Lane buildings, which include all of the affordable housing, commercial and retail space, can proceed without the CPO. The removal of parking and improvements to The Embankment can proceed without the CPO. The land between the Diamond Jubilee Gardens and Water Lane can be improved and landscaped without the CPO and access to the gardens improved.

In summary, the CPO should not be granted. The development and improvement of Twickenham Riverside could still proceed without the CPO.

Attachments

1. History of Twickenham Riverside (*Page 4*)
2. Events on Twickenham Riverside (*Page 13*)
3. Statement of Evidence - to include all information attached (*Page 18*)
4. Toilets and Pub in the Council plan (*Page 24*)
5. Twickenham Riverside – The Facts (*Page 28*)
6. List of Websites (*Page 31*)
7. A Riverside Transformed a Town Centre Revived – Evidence of Incorrect information, i.e, photos of the disused Council-owned car park (NOT Diamond Jubilee Gardens) distributed, unsolicited, by email during the Planning Consultation. (*Page 32*)
8. Facebook Screenshot – Evidence of a Paid advertisement on Facebook with incorrect information, i.e 40 years of neglect, see the History of Twickenham Riverside. (*Page 33*)

1 HISTORY OF TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE

From the World InfoZone website (produced by Teresa Read, 1997-2023)

(links to relevant websites are available)

THE HISTORY OF THE TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE SITE

bought by the Council in 1924 for the purpose of providing "public walks and pleasure grounds"

Title absolute
1 (14.12.2001) PROPRIETOR: THE MAYOR AND BURGESSES OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES of Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BZ.

Twickenham Riverside 1980 - 2000

In 1980, while under a Conservative administration which lasted until 1983, Twickenham Baths were suddenly and unexpectedly closed for "refurbishment" and never opened again. You can read and hear people's memories which were recorded by the REIC at the lidosalive website.

It is interesting to note that in January 1982 the Council's Planning Committee Minutes recorded that the Council's view was that there should be no housing development on the site.

In 1991, whilst there was a Liberal Democrat administration, a scheme was put forward for a Marks & Spencer store but permission was refused following the intervention of the Department of the Environment and a Public Enquiry in 1991 – "Commercial ambitions were to be kept subordinate." (Reference: Twickenham Museum).

In 1996 the Council held a competition for plans for the Twickenham Riverside site. There were five plans and it was hoped that there might be some Lottery funding but this was refused.

1999 saw a proposal for the Twickenham Riverside site for thirty-nine flats, six restaurants, shops, an auditorium for over four hundred and fifty people, three cinemas and very

limited parking. This was considered “over development” and following public outcry the Council asked for a smaller version; there were various rethinks, but nothing came of any of the proposals.

Twickenham Riverside 2000 - 2021

In 2001 a planning application was submitted by Dawnay Day. The Council gave the go-ahead for forty flats, shops, a restaurant and a health and fitness centre. However, a Public Enquiry put a stop to the Dawnay Day proposal.

Subsequently the Twickenham Challenge for Twickenham Riverside appeared. Proposals were the Duke of Edinburgh Award Centre, a River Centre, the Busen Anglo-Japanese Club and the Laura Sevenus Swimming School.

Café and Children’s Playground Opened

In 2005 the children’s playground, café and toilets were opened, along with a new retaining wall. Landscaping was carried out at the front of the site. The [award winning] garden area hosted an array of plants selected to provide an attractive environment for bees and butterflies; overall, the first positive steps since the pool site closed in 1980, but the art deco building had been demolished.

From 2006 to 2010 the Liberal Democrats took office. Four housing developments were put forward in 2008 (along with the Environment Trust’s River Centre which had entered the Twickenham Challenge) – the Countryside Properties company was chosen as the developer by the administration.

There was huge opposition to housing on the site and after consultation with the Department for Communities and Local Government - with which I had some association - Electoral Reform Services (ERS) was engaged by residents. 41.7% voted and the result was 93.5% against housing on Twickenham Riverside.

Local community groups such as Save Our Riverside and the Richmond United Group promoted the result of the referendum gaining much public support. It is also interesting to note that at this stage Twickenham Riverside was taken up by national journalists in the New Statesman, Private Eye and the London Evening Standard.

Subsequently the Liberal Democrat administration of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames lost office although their Linked Sites Strategy went ahead.

It should be remembered that before leaving office the Liberal Democrat administration signed off a "Linked Sites Strategy" for the Twickenham Riverside site. This scheme allowed the affordable housing component of their housing plan to be off-loaded onto other sites in the Borough. The sites designated for affordable housing in the Linked Sites Strategy included a number of garage sites and various garden plots, including a community garden. This housing was built and it seemed that the affordable housing for the Twickenham Riverside site had been fulfilled, although it is understood that the Hopkins plan (2021) also includes "affordable" housing.

Diamond Jubilee Gardens opened by HRH Princess Alexandra

In the Spring of 2011, Boris Johnson, the then Mayor of London, took part in a tree planting ceremony relatively near the café; the following year the gardens were opened by HRH Princess Alexandra and in 2013 the Diamond Jubilee Gardens were awarded the Sustainable Landscaping Award by London in Bloom. (HRH Queen Elizabeth II gave a rare black poplar tree for the opening ceremony for the gardens but this is to be felled in the Hopkins plan).

In 2014 the Council purchased the Santander car park area connecting to the derelict Pool House buildings owned by the Council.

A Charitable Trust was formed in 2014 with a 125-year lease designed to protect the Diamond Jubilee Gardens ... And in January 2014 Diamond Jubilee Gardens, in Conservation Area 8 Twickenham Riverside, was designated a Public Open Space.

Land approved Public Open Space: London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Decision January 2014

"Cabinet approve the designation of land at Diamond Jubilee Gardens, Twickenham, identified in the attached plan, as Public Open Space under Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972. Cabinet consider and approve the granting of a lease to an appropriate Trust, that being Twickenham Riverside Trust, to ensure that the land is held in trust for the benefit of residents.

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames website stated: "Diamond Jubilee Gardens on Twickenham Riverside have been formally protected, following approval by Richmond Council's Cabinet. The gardens have been designated as public open space and are protected for public use, performances and events. The picturesque spot was established and opened in 2012, and, is located on the site of the former Twickenham outdoor swimming pool."

During this Council administration (2014-2018) The Embankment was refurbished, and new trees planted.

Further Competitions to Develop Twickenham Riverside

In 2015 another competition for the Twickenham Riverside site took place but the Council's chosen plan for the site did not go ahead as there were issues brought up by the Environment Agency. (note: Berkley Driscoll and I were members of the team for one of the designs submitted to the Council).

And now there is the Hopkins Design with housing on the site of Diamond Jubilee Gardens and a pub, although there are over 20 public houses – and numerous restaurants - within walking distance; there will also be the loss of modern public toilets NOT to be replaced.

Planning Announcement on 16 June 2021

LBRUT (Richmond Council) announced that they intended to submit a planning application for luxury flats and a pub. Affordable housing, also proposed on the land bought by the Council in 2014, is next to Water Lane.

The Incorrect "40 Years of Neglect" Mantra

On 14 September the local Liberal Democrat Party sent out a number of unsolicited emails to residents stating that there had been 40 years of neglect on Twickenham Riverside. Example photographs of the "neglect" were of the locked Council car park in Water Lane - the former "Santander" car park. A Liberal Democrat councillor promoting the planning application personally paid for an advertisement on social media which promoted this information.

However, it must be remembered that from 2010 to 2018 Twickenham Riverside was a hive of activity; the annual Charlie

Shore Boys and Girls Regattas, Dragon Boat Races, music on the Riverside, fairgrounds, Shetland Pony rides and varied market stalls.

And do councillors remember the children's playground opening in 2005, followed by Diamond Jubilee Gardens in 2013 - and the refurbishment of the Embankment?

"40 years of neglect" takes us back to the early 1980s and the Liberal Democrats have been the majority in the Council for five terms of office during that time plus their 1986 alliance with the SDP.

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Planning Application November 2022

The Liberal Democrats, supported by a member of the Green Party, passed a planning application on 24 November 2022 that will erase the Diamond Jubilee Gardens. It seems that there are around 68 trees that will be completely destroyed. One wonders how a member of the Green Party could support this application. It is now up to the Twickenham Riverside Trust, initially with a 125 year lease, to oppose the Council's Compulsory Purchase Order.

Compulsory Purchase Order

A Public Enquiry for the London Borough of Richmond's Compulsory Purchase Order to wrest land from the Twickenham Riverside Trust is to take place in June 2023.

A Comment from Teddington in relation to the Linked Sites Scheme for Twickenham Riverside

"It must be remembered that the "affordable housing" connected to the original [Twickenham Riverside] plan was built in Shacklegate Lane and Railway Road Teddington, although the planned luxury housing never got built on the site itself." A community garden in Sherland Road in Twickenham also suffered from the scheme as well as a garden in Strawberry Hill.

A Comment from the Deputy Mayor of London (Sport) During a Visit to the Riverside:

Twickenham Riverside would be an ideal location to develop river sports.

The old pool site and Riverside Conservation Area 8

"The Village core, on the raised river terrace including Church Street and its associated alleyways, forms a focal point when viewed from the Thames and is closely linked to it. The medieval settlement is clearly visible from as far away as Radnor Gardens, Ham House and Richmond Hill. Physical and visual links between the original village street, Church Street, and the River Thames are very important as evidence of the village's historical development and present day

TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE - ONCE THE SITE OF RICHMOND HOUSE

Prior to Twickenham Baths, Richmond House, a very grand and impressive house, stood on the Twickenham Riverside site for centuries (1662-1923). The story starts with the Birkheads. Edward, the first inhabitant married Eleanor Myddleton. Members of the Birkhead and Middleton families emigrated to America and Henry Middleton was a signatory of the American Declaration of Independence. Towards the end of a Heritage Lottery project in June 2013 Kate Middleton, the Duchess of Cambridge, was pleased to receive a copy of **Richmond House** on the "Twickenham Riverside site" - a letter of thanks was received from Kensington Palace.

Some of the other inhabitants who lived in Richmond House on Twickenham Riverside

The Earl of Bradford, Lord Torrington, Countess of Shelburne, Countess of Elgin, Dowager Duchess of Roxburghe and Field Marshal Sir Edward Blakeney. Joseph Theophilus Mears, the last owner of Richmond House. sold the house to the Council in 1924; following a petition by residents the Council built a public bathhouse and Twickenham outdoor swimming pool, a classic lido of its time.

And, HORACE WALPOLE'S VIEW OF TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE FROM STRAWBERRY HILL HOUSE

"The enclosed enchanted little landscape, then, is Strawberry Hill.... This view of the castle is what I have just finished [it was a view of the south side, towards the north-east], and is the only side that will be at all regular. Directly before it is an open grove, through which you see a field, which is bounded by a serpentine wood of all kind of trees, and flowering shrubs, and flowers.

The lawn before the house is situated on the top of a small hill, from whence to the left you see the town and church of

Twickenham encircling a turn of the river, that looks exactly like a sea-port in miniature."

NOTE the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Supplementary Planning Guidance for Strawberry Hill Planning Policy LP5 Views and Vistas

Synopsis of The Situation on Twickenham Riverside

LAND BOUGHT FOR RESIDENTS, AND, CURRENTLY PROTECTED BY A TRUST FIGHTING A COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER BY LBRUT

The land was bought in 1924 by the Council for "walks and pleasure grounds" with the title of the land in the name of the residents of the borough; it is currently protected by a Charitable Trust which the Council hopes to defeat with a Compulsory Purchase Order.

THE TWICKENHAM RESIDENTS' REFERENDUM RESULT – 93.5% VOTED AGAINST HOUSING ON TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE

In June 2009 Electoral Reform Services organized a postal vote for 4,000 people in Twickenham to find out whether they supported housing on public land on Twickenham Riverside, i.e, the main site of the current Hopkins' Architects plan (Diamond Jubilee Gardens). The result of this independent vote, £4,000 paid for by residents, was 93.5% of voters who said NO.

CONTINUED OPPOSITION TO BUILDING ON THIS PROTECTED AREA - WITH ONE OF THE BEST VIEWS OF THE THAMES

Despite this overwhelming vote, and continued opposition from local people, the LBRUT Planning Committee has voted for planning permission and aims to build "luxury flats", assisted with input from a West End estate agent, on land with one of the best views of the Thames, currently Diamond Jubilee Gardens, protected by a charitable trust with a 125 lease.

Note: The cost of flats with this famous view of the Thames, recorded by Horace Walpole (the well-known writer and politician) who lived in nearby Strawberry Hill, will not be within the reach of most families in Twickenham. Sales are with a

West End agent.

"AFFORDABLE HOUSING" IS NOT PROPOSED ON THE MOST DESIRABLE PART OF THE AREA TO BE DEVELOPED

"Affordable Housing" is to be built to the far side of the site, next to Water Lane on a derelict Council-owned car park, and the Council has certainly cut corners on the living space area. (During Consultation for the planning application photographs of the disused Council-owned car park were emailed to residents implying it was the main area to be developed – the area in Trust was not shown).

PUBLIC CONSULTATION: The Council Even Refused A Popular Request for a Water Feature. In various consultations residents were asked what they wanted on the site but it seems that the results did not make it to the architects' drawing board. Even a verbal request for the popular water feature has met with a rebuttal.

PREVIOUS USE OF THE AREA

It should be remembered that a popular lido was on the site and, previously from the seventeenth century Richmond House, the home of many famous names that will be recognised today.

THE COUNCIL'S LINKED SITES STRATEGY

Following the defeat of the Council administration after the 2009 Referendum – organized by the Richmond United Group - the Council quickly signed off their "Linked Sites Strategy" for their Twickenham Riverside plan.

LINKED SITES: TEDDINGTON also suffered from the Council's 2009 Plan

"Linked Sites" were areas in the Borough where "affordable housing" could be built in lieu of building on Twickenham Riverside. This housing was built, destroying garages and gardens, causing problems for residents in areas in Twickenham (including loss of garages and an award-winning garden), Strawberry Hill (loss of a garden) and Teddington (loss of garages in Shacklegate Lane and Railway Road). Residents were left to pick up the pieces of the Linked Sites Strategy although the 2009 plan for Twickenham Riverside did not go ahead.

LOSS OF TREES, A FEATURE OF THE 2009 PLAN AND TODAY'S PLAN

It has been reported that a number of trees have already been lost in the Council's Linked Sites Strategy and if the Council's present attempt to develop the Riverside area goes ahead around seventy trees, as well as much vegetation and wildlife habitats, will also be destroyed.

HOW GREEN IS THE LONDON BOROUGH OR RICHMOND UPON THAMES?

Trees are important in our fight against Climate Change. The loss of trees in pursuit of this plan will release carbon dioxide into our atmosphere. Replacing trees will do little to store carbon until they have grown, taking some years when time is running out. Trees to be cut down include three rare trees, one a gift from Queen Elizabeth II.

TREES ON THE EMBANKMENT

The trees on the Embankment (chosen for floodable areas) were replaced some years ago and are now storing carbon, felling these attractive specimens and replacing with new trees would be a mistake and a waste of money. The Embankment has already been refurbished; the bulldozers are not required and we do not want to release more carbon into the atmosphere.

Teresa Read, 29 Popes Avenue Twickenham

2 EVENTS ON TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE

A SYNOPSIS OF TWICKENHAM ALIVE'S EVENT EXPERIENCE ON TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE

Twickenham Alive was founded by Teresa Read and Berkley Driscoll to organise events on Twickenham Riverside

Many of the events supported by the Community Liaison officer of the Rugby Football Union (RFU)

Since November 2016 we have published a community online newspaper every week for residents in the London Borough of Richmond and are fully informed of the situation on Twickenham Riverside.

LIST OF EVENTS FROM 2011

The re-creation of the **CHARLIE SHORE REGATTA FOR BOYS AND GIRLS, 2011**, which started in 1894 and continued to the 1950s:

The Regatta was part of a two-day event on Twickenham Riverside organised by Twickenham Alive with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, the RFU and the Richmond Environmental Information Centre. The event included Stand Up Paddleboard races (the first time SUP came to Twickenham Riverside). The event also included a two-day market on The Embankment, music concerts on Champions Wharf, a children's fairground and Shetland pony rides.

TWICKENHAM ALIVE was formed to organize events surrounding the regatta and was given a Volunteer's Contract by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

Twickenham Alive arranged a video and photographic competition at the Charlie Shore Regatta for Richmond College students and local residents. A photographic exhibition, video screenings and prize-giving took place in Clarendon Hall:

THE TWICKENHAM ALIVE JUBILEE RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL 2012: A programme of events included dragon boat racing, Stand Up Paddleboard races (The Blue Mile, a national event), the Charlie Shore Boys and Girls Regatta and open-air live music. The event also included a two-day market on

The Embankment, a children's fairground, water zorbing and Shetland pony rides.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE OPENING OF DIAMOND JUBILEE GARDENS BY HRH PRINCESS ALEXANDRA,

Twickenham Riverside, 23rd and 24th June 2012. Twickenham Alive participated in the organization of the opening of Diamond Jubilee Gardens on behalf of the RFU. In addition, an exhibition of photographs was provided from the HLF Memories of Twickenham Riverside project. A photograph can be seen on the website of our Memories of Twickenham Riverside project.

(22nd July 2012 Twickenham Alive worked with the RFU organizing the Strawberry Hill Music and Fun Day)

Twickenham Alive's Christmas on Diamond Jubilee Gardens in 2012 was a fun packed event with a live music stage, an exhibition of breakdancing, a Christmas Market and entertainment for children.

A two-year research project MEMORIES OF TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE funded by the Heritage Lottery (HLF) is another of our projects.

TWICKENHAM ALIVE FOUNDED THE EEL PIE ISLAND SUP CLUB (EPIC SUP) in June 2013 at Twickenham Rowing Club, Twickenham Riverside.

The TWICKENHAM ALIVE RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL 2013

was supported by the RFU. Events included a D-Day Dance in Twickenham Rowing Club, the Twickenham Alive SUP Charity Mile (SUP), Dragon Boat races, the Charlie Shore children's Regatta, live music stages, children's Fun Fair and Shetland pony rides. There was an open-air market on The Embankment.

(2013 Twickenham Alive Film Festival in the Live Room, RFU)

The first TWICKENHAM ALIVE ICE RINK took place in the grounds of the Council offices, York House, Twickenham Riverside, during Christmas and New Year (2013/14). This was the first of THREE yearly community ice rinks organized by Twickenham Alive.

THE MOST FAMOUS ICE RINK IN THE WORLD, a Heritage Lottery Funded Project 2015/16 (Our second two-year HLF project).

From June **2014 TWICKENHAM ALIVE'S river-related events** continued annually: Dragon Boat races, free SUP taster events and the Charlie Shore children's Regatta. Twickenham Alive's music concerts, markets and children's fairgrounds also continued on Twickenham Riverside

In 2014 **Twickenham Alive began PLANS FOR THE TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE DEVELOPMENT.**

Twickenham Alive took part in the first LBRUT competition, with a global company, for a plan for Twickenham Riverside. See the Competition in TwickenhamLido.com

(2014 Twickenham Alive Music and Fun Day at Strawberry Hill House)

TWICKENHAM LIDO'S FIRST CONCEPT PLAN (2015) was published for the Twickenham Riverside Development.

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A PETITION to support TWICKENHAM LIDO was started on CHANGE.ORG. which now has thousands of supporters (4,815) and comments.

The Twickenham Alive Film Festival 2015 took place at Twickenham Rowing Club, Twickenham Riverside.

TWICKENHAM ALIVE'S RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL 2015 included Dragon Boat races and the Twickenham Alive Charity Mile SUP Races. Once again, we organised the CHARLIE SHORE BOYS AND GIRLS REGATTA, by then an annual TWICKENHAM ALIVE event, with Twickenham Rowing Club and the Richmond Environmental Information Centre.

(2015 Twickenham Alive Strawberry Hill Music and Fun Day)

A Heritage Lottery Funded project LIDOS ALIVE was completed. (Our third HLF project).

November 2016 Twickenham Alive and World InfoZone founded THE TWICKENHAM & RICHMOND TRIBUNE – a community online newspaper.

In 2017 TWO HISTORY BOARDS were produced by Twickenham Alive for permanent display in a public park in East Twickenham.

On 1st April 2017 the Twickenham Tribune attended the installation ceremony of the two history plaques in Warren Gardens, East Twickenham, next to the River Thames. (The Twickenham Tribune, Edition 22).

The first plaque commemorated the Belgians who lived and worked in Twickenham during the Second World War; produced by Twickenham Alive on behalf of the East Twickenham Centennial Group.

A second history plaque, the final phase of the HLF project The Most Famous Ice Rink in the World, commemorated the ice rink which once stood in East Twickenham.

Both history boards are the work of Twickenham Alive; the compilation of the information for the ice rink, and, the InDesign work to produce both plaques.

THE TWICKENHAM & RICHMOND TRIBUNE

The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune was founded as a local online newspaper for and by local people in Twickenham and the surrounding towns. A place where people can have their letters published, have their say and where their articles can be published online.

... And as well as local news the Tribune also aims to bring people into contact with the wider world, just as those in a number of countries enjoy the Tribune. World InfoZone, produced by one of the Tribune team, is a useful international

resource which tries to bring a global dimension to the online newspaper.

The Twickenham Tribune Goes Global

Edition 51 of the Twickenham Tribune, published on 28 October 2017, was produced in Rome as the Tribune took part in the Global Junior Challenge (GJC), organised by Fondazione Mondo Digitale, under the high patronage of the Italian Presidency. The Tribune was invited to attend as a Finalist in the Challenge.

The aim of the biannual event is to promote the innovative use of ICT in the social inclusion area, education for life, training and intercultural cooperation and to encourage young generations to share in some of the best practice in the use of ICT.

The Tribune was pleased to take the opportunity, not only to interact with those at the event, but to showcase the towns in the Twickenham constituency as well as exhibit some of the Tribune's work.

3 STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE FOR THE PUBLIC ENQUIRY

TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE 2009:

At this time I was co-chair of a community group set up to assist residents with planning issues. Twickenham Riverside was under threat of the development of “luxury” housing, i.e., houses on Twickenham Riverside overlooking a beautiful view of the Thames – homes that many local people would not be able to afford. There was much opposition to this plan within the community.

I asked for advice from the Department of Local Government and Community Affairs about this issue and it was suggested that we spoke to the Leader of the Council about a Referendum; but he refused straightaway.

THE REFERENDUM & OPENING OF DIAMOND JUBILEE GARDENS:

It was decided to initiate a referendum to be carried out by Electoral Reform Services. The concern about Twickenham Riverside was so great that the cost of £4,000 was soon covered by donations from the residents of Twickenham. The result of the referendum was as follows: 41.7% voted and the result was 93.5% against housing on Twickenham Riverside and the area was saved. A Trust was set up for Diamond Jubilee Gardens and it was opened during the Queen’s Jubilee by Princess Alexandra who planted the rare Black Poplar tree now flourishing in DJG.

PROTECTION BY A TRUST: Over the years there have been Councils who have wanted to build on the Twickenham Riverside site. Today, the disputed area, the Diamond Jubilee Gardens (DJG), is currently protected by a Charitable Trust. The Trust land has one of the best views of the Thames; residents feel that it is important to protect “the View” historically recorded by Horace Walpole as a “little seaport in miniature”. There is also concern over the loss of around seventy trees on the land, a particularly sensitive issue in view of climate change and the importance of **mature** trees absorbing carbon dioxide.

THE COUNCIL’S STAKEHOLDER GROUP: As an invited

member of the LBRUT Stakeholders' Group, and a member of the team for the first LBRUT competition for a Twickenham Riverside plan, I am sorry to say that the Stakeholders' Group appears to some of the members to have been no more than "window dressing". One important consultation that needed a reply was sent late at night with little time to reply. Although we were asked to write down what we would like to see on the proposed development at one meeting it does not seem as though the information was taken into account, for instance, there are no boathouses as in a previous plan and as requested.

RIVERSIDE COUNCILLORS: I have read through the recent statement of the Riverside councillors on the LBRUT planning website, none of whom were seen to be interested in Twickenham Riverside in earlier times. One point which came to my notice in the submission is the mention of "Public Toilets" in the current plans. This is particularly confusing as there are NO public toilets in the Council plan.

LOSS OF THE DIAMOND JUBILEE GARDEN PUBLIC TOILETS: The Council has not been in favour of providing permanent public toilets; this is of concern in areas where there are problems of anti-social behaviour caused by people trespassing on property for toilet purposes and also urination in streets in residential areas.

USE OF PUB TOILETS

A pub is planned in the present DJG area near the "luxury" housing development (flats overlooking one of the best views of the River Thames will be expensive). The pub is said to be available to those using the area, for example children in a "reprovisioned" children's playground. Proper toilet facilities are needed, not another pub in an area where there are at least twenty pubs within walking distance.

LOSS OF A SAFE AREA FOR THE CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND: Currently, the children's playground is in a safe and enclosed area in the Diamond Jubilee Gardens; this would not be the case in the Council's proposals; the area is also within sight of the River Thames.

THE RIVER THAMES: I was the Stakeholder representative for the Stand Up Paddleboarding Club and have a lot of experience organizing regular river races, including rowing and dragon boats. Safety precautions must be taken. I always hired a safety boat. The River Thames comes right up to the edge of The Embankment. There is also a small beach with various birds and ducks, but this floods. An ice cream van is usually next to the beach. I would be concerned for the safety of children who would have easy access to this area in the new proposals. As mentioned, the current children's playground is enclosed and within the confines of the Diamond Jubilee Gardens raised above the river level and any flooding.

REQUEST FOR BOATHOUSES IGNORED: Boathouses were a request to be incorporated into the plan; in a previous application a senior councillor added boathouses following discussions. However, there are no "Boathouses" in the plan. There is also mention of a boathouse that Berkley Driscoll and I had been asked by Habitats & Heritage to consider for riverside use but this is a red herring; the boathouse is small and possibly only designed for one boat.

REQUEST FOR A WATER FEATURE REFUSED: One of the frequent requests by residents over the years has been for a water feature (if we could not replace the swimming pool, most of which still exists under DJ Gardens) but in a zoom meeting with the Council team a water feature was refused.

CONFUSING INFORMATION SENT TO RESIDENTS: In relation to the Consultations, I have mentioned in a previous email sent to Joanna Vincent, that misleading information was sent to residents by email. Photographs were used of the disused Council car park next to Water Lane and readers were led to believe that this was the Twickenham Riverside "site" to be developed, (and now the subject of the Compulsory Purchase Order) but it was **not** Diamond Jubilee Gardens. This information was immediately followed by a Click button to a link asking people to make a Comment on the scheme on the LBRUT Planning website. Some of the residents receiving these emails would not be familiar with the Twickenham Riverside area.

THE INCORRECT AND REPEATED 40 YEARS OF NEGLECT MYTH:

Looking through emails from councillors promoting the current Council/Hopkins plan – *and a copy of a Tweet of a personally "paid for" Facebook advertisement by one of the Twickenham Riverside councillors*, there is the repeated, and incorrect, mantra of 40 years of neglect. I have copied a link below with details of the improvements starting from 2005 with the opening of the children's playground, café and toilets, and the ongoing improvements in following years. *Repeating the 40-years of neglect slogan has been designed to make people believe that it is true* – after all the slogan is from elected members of the Council. However, looking at the election results for the last 40 years it is possible to see that the improvements on Twickenham Riverside including The Diamond Jubilee Gardens, retaining wall and award-winning planting, the café, children's playground, public toilets, and the refurbishment of The Embankment all took place under Conservative administrations.

ACCESSIBILITY TO DIAMOND JUBILEE GARDENS: *"In particular, the site suffers from very poor accessibility, either via steep steps from the Embankment car park, or a gate on the service road behind Iceland supermarket".* There is an entrance to the Gardens just off the High Street, on the same level as the pavement. When the area was an open-air swimming pool there were many families with children and pushchairs; they did not seem to have a problem with entering the area, now Diamond Jubilee Gardens. However, if the affordable housing goes ahead on the Water Lane side it would be possible to create entrances from that side. Various designs for the area show the use of ramps, etc. see examples of access at the Twickenham Lido website including a link the side bar.

HOW MUCH DOES POLITICS PLAY IN THE TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE ISSUE:

In the statement by the Riverside councillors to the Public Enquiry there are the following words **"By contrast, our main opponents locally (the Conservatives)"**. I would suggest that the main people against proposals have been the residents who want to see the area preserved and providing suitable public amenities; there is also only **ONE** Conservative councillor in the present

administration and the minority Green Party seem to vote with the Liberal Democrat administration.

THE TRUST: The only obstacle to the Council building on Twickenham Riverside is the existence of the Trust and the Diamond Jubilee Gardens. This is why the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames is trying to take the land by legal means, a Compulsory Purchase Order.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON THE DERELICT COUNCIL LAND NEXT TO WATER LANE: If the Council wishes to build affordable housing on Twickenham Riverside there is the area next to Water Lane; the Council already has planning permission.

COUNCIL COOPERATION WITH THE DIAMOND JUBILEE TRUST: The Council could also be more cooperative with the Trust; I noticed one mention in the Riverside Councillors report of an anti-social occurrence that took place at night that seemed to me to be a slur against the Trust. As a Committee Member of a Friends organization of a nearby Council-owned public garden I can confirm that anti-social actions have taken place there, further along the river, even with CCTV installed. There is also anti-social behaviour in other parks and open spaces locally: the Council, and local councillors should be more helpful in such situations instead of using one example to disparage the Trust. However, at the time it is understood that the Trust had a 10-year maintenance contract with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

TAKE POLITICS THE POLITICS OUT OF THE SITUATION: In the time I have been aware of the Twickenham Riverside issue it seems to be a political football – currently a Liberal Democrat administration planning to build on land initially protected by a Conservative administration. A compromise of affordable housing on the Water Lane side AND supporting the Trust and Diamond Jubilee Gardens could be the answer. The Council has planning permission for the “affordable flats” and remember the Leader of the Council on a recent webcast saying that the Council’s financial position was Robust.

THE COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER ON DIAMOND JUBILEE GARDENS SHOULD BE REFUSED: let residents enjoy the land bought by the Council in 1924 “for the purpose

of public walks and pleasure grounds.

Teresa Read

29 Popes Avenue

Twickenham

Trustee of Richmond Environmental Information Centre (REIC)

4 TOILETS AND PUB

My Concern about the loss of the public toilets in the Diamond Jubilee Gardens

I am concerned about the loss of public toilets in the Diamond Jubilee Gardens. I was the first person to make an objection to the Hopkins/Council planning application, and, it was in relation to this fact.

Children - with or without an adult - young people and others, some perhaps feeling vulnerable, might not want to go into a pub to use toilets.

The Diamond Jubilee Garden toilets, next to the café and near the children's playground, are wonderful; clean and spacious, the former toilet block in the old lido closed many years ago and will soon be demolished. I remember the late Trevor Bayliss (whom I knew relatively well) being particularly concerned about the need for "proper" toilet facilities on Twickenham Riverside; Trevor used to come to all the Twickenham Riverside events that Berkley Driscoll and I organised for many years.

One of the relevant facts relating to the abovementioned concern is that Twickenham is a rugby town. There are weekends when Twickenham Riverside outside the Barmy Arms is thronged and swaying with people singing "Sweet Caroline", with little chance of getting through to use a toilet.

I raised the toilet issue with the Leader of the Council at one of the Stakeholders' meetings; he brushed off my concern saying that people took their children to pubs these days. Maybe so, but what about those without an adult and the vulnerable, and children from the playground. There are many people who do not want to use a pub toilet, and if they do Twickenham is full of pubs as you will see below.

Twickenham is dependent to a great extent on the "rugby economy"; perhaps I am aware of this as I worked as a

community partner with Berkley Driscoll with the Community Liaison officer of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) for many years; we know those who run the bars and we know the importance of bringing in customers, not only at the RFU but in pubs, bars and restaurants throughout Twickenham.

Public toilets should be high on the list of the Council's priorities (lack of them throughout the borough is associated with anti-social behaviour with many related reports to the police) but instead, two senior councillors made fun of residents' requests for public toilets on Twitter.

Public toilets are needed throughout areas of the borough where people congregate, in outside spaces such as Twickenham Riverside. Considering the amount of money to be spent on the Hopkins' development and associated plans surely the Council could consider basic needs, especially of some of the vulnerable in our town.

I am copying below an article in The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune (edition 218, in reply to a reader's letter), to give an idea of how pubs proliferate in Twickenham.

A Guide to Finding a Pub in Twickenham

Twickenham is full of historic pubs easily reached on foot, in and around the town centre.

The George (circa 1709) is in King Street in the centre of the town and along the Embankment facing the river stands the Barmy Arms (previously the Queen's Head, circa seventeenth century).

In Church Street, behind the Barmy Arms, there is The Fox (Le Bell, circa 1700) and The Eel Pie – previously a wine bar – with The Royal Oak (circa 1723) in Richmond Road opposite the Council car park. The Royal Oak has also been called Stokes & Moncreiff, Twickenham Tup, and Hedgehog and Stump.

It is interesting to note that an alehouse, the Glass and Bottle (circa 1635) was adjacent to the Royal Oak. The Glass and Bottle closed in the mid 1700s and the Royal Oak expanded onto the Glass and Bottle site.

Walking back across the Richmond Road and a short walk along the river we come to The White Swan (The Swan, circa mid seventeenth century) and nearby, on Richmond Road, The Crown (circa 1730)..

Along from the town centre in Cross Deep, Strawberry Hill, there is the Alexander Pope (Popes Grotto, 1852), rebuilt after bombing in the Second World War). This is a spacious pub with a garden overlooking Radnor Gardens and the Thames, within sight of Twickenham Riverside.

A walk into Strawberry Hill and past Strawberry Hill Station, up to the Hampton Road, we find The Prince of Wales (circa 1850). and further on towards Squires Garden Centre we come to Brouge (Brouge at the Old Goat, Fulwell Arms, 1932).

Turning back towards Twickenham Green we pass Fourth Cross Road - the home to The Rifleman - and The Bloomsbury (The Five Oaks, 1837) in the Staines Road.

Both the Rifleman and the Bloomsbury were purveyors of beer, following the Beer House Act, 1830. Similarly, The Sussex Arms (1837) not far from Twickenham Green also took advantage of this Act.

The Prince Blucher (1815) is across the road from the Sussex with The Prince Albert (1840) on the Hampton Road side of the Green.

Walking back towards Twickenham town, along Heath Road, we come to the Three Kings (circa eighteenth century) and onwards towards Twickenham Station there is a choice between The William Webb Ellis (2003); the building: previously Twickenham's Post Office, then, the Sorting Office pub),

Timberyard (formerly Misty Moon and Moon Under Water), The Cabbage Patch (The Railway Tavern, 1853), The Albany (1860s) and The Shack 68 (Garyowen, Codee's Bar, Rugby Tavern).

5 Twickenham Riverside - The Facts?

1. The first fact is that the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Liberal Democrat Party support the Hopkins' plan for Twickenham Riverside; I know, because I have received unsolicited emails from them telling me so with the intention of getting support. Some emails have shown photographs of the disused car park, owned by the Council on Twickenham Riverside, but there are no photographs or mention of Diamond Jubilee Gardens with the children's playground, café, spacious public toilets and all the work completed on The Embankment.
2. A second fact is that a Riverside Councillor is very keen to promote the Council plan; it is known because he "Sponsored" a supporting advertisement on Facebook under the banner of Twickenham Riverside Lib Democrats.
3. "Affordable" housing "linked" to Twickenham Riverside has already been built in Twickenham, Strawberry Hill and Teddington at considerable inconvenience to nearby residents - "The Linked Sites Strategy".

However, the Council owns and has planning permission for housing on the Water Lane side of the site, the disused Council-owned car park; this is where more "affordable housing" will be built.

4. Diamond Jubilee Gardens was opened in 2012, followed by the refurbishment of The Embankment on Twickenham Riverside – currently looking very attractive, but designated to become a building site for some years to come if the Council/Hopkins plans go ahead.
5. Our local environment will not only be affected by demolition on Twickenham Riverside, but over seventy trees and many shrubs will be lost and will no longer be able to absorb carbon dioxide into their leaves, branches, and roots; young trees cannot replace this crucial function to protect our environment until they are mature.

6. A sixth fact, if the Public Enquiry goes against those wishing to stop the development taking place, Twickenham Riverside will be no more than a building site for a very long time; this would cause traffic problems in Twickenham for the years it will take to demolish and build in this Conservation Area.
7. And a seventh fact is that is that the waste of taxpayers' money is involved – especially, after paying for all the previous improvements since 2005.

It also seems that the cost of the Council plan has changed; increasing since the original forecast was available to residents.

It should also be noted that the Council will not replace the public toilets currently in Diamond Jubilee Gardens and users of the “new children’s playground” will only have the use of the pub the Council plans to build on the site (although there are over 20 pubs withing walking distance).

One Riverside councillor has criticized the 38 Degrees petition in his recent tweet <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-twickenham-riverside-public-gardens>

This online petition has reached over 3,000 in support of the Diamond Jubilee Gardens and against the CPO. I followed this petition until it reached around 2,500 allowing residents to register their views.

The Riverside has been a contentious issue for some years. Originally bought for the residents of Twickenham for “public walks and pleasure grounds” with the Title Absolute in the name of the Mayor and **Burgesses** of the Borough.

Why does the Council want to build on the Diamond Jubilee Gardens where you can see one of the best views of the River Thames – a view bought for the residents of the borough?

Of course, “affordable housing” is important, but we also need to protect our local environment. I am sure that the future residents living in the “affordable flats” would appreciate walking around Diamond Jubilee Gardens looking at Horace Walpole “sea-port in miniature”.

6 LIST OF WEBSITES

LIST OF RELEVANT WEBSITES:

TWICKENHAM ALIVE'S EXPERIENCE OF EVENTS ON TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE

[https://worldinfozone.com/features.php?section=Twickenham%27s News&page=2](https://worldinfozone.com/features.php?section=Twickenham%27s%20News&page=2)

SAVING TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE – the history

<https://worldinfozone.com/features.php?section=SavingTwickenhamRiverside>

MEMORIES OF TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE (HLF)

<https://www.memoriesoftwickenhamriverside.com/story.html>

THE ILLUSTRIOUS HISTORY OF THE OLD POOL SITE IN TWICKENHAM

[https://worldinfozone.com/features.php?section=StrawberryHill Neighbours](https://worldinfozone.com/features.php?section=StrawberryHillNeighbours)

LIDOS ALIVE (HLF)


<https://lidosalive.com/twickenham.html>

TWICKENHAM LIDO

<https://twickenhamlido.com/> Some examples of various access points

7 A Riverside Transformed a Town Centre Revived

Evidence of Incorrect information, i.e, photos of the disused Council-owned car park (NOT Diamond Jubilee Gardens) distributed, unsolicited, by email during the Planning Consultation.



Dear Teresa,

After forty years of neglect, a plan that offers the chance to transform Twickenham's riverside has at last been submitted for planning approval. The consultation on the draft proposals earlier in 2021 showed overwhelming support. Now the plans have been finalised and it's time to get it done.


Features include:

- Enlarged and vastly improved **pedestrianised space** all the way to the river
- Flexible space capable of hosting a **wide range of public events** (markets, fairs, open-air cinema screenings etc) to draw people into Twickenham town centre and boost the local economy
- Terraced **gardens and tree planting**
- Significantly widened Water Lane to create a connection with Church Street and the rest of the town
- Twenty one new **affordable homes**
- **Riverside activity area** with paddleboard storage and pontoon


We'd encourage you to look at the plans yourself and comment positively. This is a plan put together by first class architects, with strong public support, which will change Twickenham's riverside for the better. The Council is ready to invest in the interests of the community. After 40 years, it's high time to get this done.

[Click here to comment on the plans](#)

Let's transform this:



Into this:



Many thanks,

Twickenham and Richmond Liberal Democrats

This email was sent to Teresa Read at teresa.read@worldinfozone.com.
You [can update your preferences here](#), or you can [unsubscribe](#) at any time.

Printed, published, and promoted by Twickenham and Richmond Liberal Democrats at 108 South Worple Way, Richmond, SW14 8TN.

8 Facebook Screenshot

Evidence of a Paid advertisement on Facebook with incorrect information, i.e 40 years of neglect, see the History of Twickenham Riverside.

