



Leader of the Council

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Date: 29 August 2018

Dear Denis,

Re: Brentford Town Centre

Thank you for your letter dated 2 July 2018 (your reference BCC837). Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

I have provided responses to your questions below.

Question 1

Brentford Town Centre should be the vibrant centre of our community but for years it has been going downhill and there appear to be no co-ordinated plans to ensure its future.

Response

The Council remains committed to the health and prosperity of our town centres, which provide a vital role for our residents and businesses in creating thriving communities. We are grateful to organisations such as the Brentford Community Council for their part in engaging with our plans affecting the town centre, such as the Great West Corridor (Opportunity Area) plan, the more recent Retail and Town Centre Needs Study and our bid to the Mayor of London to bring in nearly £1m of investment for a Creative Enterprise Zone with Brentford at its hub.

We have also engaged with businesses and the Brentford Chamber of Commerce regarding the possibility of Brentford becoming a Business Improvement District, with a view to increasing footfall and even greater business engagement to shape the future of the Brentford.

Questions 2, 3 & 4

Short Term Problems. Our supermarket is closing and those without cars may not have any suitable facilities for some years.

One bank is closing. The post office is on a development site and there are no plans for it to be re-located.

There are planning consents for development on the South Side of the High Street, phase one by Ballymore and for the Council's own development. There is also a consent for the Morrison site and there has been an exhibition for the redevelopment of Roman House. But there are no firm timetables for any of these projects.

Response

The problems facing town centres up and down the country have been well documented and are to a large degree the result of market conditions and commercial decisions. Online shopping, destination high streets and shopping centres, high rents and rates mean that independent retailers in smaller town centres need to be ever more innovative to simply survive. It is our ambition that the regeneration of Brentford town centre will be a major component in retailers flourishing here once more.

The planning consent to the Morrisons Site has been subject to a Judicial Review and we expect a clarification on schedules from the applicant soon after this process.

Discussions regarding the site to the south side of Brentford High Street are at an advanced stage and we expect the site to become unconditional in March 2019 and for works to begin in June of next year. Further news is imminent.

Questions 5, 6 & 7

There are proposals for bicycle superhighway 9 which have been out to consultation, but no amended proposals or timetable.

Bus services are not centred on the town centre to increase the catchment area for shops and services. Short term parking is likely to diminish.

No improvements have been proposed for the link between Brentford station and the Town Centre.

Response

A cohesive transport strategy is all-important to our town centres' health and we have been working with stakeholders such as Transport for London to achieve this in Brentford and elsewhere. TfL's amendments, following the first consultation, of the proposed CS9 are will be made available in 2019 and a further consultation will ensue.

The Great West Corridor plan has highlighted the need to improve way-finding to Brentford town centre (policy GWC5 F) and we expect development in the area to unlock these proposals. We are to consider options to improve the link between the station and the town centre (and the station and the Great West Corridor) in 2019/20. One such option is to improve signage, or whether it will be possible to extend the segregated cycle facilities implemented on Boston Manor north of the A4 across the south. We welcome ideas from BCC on other potential improvements.

Officers consider that Brentford town centre is well served by bus routes. On street parking is likely to be reduced in the CS9 proposals (which will be subject to further consultation as outlined above) but the redevelopment sites (Land south of Brentford High Street and morrisons) both re-provide off-street parking. We would welcome comments on whether there is any particular catchment area that is not currently served.

With best wishes,



Cllr Steve Curran
Leader of the Council
London Borough of Hounslow

cc. Peter Matthew, Strategic Director Housing, Planning and Communities
Marilyn Smith, Chief Planning Officer
Sarah Scannell, Head of Planning Development