

SUP-13

COMMENTS BY THE TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE TRUST

SUP-13 by Sam Kamleh

1 It will be evident that the present trustees and Ms Kamleh differ substantially on a number of points made in this submission, both as to the facts and to points of subjective interpretation. We acknowledge that Ms Kamleh feels a need to take up some “matters of principle” relating to the decisions the Trust has taken, but we are equally bound to point out areas where the points raised are driven by assumptions with which we disagree and/or by inaccuracy.

2 Taking some of the specific points:

- (1) As stated above, the Trust is fully mindful today of the scope of its objects relating to the wider Riverside and its environs and has acted and continues to act precisely and consciously in pursuit of those objects.
- (2) The Trust does not have any “self-interested requirement to retain the Diamond Jubilee Gardens as a self-contained, fenced off area that the Trust manages – what they term to be a ‘cohesive’ space – and to retain the parking for the residents on Eel Pie Island, in spite of their statements to the contrary”. The Trust has been open throughout to changes which might improve the open space for which it has direct responsibility under its lease with the Council (the Gardens) and to enhancements and their integration in the context of the wider Riverside.
- (3) Today 5 of the 8 trustees (not including the Council-appointed trustee) live elsewhere in Twickenham, with 3 trustees living on or more closely connected with Eel Pie Island. All trustees act – as they are bound to do – independently and exercising their best judgement in the implementation of the Trust’s objects. In addition, only 2 of the 7 people who spoke against the Scheme at the Planning Committee live on the island (one being the TRT secretary and one having a direct commercial interest in the arrangements on the Embankment.)

- (4) The Trust is not insisting on the retention of the parking – indeed, it supports its removal.
- (5) The Trust’s position on the RIBA competition and the Hopkins winning concept design is discussed in the Trust’s evidence in S-2 W4.1.3 Twickenham Riverside Trust – Negotiation and in S-2 W4.1.1 Twickenham Riverside Trust – Consultation and Engagement. It was presented as a ‘concept’ subject to consultation and change. We note that the design then changed very significantly very quickly.
- (6) The two resignations from the Trust in September 2021 happened for completely different reasons than suggested here. The Chairman presented his resignation four days before the expiry of his maximum term, having served nine years as a trustee. The second trustee referred to here resigned because his wife had got a job in Wales and the whole family was moving there; he then brought his termination date forward by one week to align with the departure of the chairman. No formal discussion or decisions had been held at that stage either on conflicts of interest or the re-provision plan and neither had expressed his opinion.
- (7) This contribution offers a number of personal views including that (1) “beyond the narrowed issue of the values associated with the specific parcels of land to be exchanged, the proposed scheme provides unmistakeable improvements to the wider Twickenham environs”, (2) the Trust is “a small group of residents, mostly representative of themselves and acting contrary to the Trust’s founding principles and, therefore, the wider interests of local residents, to deny the benefit of the proposals to others”, and (3) “a town centre, brownfield site should be properly utilised to avoid urban spread. Providing a mixture of housing, commercial units and open space is the right answer for the most important site in Twickenham and for future generations”. The fact is that the substantial majority of the Trust did not share those views, in the considered judgement both that what was being offered to the Trust as a re-provision was of reduced amenity value when compared to the existing Gardens and that the same also applied to the overall public open space in the Scheme Land.