

Appendix 5

Summary of Brighton Station Stakeholder Workshop comments 30th August & 13th September 2012.

Context:

The Station Gateway Stakeholder Working Group was established to ensure representative stakeholder feedback informed development of the vision and objectives for, and ultimately design of, an improved Station environment. The group enables scheme principles to be discussed and developed in partnership prior to wider full public consultation.

On July 10th 2012 at Transport Committee, members asked that a final proposal be developed for the areas around Brighton Station, drawing on options previously put out to full public consultation.

The Stakeholder Working Group came together to help refine the final options over the course of two workshops. This note summarises the outcome of those workshops and their influence on the design proposals that will be presented back to Committee on 2nd October 2012.

During the course of the workshops draft plans were discussed for the southern and northern station gateway areas. Refinements suggested by the stakeholder group are represented in the final preferred options presented to transport committee on 2nd October.

Involvement

30th August Workshop

Attendance: Jim Mayor & Ben Coleman (BHCC Project Manager), Oli Davey & Ian Hingley (Urban Initiatives Designers) Mike Best & Roger French (Brighton & Hove Bus & Coach Company), Tony Mernagh (Economic Partnership), John Oram (Streamline), Any Cheesman (Queens Rd Traders), Steve Ovet (GMB Taxi Representative), James Dickson (Southern Railways), Colette Wilson (West Hill Community Association), Peter Crowhurst (N Laine Community Association), John Carmichael (Visit Brighton), David Sewell (N Laine Traders Association), Bruce Smith & Stephen Young (Living Streets), Simon Bannister (BHCC Environment Improvements)

13th September Workshop

Attendance: Jim Mayor (BHCC Project Manager), Ian Hingley (Urban Initiatives Designer), Mike Best (Brighton & Hove Bus & Coach Company), John Oram (Streamline), Any Cheesman (Queens Rd Traders), Steve Ovet (GMB Taxi Representative), Victoria Bentley (Network Rail), Peter Crowhurst (N Laine Community Association), John Carmichael (Visit Brighton), David Sewell (N Laine Traders Association), Bruce Smith (Living Streets), Mark Strong (Community & Voluntary Sector Forum), Alan Buck (BHCC Planning manager), Richard Wolfstrome (Wolfstrome Design).

Contributors outside Workshops

Jon Hastie (Fed), Claire Ottewell (Tourism Alliance)

Apologies: Chris Todd (Friends of the Earth), Shelley Atlas (Commuters), Sharon Hedges (Passenger Focus), Tom Shaw (Hyde Housing)

Workshop Views: Southern Station Gateway

Areas of Agreement around the Proposed Scheme

General Principles

In general the Stakeholder Group expresses support for the general principles of the proposal. The rest of this note focuses on areas where the Stakeholders focussed on specific areas of concern / different opinion. Any design aspects not mentioned were supported.

North Laine Traffic Flow

The group has worked to identify a traffic arrangement for the North Laine that:

- a. accommodates taxis in Frederick Place / Trafalgar Street
- b. restricts general through traffic in the area (to provide overall traffic-related benefits within the North Laine)
- c. avoids additional traffic on residential streets and
- d. enables resident and business access.

The proposal sees Frederick Place reversed, so it flows northbound. Eastbound access to the North Laine is made by Gloucester Street rather than Trafalgar Street. The western end of Trafalgar Street (under the bridge) is reversed and made taxi only.

As there is no longer a Gloucester Road exit to Queens Rd from the North Laine, Over Street, Kemp Street and Frederick St are reversed to enable residents here to exit the area via North Road. Upper Gardener Street is reversed to enable residents in Tidy Street and Kensington Place to do the same.

Non-local vehicles that currently exit the area from the A23 continue towards the seafront via Valley Gardens, reducing through traffic in the North Laine. Local access is provided via Church Street and Spring Gardens.

The group believes that the proposed arrangement best accommodates all three objectives. However the following issues should be considered.

Some local journeys in and out of the North Laine will be slightly longer than at present – specifically people accessing and leaving the western North Laine area:

- People arriving via the A23 from the south will access the west North Lane by Church Street, Spring Gardens and North Road rather than Trafalgar Street.
- People heading south west via Queens Road from Over Street, Kemp Street, Tidy Street or Kensington Place would do so via Frederick Street or Upper Gardner Street and North Road rather than Gloucester Road.
- People would access Upper Gardner Street from Trafalgar Street and exit via North Road, switching the current arrangement.

Along with non-local traffic, taxi access from the north of the station to the south would be restricted by the changes. An option is to enable taxis to access Trafalgar Street via Blackman Street (the suggested revisions stop this movement for regular traffic to avoid rat running through Tidy St and Upper Gardner St). However, this would mean more taxi traffic in these residential streets. The actual level of impact is difficult to estimate with any degree of certainty – taxi access could be maintained on an initial trial basis if required.

Transport Modelling of current through traffic (between the A23 and Queens Road) suggests that eastbound traffic flow would continue along its current route – albeit accessing Trafalgar Street from Gloucester Rd and Frederick Place. Most traffic travelling west would do so via Aquarium Roundabout rather than Trafalgar Street rather than Church Street / North Road.

IBIS Hotel Pick Up / Drop Off

The group agreed that it was important to accommodate space for one or two taxis / private vehicles to pick up and drop off directly outside the IBIS Hotel. It was agreed that this would best be achieved by moving bus stops further north from the initial proposal tabled, with the southern most bus sitting directly behind the IBIS facility. This has the additional benefit of ensuring buses on the eastern side of Queens Road are slightly closer to the Station Entrance, but does mean that the loading bay for Budgens will have to be moved to the eastern side of Queens Road (or Budgens and taxis will have to share space), and that there is only room for two taxi drop off points at the north western end of Queens Road (the original aim had been to provide space for 2-6 taxis to drop off in this area). It was noted that taxi facilities should provide room for rear loading wheelchair access when required. A final proposal for this arrangement will be worked up with Budgens and taxi representatives if approval is given to consult on the wider scheme.

Provision of loading bays in Queens Road

The group agreed that 3 loading bays should be provided on the eastern side of Queens Road.

Gloucester Road / Queens Road Junction

The group considered whether Gloucester Road could be made 2-way at the junction with Queens Road to make it slightly quicker for residents who wanted to drive between the North Laine and Seven Dials to do so. However, this would make the junction of Gloucester Rd and Queens Road more complex as it would need to accommodate a greater variety of movements. This would likely impact on smooth flow of traffic (pedestrian as well as vehicle) through the area. That impact would be experienced by a lot of people a lot of the time (everyone moving through that junction would experience delay). The group agreed that keeping Gloucester Road one way eastbound from Queens Road provided the best overall solution.

Accessibility & the Trafalgar Street Structure

It was noted that special attention should be paid to ensuring the proposed new structure covering the western end of Trafalgar Street should not be a hazard for disabled people.

Signalised Pedestrian Crossings

It was requested that pedestrian crossings could be signalised. The request will be considered in development of the design (such considerations would be made at a more detailed stage of scheme development).

Taxi access from Trafalgar Street to Junction Road

The design team were asked to investigate the opportunity for an engineering solution that would enable taxis to turn from Trafalgar Street into Junction Road without driving into Terminus Road, to enable freer flowing traffic. Having given this more consideration, the design team feel that the area is too complex (in terms of available space and level changes) to introduce a straightforward solution. It is also considered that taxis would be able to make this manoeuvre without delays to wider traffic flow by using natural breaks in through traffic and also making the manoeuvre when the Terminus Road pedestrian crossing to the immediate north of Trafalgar Street was in effect.

Enforcement of the proposed Cycle Contraflow arrangement

There was some concern over enforcement of the proposed contraflow. The design team feel that the arrangement will be beneficial, and would not create conflict with deliveries. Possible enforcement issues should not be a reason not to do something – instead efforts should be made to ensure adequate enforcement procedures are in place.

Extension of the proposed Cycle Contraflow to create a dedicated 2-way cycle lane on the eastern side of Queens Road.

It was suggested that a two-way cycle contraflow should be created on the eastern side of Queens Road to enable segregated southbound cycle journeys from the station to beyond the Gloucester Road junction. The design team feel this would not be beneficial for an amalgamation of the following reasons:

- Such a facility would be inconsistent with the surrounding cycle network
- The facility would require an additional 1.5 meters of the eastern footway to be given to cycles rather than pedestrians. Due to

relative numbers of pedestrians and cyclists, it is felt more important to give this space to pedestrians.

- The simplified contraflow arrangement in Queens Road will make on street southbound cycling safer than the current arrangement without segregated facilities
- Any benefit provided by a segregated southbound cycle lane would only be felt over a short distance. Beyond the facility cyclists would quickly need to share Queens Road with wider traffic.
- There is an alternative southbound route (via Trafalgar Street and North Laine) for cyclists who do not feel confident using Queens Road.

Queens Road / Gloucester Road junction congestion

There was some concern that taxis trying to reach the rank in Frederick Place could block access in to the North Laine for other vehicles. After some discussion it was agreed that this was unlikely to happen, but that if a problem did arise, an enforcement solution could easily be identified and implemented to resolve the problem.

Aspects outside the direct scope of the scheme

Certain aspects of the proposal, or causes for discussion amongst stakeholders, are outside the direct scope of what could be termed the 'core preferred scheme'. These aspects will influence the ongoing development and management of wider improvements:

Restrictions on Wider Traffic Flow

Earlier public consultation had raised the principle of restrictions on wider traffic flows being introduced alongside any improvements within the vicinity of the station. As with the general public, stakeholders expressed strong views on the subject. Most were in favour of restricting wider through traffic, although some expressed strong concerns as to the potential impact of such measures both on the wider transport network, and also on surrounding local streets which could suffer from increased levels of displaced traffic.

An option for restricting non-local traffic through the area is being tested using the city's transport model. The scenario tested involves restricting vehicle movements between Surrey Street and Terminus Road. Under the proposal, only buses, cycles and taxis would be able to travel between Surrey Street and Terminus Road. Measures would also be introduced to ensure southbound vehicles from Seven Dials did

not use Buckingham Road and Clifton Street as alternative southbound routes to Terminus Road through the Seven Dials.

In the view of the design team, the core scheme proposal could operate with or without wider traffic restrictions (based on the fact that a similar arrangement works at present without through traffic being restricted). Any final decision on restriction of through traffic should be informed by the results of the ongoing transport modelling (results are expected back shortly before Transport Committee on October 2nd), followed by a trial period of sufficient duration (probably lasting at least 3 months).

Signage

Whilst again not within the direct scope of the project, the need for high-quality accessible signing was noted – both within and around the station. Paralympics arrangements were cited as a good precedent.

Northern Boardwalk

A workshop member asked whether the boardwalk leading to the northern station entrance / exit could be treated to make it less slippery. This would be considered by Southern Railway.

North Laine Entrance

The stakeholders supported the principle of a new North Laine entrance from the station, which arguably becomes more important if taxis are to rank in Trafalgar Street. The importance of making any such feature fully accessible (by inclusion of a lift) was stressed. Network Rail are leading efforts to deliver this aspect of the project. Once the most suitable location has been identified, wider considerations (including measures to ensure full accessibility) can be progressed in more detail.

Operational Improvements

Although not within the direct scope of the design project, it was agreed that a meeting to discuss aspects of the area's future operations would be beneficial. Topics for discussion would include managing deliveries, enforcement of any traffic restrictions, management of waste collections, training to ensure staff around the station can give good advice to disabled station users and provision of tourist information.

'Out of Hours' Safety around the Station

The group discussed whether the scheme could incorporate elements that could improve safety / provide facilities for people who miss the last train of the evening and have nowhere to go for the couple of hours in the early morning when the station is closed. It was agreed that the project's scope of influence in this area was limited, although the presence of a 24 hour taxi / bus presence in front of the station should help. Another suggestion was to provide details of establishments offering short notice accommodation for people unexpectedly stranded in the city. The latter is beyond the scope of the design project, but will be considered further during a meeting to discuss operational management of the area.

Removal of Canopy

There was overall support for removal of at least some of the southern station canopy to enable creation of an open, higher-quality public space directly outside the station and to reveal the original station architecture. It was suggested that some of the canopy could be retained as cover for any retail / market activity in the area of concourse currently occupied by taxis. It was also noted that for a proportion of station customers (primarily taxi customers and bus passengers accessing buses directly outside the station), removal of the canopy would result in creation of a 'new' unsheltered route between the station building and new taxi / bus shelters. (No one else would be worse off in bad weather by removal of the canopy.) However, benefits for the majority achieved by removing the canopy directly in front of the station were felt to outweigh any occasional and relatively minor disadvantages to a minority.

As with wider traffic restrictions, the general proposal could be delivered with or without the canopy being removed in whole or part, and practicality of removal will need to be investigated with relevant conservation and landowner partners.

Transferring the Taxi Permit Arrangement from within the Station to Junction Road

Some existing taxi permit holders within the station had enquired whether a permit arrangement could be retained at the new rank location. This could reduce demand for taxi spaces, and also raise revenue for maintenance and operational costs of the wider station area in future. Following further discussion it was clear that other taxi drivers would oppose such an arrangement, and the legality of issuing permits to access public highway ranks was also raised. Definitive legal clarification is currently being sought on the issue, but the group agreed that a permit arrangement should not be recommended.

Workshop Views: Northern Station Gateway

Compared to the Southern Gateway area, it has been difficult to progress designs for an improved Northern Station area. Much depends on whether a cycle parking facility will be delivered in this location (this will impact on the 'eastern edge' of any new plaza at the northern station entrance and also impact on wider cycle parking requirements in the area). Efforts to deliver the cycle parking facility are currently being led by Southern Railway, and as of mid-September Southern Railway were still working towards a definitive conclusion.

Aside from the cycle parking facility, opportunities to beneficially rearrange aspects of the northern gateway are limited by available space, and the operational requirements of that space.

The group agreed the proposed layout after an additional bus stop was added for the new number 38 service serving the northern entrance.

