

Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish

Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **17 September 2014**

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL.

Membership:

Councillors Sue Gray (Chair), Tom Kelly (Vice-Chair), Roy Jones, Martin Kerin, Gerard Rice and Simon Wootton

Substitutes:

Councillors Robert Ray, Garry Hague, James Halden and Michael Stone

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Minutes	5 - 12
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30 July 2014.	
3. Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4. Declaration of Interests	

Exclusion of the Public and Press

Members are asked to consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Kenna-Victoria Martin, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **9 September 2014**

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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest at a meeting?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish

To achieve our vision, we have identified five strategic priorities:

1. Create a great place for learning and opportunity

- Ensure that every place of learning is rated “Good” or better
- Raise levels of aspirations and attainment so that local residents can take advantage of job opportunities in the local area
- Support families to give children the best possible start in life

2. Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity

- Provide the infrastructure to promote and sustain growth and prosperity
- Support local businesses and develop the skilled workforce they will require
- Work with communities to regenerate Thurrock’s physical environment

3. Build pride, responsibility and respect to create safer communities

- Create safer welcoming communities who value diversity and respect cultural heritage
- Involve communities in shaping where they live and their quality of life
- Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and safeguard the vulnerable

4. Improve health and well-being

- Ensure people stay healthy longer, adding years to life and life to years
- Reduce inequalities in health and well-being
- Empower communities to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing

5. Protect and promote our clean and green environment

- Enhance access to Thurrock’s river frontage, cultural assets and leisure opportunities
- Promote Thurrock’s natural environment and biodiversity
- Ensure Thurrock’s streets and parks and open spaces are clean and well maintained

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 30 July 2014 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors Sue Gray (Chair), Tom Kelly (Vice-Chair), Roy Jones, Martin Kerin, Gerard Rice and Simon Wootton

In attendance: Mrs A White – Member of Transvol
D. Bull –Director of Planning and Transportation
A. Osola – Head of Highways
M. Essex – Head of Regeneration
K. Martin – Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 4 March 2014, were approved as a correct record.

2. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business, however the Chair informed Members that one question from a member of the public had been received in relation to Item 5 'Budget Update and Savings Proposals' and advised that the question would be taken directly before the agenda item to which it was related.

3. Declaration of Interests

There were no such declarations.

4. Budget Update and Savings Proposals

At the request of the Chair, Mrs Anne White, a Member of Transvol presented her question to the Committee, which was as follows:

"My name is Anne White and I am a local disabled resident who has lived in Thurrock for over 50 years. I have been a member of TRANSVOL since 1994. We understand that the Council has very little money; however taking all of the budget given to TRANSVOL will have a massive impact on the most vulnerable people in the Thurrock community. TRANSVOL do fifteen thousand door to door trips per year.

We have had our budget cut over the years from three hundred thousand pounds to currently one hundred thousand pounds. The service now spends two hundred thousand pounds per year. In other words, we add another pound of service for each pound the Council spends – so you get double your money’s worth. Most people who use TRANSVOL cannot use the free bus pass you provide due to their impairment or even afford the limited accessible taxis. They use TRANSVOL to get shopping, visit doctors or to have a social life.

How do you justify such a harsh decision to take our service away and its negative effect on the wellbeing of your vulnerable citizens?

The Chair thanked Mrs White for her attendance at the Committee and provided the following response which had been provided by officers:

The Council recognises how important mobility is to the quality of life of Thurrock’s disabled residents. In recent years, there have been changes in the way government provides support for disabled people, which has focussed more on individual choices and less on dedicated transport subsidies.

In view of these changes, Thurrock Council realised last year that the time would come when pressure on the Transportation and Highways budget would require a review of the grant to Transvol and began discussions as to how alternative ways of funding the Service could be explored.

In allocating the 2014/15 grant funding, the Director of Planning and Transportation wrote to Transvol, saying that, given shrinking budgets, grant funding was secure for 2014/15 but may not be available for 2015/16. Similar services across the country have succeeded in finding ways of operating without total reliance on local authority grants.

Transport Officers have offered to support Transvol in exploring options for following a similar path and it is hoped that arrangements could be in place by April 2015.

Mrs White then presented her supplementary question to the Committee which was:

“Have you thought about the impact on everyone; there is a greater need and support for these people. Not everyone gets mobility allowance or can use the free bus pass.

Have you looked at the impact?”

The Director of Planning and Transportation provided a response, explaining that it was up to him as Director for this department to propose suggested savings; it was the responsibility of the Members to make the final decisions. He continued to inform those present that different areas and communities impacted had been looked at and the impacts would be considered within the

decision. Officers explained that there were services that were statutory which by law are saved first then Officers had to look at funding and grants after.

It was suggested and agreed by the Committee to suspend standing orders, to enable Members to have an open discussion with members and users of Transvol, the following points were raised:

- That should funding to Transvol be cut, then the people who use it will become isolated within their own homes,
- There are no taxis on the taxi rank at Lakeside shopping centre which were equipped for disabled passengers,
- That by cutting funding to Transvol would make a change to its members lifestyles
- Transvol provided two return trips a week

Officers informed the Committee and members of Transvol that Thurrock Council had to find £37.7million worth of savings over the next three years, Transvol currently received £97,000 in funding from the council. The Director of Planning and Transportation continued to explain that he had written to Transvol and had informed them of the savings which needed to be achieved. The Committee were advised that there were other community transport charities around the country who did not receive funding from their local Council.

All Members of the Committee agreed that a Task and Finish Group be established to look at community transport. Senior Officers then provided a detailed introduction to the report which outlined the significant reductions in the money received from the Government and other pressures on services as the Council was required to make £37.7million of savings over the next three financial years.

The Director of Planning and Transportation notified the Committee that staff of the Council had currently been offered voluntary redundancy and that it was inevitable that there would also be compulsory redundancies made to assist with making the savings needed.

Members were informed by the Head of Regeneration, that there were statutory and non-statutory functions. With statutory functions largely protected, greater pressure would need to be applied to non-statutory functions to meet the savings. He continued to explain that the majority, although not all, of the functions undertaken within the Chief Executives Delivery Unit (CEDU) were non-statutory and the £700,000 reduction in funding to the Department reflected a significant cut in General Fund support. Within this the Regeneration Service accounted for £500,000 of the savings target.

The Committee queried as to whether it was possible to use section 106 monies to support Transvol, Officers responded to Members queries

explaining that Transvol was an independent charity, who had expert help and made all of the day to day decisions themselves. The Director of Planning and Transportation further explained that through writing to the charity two years ago, he had pre-warned them that saving proposals were a possibility. Members were notified that Section 106 monies had to relate to mitigating the impacts of the particular development that they were generated from.

Members were updated that implementing low energy lighting around the borough was moving forward and that income was being generated by the Planning and Transportation directorate selling and sharing services with neighbouring authorities.

It was enquired by some Members of the Committee, what was meant by selling and sharing services. Senior Officers explained that in some areas the Council had excellent systems in place whereas neighbouring Councils needed support, therefore officers were going to these Councils to help develop good practice and that through providing that support they were generating an income.

The Committee questioned as to whether there was a risk of making Lakeside Shopping Centre more attractive to the detriment of Grays should car parking charges within the borough be raised as suggested within appendix 2c. The Head of Regeneration clarified to Members that recent work within Grays, including the development of the new College, was to differentiate the roles of Grays and Lakeside and avoid competition between the two. Whilst the perception remained that there was not enough car parking places available within Grays and that the cost of the available parking was high, the Council's own research had found that there was a surfeit of parking spaces and that the car parking charges were below those of neighbouring authorities.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the comments detailed above with regard to the savings proposals within Planning & Transportation and Regeneration be noted.**
 - 2. That a Task and Finish Group be established to examine Community Transport.**
 - 3. That an update report on parking within Grays be taken back to Committee at a later date.**
- 5. Local Highways Infrastructure (including public transport)**

The Director of Planning and Transportation introduced the report to Members explain that the vice-chair of Committee last year requested that a report be brought back to the Committee in relation to public transport and bus subsidies.

Members were notified that Officers were planning to invite Members of the Committee to be involved in a Local Government Association Strategic review of Highways Maintenance within Thurrock.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Committee supports ongoing work to improve value for money in relation to local highways infrastructure maintenance and support for local bus services.**
- 2. That the Committee agrees to participate in the stakeholder activities which will be organised during the autumn to agree a way forward on how we make the best use of the resources we have for the benefit of communities in Thurrock.**

6. SELEP Single Local Growth Fund Update

The Head of Regeneration introduced the report and explained that Thurrock was within the South East Local Economic Partnership (SELEP); the second largest LEP in the country which spanned East Sussex, Kent, Essex, Medway, Southend and Thurrock. Officers had been working hard to get the needs of Thurrock heard across this area in developing the SELEP Strategic Economic Plan which is the mechanism through which Government funding in support of Regeneration, Economic Development, Highways and Housing would be secured. Members were notified that Thurrock had been particularly successful in securing funding allocations in support of the widening of the A13, local cycle improvements and the creation of a public transport hub at Stanford-le-Hope to secure greater access to London Gateway. In total Thurrock's share of the £442 million funding allocated to SELEP was £92.5million, which equated to nearly 25% of all of the new funding (as opposed to those which had previously been awarded), awarded to SELEP.

In addition to the Borough's own projects, officers had taken a leading role in developing and presenting the Thames Gateway South Essex case which had also secured impressive £63.3m allocations for a range of projects including capacity enhancements to the A127 and transport investment in Basildon and Southend. It was noted that, given existing travel to work patterns, this investment was likely to have a benefit to Thurrock's residents as well as those within the neighbouring authorities.

The Committee queried the £5million allocation for the development of the A13 widening. Officers explained that the Council was given funding of £1million to complete the plan, £5million to develop the scheme and then, depending on discussions on the Lower Thames Crossing, the Council would receive the remaining £75 million to deliver the scheme.

Members congratulated the Director and his team for their hard work and the fantastic income they were bring into the Council, which demonstrated different ways of working.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the report and welcome the success that Thurrock has had in attracting Government funding as part of the Growth Deal.

The Chair proposed to suspend standing ordering this was agreed by all Members.

7. Purfleet Regeneration Update

Members of the Committee were shown a short video on the Purfleet Centre Regeneration project. Following the video the Head of Regeneration took the Committee through a presentation on the project, explaining that the Council owned 55% of the land required to complete the project.

It was further explained that the idea for the project was to redevelop the of 140acre site to provide a 500,000sqft film, television and media complex and up to 2,500 new homes within a new town centre featuring a primary school, GP surgery, supermarket and retail/leisure facilities.

The Committee were informed that, following a three stage procurement exercise, Cabinet had selected Purfleet Centre Regeneration Limited as the Council's Development Partner in March 2014. Since then officers had been working with the developer to develop the detail of the proposals on from the initial bidding stage. Members were informed that the media complex would be the first purpose built studios developed in the UK for 50 years and, once complete, would boast some of the best facilities in Europe capable of hosting the largest productions in the world. The housing offer was expected to be mixed with different housing types being used in different areas. Overall it was expected that 60% of the 2,500 new homes would be houses.

Officers reported to Members that it was possible to be on site as early as next year with the school and Studio to be open in 2017.

Members enquired as to whether the Council had the money or the investors to be able to complete the project. The Head of Regeneration replied to Members questions explaining that the developers were procured for their skill and experience in attracting and securing the necessary investment to deliver the scheme and that it is not the Council's role to secure the funding itself although it is working in partnership with the developer. There are currently a number of positive discussions underway with potential funders and an announcement is expected in the coming months.

Members enquired as to whether the scheme presented was likely to be delivered or whether the developer could make their own changes. The Head of Regeneration explained that, under the terms of an agreement between the

Council and the developer, the Council had to be consulted on all amendments to the proposals and that in most cases the Council's specific approval would be required to any changes

Following further questions from Members it was identified that the primary school would ultimately have be three form entry and Education colleagues had confirmed that there was no requirement for secondary provision in the area as there is sufficient capacity in existing schools.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee welcome the progress made on the Purfleet Centre regeneration project.

8. Work Programme

Members discussed the work programme for the municipal year and the following reports were agreed:

- Review on Planning Standard – 17 September 2014
- Report on funding from the European Union and other non UK Government streams

The meeting finished at 9.50pm.

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

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17 September 2014	ITEM: 5
Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
European Union Funding Programmes	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Report of: Stephen Taylor, Projects and Programmes Manager	
Accountable Head of Service: Matthew Essex, Head of Regeneration	
Accountable Director: Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The members of the European Union have agreed a new regional policy for the period 2014-20 which focuses on economic growth. The funds which support the delivery of regional policy are now being revised to reflect this new focus and, in the UK, the Government has decided that the large majority of the funding will be allocated to Local Enterprise Partnerships to oversee the development and delivery of the programme.

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) has been allocated £179.5m over the funding period which will be matched with resources from elsewhere to deliver support for businesses and for people seeking to access jobs. SELEP has been working with partners, including the Council, to develop programme priorities together with appropriate governance arrangements. This paper sets out the process adopted to develop the programme, the timetable for completing negotiations and the emerging priorities for support.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 Members are invited to review progress and comment on the priorities identified for the new European Growth Programme.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The European Union Structural and Investment Funds exist to support European Union regional policy. Regional policy seeks to reduce disparities in terms of income and wealth across Europe. Although poorer regions receive most of the support there is funding available for projects that support

businesses and help people into work across the whole of the European Union. Projects operating in Thurrock include the Low Carbon Business Programme which has worked with over 500 businesses to make cost savings by making cheap and sometimes free energy efficiency measures.

2.2 Regional policy is usually set for a period of years. Recently a new set of goals for regional policy have been agreed for the period 2014-2020 which focus on creating growth and jobs, tackling climate change and energy dependence and reducing poverty and social exclusion. Changes in regional policy are accompanied by changes to the objectives and operation of the accompanying European Funds: -

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – to invest in EU growth
- European Social Fund (ESF) – to invest in people
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
- European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

2.3 Changes are negotiated between the European Commission and the Member States including the UK Government. In the UK the Government has announced that the ERDF, ESF and part of the EAFRD funds will be combined into the European Growth Programme with the large majority of funding allocated to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) including the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) which covers Thurrock, Southend and Medway unitary authorities and Essex, Kent and East Sussex County Councils.

2.4 Each LEP has been allocated funds for the 2014-2020 period and have been asked to set out how they intend to use this allocation in a strategy to be agreed with Government. SELEP has been allocated £179.5m for this period; £82.5m ESF, £82.5m ERDF and £14.5m from EAFRD. Once the strategy is agreed the LEPs will be asked to oversee the ongoing development and delivery of the strategy, while the UK Government will undertake the management and administration of the programme.

2.5 In a separate but related programme the European Council has announced the creation of a new Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) to tackle unemployment among young people in areas with the highest rates. In the UK the Government has allocated the funding to particular areas including approximately £1.5m to be spent in Thurrock for projects which work with young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) or who are at risk of becoming NEET. The Government has decided that the fund will form part of the European Growth Programme and will need to be matched with investment from ESF which, in turn, will need to be matched with funding from a third party, creating a programme worth a total of £4.5m.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

Development of the E-SIF and Operational Programme

3.1 Over the past year SELEP, along with the other LEPs in England, has been developing its strategy for use of the funds. The European Structural and Investment Fund strategy (the E-SIF) sets out how the funding allocated to SELEP will be used as part of a wider strategy to help businesses to compete and grow and people to gain the skills they require for employment. Through the strategy SELEP has agreed a number of objectives for the programme that reflect the issues and opportunities in the area. Notional allocations of funding have also been given to each objective:

- Innovation and smart specialisation (£16.5m)
- Small and medium sized business competitiveness (£49.5m)
- Supporting the shift to the low carbon economy (£16.5m)
- Supporting economic growth in rural areas (£14.5m)
- Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility (£33.8m)
- Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty (£16.5m)
- Education, skills and lifelong learning (£32.2m)

3.2 One rule of the new programme is that the funding has to be matched on a 50/50 basis. This match funding can be found at a local level or through 'opt-in' arrangements with certain organisations, who will provide match funding from their own budgets, oversee procurement exercises to appoint delivery organisations for projects and use their own contract management systems to monitor delivery. SELEP is negotiating with a number of 'opt-in' agencies to match fund particular priorities in the programme. The Council already has a relationship with each of these opt-in organisations and the funding can be used to secure more relevant responses to local need than would otherwise be the case. The opt-in organisations for each objective, their main interest in the new programme and the potential value of each opt-in is listed below:

Objective	Opt-in agency and their interest in the new programme	Value of opt-in
Innovation and smart specialisation	Manufacturing Advisory Service – enhancing business support services targeting manufacturing companies	£5m
Small and medium sized business competitiveness	Growth Accelerator – enhancing business support services targeting companies with high growth potential	£9.4m
	UKTI – enhancing business support for companies seeking to export and / or attracting overseas investment	£5.4m
Promoting employment and	Department for Work and Pensions – enhancing skills and employment support for	£10m

supporting labour mobility	workless adults Skills Funding Agency – enhancing training for young people and adults	£20m
Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty	Big Lottery Fund – addressing barriers to employment for those furthest away from the labour market	£8m
Education, skills and lifelong learning	Skills Funding Agency – enhancing training for young people and adults	£13m

Negotiations will continue with each to agree priorities to be funded, the value of the opt-in and how much European funding will still be available for organisations to bid for directly and match themselves.

- 3.3 Now that the E-SIF strategy has been drafted the LEP has been asked to produce an operational plan, called the Local Implementation Plan (LIP), which will briefly describe how the programme will operate and set out the types of projects to be supported and the estimated spend profile for the first years of the programme. The first draft of the LIP is due to be submitted by October 2014.
- 3.4 Following the submission of the LIP there will be a concentrated period of negotiation with the Government leading to final agreement of the programme and the first investment in new projects. Key milestones include:
- Agree governance arrangements for the programme – December 2014
 - LIP agreed – December 2014
 - First call for project proposals – January 2015
 - First investment in new projects – March 2015

Priorities for Support

- 3.5 Partners across SELEP have been working together to develop more specific priorities for support under each objective of the programme. The Council has been working with partners to ensure that issues and opportunities in Thurrock and across Thames Gateway South Essex are reflected in and can be addressed by these emerging priorities. The emerging priorities are: -
- Innovation and smart specialisation
 - Research to identify issues and opportunities
 - Provision of new business workspace
 - Business support events and training programmes
 - Tailored business support for manufacturing companies
 - Projects to improve collaboration between companies
 - Promoting local supply chain development
 - Small and medium sized business competitiveness

- Business support activity
 - Tailored business support for companies with high growth potential
 - Tailored business support for companies seeking to export
 - Attracting inward investment
 - Access to finance including 0% loans and grants for businesses
 - Supporting the shift to a low carbon economy
 - Business support package to help companies reduce their carbon footprint and to support innovation in green technology
 - Promoting economic growth in rural areas
 - Proposals to be developed targeting the most rural communities in SELEP
 - Promoting employment and supporting labour market mobility
 - Enhanced support for young unemployed people including those not in employment, education and training (NEET)
 - Job brokerage services
 - Apprenticeships
 - Wage subsidy scheme
 - Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty
 - Addressing gaps in mainstream skills and employment provision
 - Supporting community led local development – a ‘bottom up’ approach to address economic and social cohesion
 - Targeting socially excluded groups to help them access and remain in employment
 - Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning
 - Working with employers to develop higher level skills in the existing workforce
- 3.6 Negotiations on priorities to be supported will continue over the next few months until a final version of the LIP, including proposals for the types of projects to be supported, have been agreed.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The new European Funding Programme is an opportunity to address some of the issues and opportunities identified through the development of the SELEP Strategic Economic Plan. Funding from the programme can, if used effectively, help alleviate some of the difficulties faced by businesses and by residents and support the delivery of the Council’s growth agenda.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Partners across SELEP have been consulted on the development of the new European Programme including the objectives, notional funding allocations

and priorities to be addressed. Formal and informal consultation will continue as the programme develops.

- 5.2 The Council has led discussions at the Thames Gateway South Essex level, working with partners to help identify local priorities that reflect the Thurrock Growth Story and the SELEP Strategic Economic Plan.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The new European Programme is a mechanism for securing the delivery of the Council's regeneration and growth ambitions detailed in the Corporate Plan, Local Development Framework, Regeneration Strategy and Economic Development Strategy.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
Management Account

The report provides an update on the process, and as such there are not direct financial implications associated with this report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Daniel Toohey**
Principal Corporate Solicitor

There are no specific legal implications to note in this report, save to be aware that there may be match-funding obligations arising from the proposals, which the Council will need to ensure are met.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Community Development & Equalities
Manager**

The new European Programmes seek to promote greater economic growth and address barriers to employment, particularly for individuals that are most marginalised and furthest away from the labour market. The programme includes a specific objective that seeks to promote social inclusion and combat poverty. Through the implementation of the new programme projects will be supported that help address equality and diversity issues.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

The programme could have a positive impact on the Council's priorities to delivery of the Council's sustainability agenda

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- None

Report Author:

Stephen Taylor

Programmes and Projects Manager

Regeneration

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17 September 2014	ITEM: 6
Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Grays South and Rail Station Regeneration	
Wards and communities affected: Grays Riverside	Key Decision: Key
Report of: Brian Priestley, Regeneration Programme Manager, Regeneration	
Accountable Head of Service: Matthew Essex Head of Regeneration	
Accountable Director: Steve Cox Assistant Chief Executive	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

In July 2013 Cabinet acknowledged the importance of enhancing the area around Grays Rail Station as an arrival and meeting point and reducing the barrier effect of the rail lines to support the delivery of the Council's vision for Grays. Cabinet supported continued discussion with Network Rail and others to secure the implementation of measures to upgrade the rail station and rail crossing. Following Cabinet a number of coordinated activities took place to develop the project further including:

- a) Engagement with key stakeholders including Network Rail, C2C and the Grays Town Partnership to establish the level of support for the proposals;
- b) Detailed discussions with Network Rail to establish an approach to delivery;
- c) Completion of a development capacity study, to understand the scale of potential development which could be generated by the sites created around the new public realm;
- d) Completion of initial development valuations, to understand the potential development costs and returns for development plots identified in the plans at appendix A and B; and
- e) Further design work including investigation of opportunities to address Network Rail's requirement for the underpass to provide level access between rail platforms. This work helped secure Grays as one of 42 Stations that would benefit from the Department for Transport's Secure Access for All Fund.

These activities established that there is a feasible scheme that, with the support of Network Rail, could be viable and deliverable within the next four years. In March 2014 Cabinet agreed a series of further steps:

a) Establishing a formal partnership with Network Rail and the rail service operator to outline roles and responsibilities in securing the delivery of the project. A memorandum of understanding has been drafted with Network Rail and will be reported to Cabinet later in the year;

b) Procuring a coordinated professional team to develop the proposals further and develop a detailed cost estimate. An initial design workshop has been held with the team that Network Rail proposes to appoint. Network Rail aim to secure approval and funding for the appointment through their governance processes in September.

c) Entering into direct discussions with affected land owners and occupiers to develop a partnership or acquisition strategy. Known land owners and occupiers have been informed about the proposals.

d) Continue to develop the funding strategy for the project based upon the delivery strategy which is outlined within this report. Funding is potentially available from a number of sources discussed in the report. Opportunities have also been identified for improving the design for the 'end users' of the underpass and reducing costs of construction.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the progress in developing the project and to comment on the process for the next steps detailed in section 3 of this report

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 In July 2013 Cabinet agreed a vision for Grays and a number of key, early projects that were considered central to delivering that vision. Enhancing and improving Grays rail station and the surrounding area, improving safety and removing the barrier effect of the level crossing were recognised as vital elements of the regeneration of the town centre, particularly in light of the development of South Essex College's new Thurrock Campus and the potential for the separation caused by the level crossing to be exacerbated by the increase in commercial freight traffic generated by the opening of London Gateway.

2.2 Accordingly, the report outlined proposals to introduce a broad (8m wide) 'boulevard underpass' beneath the railway line to replace the existing level crossing. The underpass would be accessed via high quality, landscaped public squares at either end with the potential for a redeveloped rail station to provide a significantly enhanced arrival point into the town centre linking

directly to the College, High Street and all points beyond. New development sites created around the public squares would provide high quality frontages designed to include street cafes and new retail floorspace whilst allowing sufficient space for street entertainment, markets and events. The plans considered and approved by Cabinet in July 2013 are included at Appendix A.

2.3 Cabinet acknowledged the work completed up to July 2013 and supported continued discussions with Network Rail and others to secure the implementation of measures to upgrade the rail station and rail crossing as detailed within the report. Since July good progress had been made with the basic concept fixed by the approvals given by Cabinet, with a number of coordinated activities to develop the project further including:

- a) Engagement with key stakeholders including Network Rail, C2C and the Grays Town Partnership;
- b) Detailed discussions with Network Rail to establish an approach to delivery;
- c) A development capacity study, to understand the scale of potential development which could be generated by the sites created around the new public realm;
- d) Development valuations, to understand the potential costs and returns for development plots identified in the plans at appendix A; and
- e) Completion of a Level Access Study, to address Network Rail's requirement for the underpass to provide level access between rail platforms.

2.4 In March 2014 Cabinet acknowledged the further work that had been progressed and approved a number of further activities including:

- a) Developing the partnership arrangements with Network Rail and the rail service operator for consideration by Cabinet at a later meeting;
- b) Procuring a professional team to develop the designs for the underpass, station and public realm proposals; and
- c) Entering into direct discussions with affected land owners and occupiers to develop a partnership or acquisition strategy for consideration by Cabinet at a later meeting.

3. DEVELOPING THE APPROACH

3.1 With the general scheme largely settled through the approvals given in July 2013 and March 2014 the main focus of activity since has been to broker discussions with Network Rail and establish a general approach to securing the delivery of the project. Network Rail has identified the Grays level crossing

as one of the most hazardous and frequently abused within the region. Their concerns are amplified by the anticipated increase in users generated through the opening of the new College and the expectation that the crossing will be closed more frequently through increased freight movements to/from London Gateway.

- 3.2 Network Rail's response to the risk presented by the crossing had been to replace it with an upgraded pedestrian bridge. Funds had already been allocated to this proposal which needed to be spent by 2019. However, acknowledging that an underpass could provide a better solution than a bridge and a solution which also has the potential for redeveloping the existing station, Network Rail is content to work with the Council to develop the proposals considered by Cabinet. In March it was reported to Cabinet that Network Rail expected the Council to develop a delivery strategy and obtain consents by first quarter of 2015. Agreement has now been reached that Network Rail would manage design development and construction of the underpass and public squares to enable delivery of these by 2019. The broad programme for delivery is discussed in more detail later in this report.

Establishing the Formal Partnership

- 3.3 A draft memorandum of understanding sets out the framework for joint working and funding of the project between the Council and Network Rail. C2C as rail service operator will have responsibility for the rail station and its car park. While these areas will not be directly affected by the proposals for the underpass, they would be an essential part of realising the broader objectives of providing a high quality public realm. The MOU will formalise the working relationship and commitment to delivering the scheme and will commit the parties to the delivery strategy. It will provide a framework for the further formal agreements necessary to implement the project. Among other things the draft of the agreement covers:

- Broad parameters of the proposals;
- Delivery strategy including phasing;
- Roles and responsibilities in securing delivery;
- Timescales for actions;
- Funding commitments;
- Project management arrangements;
- Decision making arrangements; and
- Dispute resolution/termination.

Delivery Programme

- 3.4 Due to the implications for rail infrastructure the design process will be carried out in accordance with the Network Rail Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) Policy. Broadly the project timetable is expected to be;
- a) Design and Costing to 'Approval in Principle'. It is anticipated that this stage will start in October/November 2014 and will require 12 months. At the end of the stage the Council and Network Rail will have a more detailed understanding of the feasibility of the project.
 - b) Detailed Design and Consents. A range of consents will be required including planning, highways, and Network Rail internal consents for works affecting rail infrastructure. It is anticipated that this will require 12 months.
 - c) Detailed construction design and implementation: It is anticipated that this would require 24 months.
- 3.5 Prior to construction starting all the necessary land would need to be acquired and so discussions and negotiations with land owners and occupiers would be progressed alongside this programme for design and implementation.

Design

- 3.6 Network Rail has agreed that the approach to designing the underpass will be based on the plans agreed by the Council's Cabinet in March 2014. Network Rail has considerable experience and expertise in designing and implementing this type of infrastructure and have agreed to procure one of their framework contractors (Volcker Fitzpatrick with WS Atkins) to develop the design, secure consents, and construct the underpass. An initial design workshop was held in July and Network Rail has been provided with details of the Council's design expectations based on the plans previously agreed by Cabinet. Network Rail aim to secure approval for the appointment of these contractors through their Governance procedures in September of this year with a view to starting work in October/November.

The funding strategy

- 3.7 The approach to funding the project is split into two distinct elements; funding for land acquisitions and funding for the works. The approach to funding is set out in the report to Cabinet in March 2014. Development valuations by Savills indicated potential for the Council to acquire land and dispose of development plots created around the project area using the proceeds to support the costs of borrowing incurred to take the project forward. The approach to funding the works to construct the underpass has been the primary area of discussion between the Council and Network Rail as both have a part to play.
- 3.8 Ramboll's study set a headline cost estimate for the underpass and associated public squares of £7.9m. Network Rail has indicated that they could support the project with up to up to £4 million of funding. This includes funds originally

identified for a bridge. Following on from the design work commissioned by the Council the Department for Transport announced that Grays was one of 42 stations that could benefit from the Secure Access for All Fund, there would be up to £3 million available from the fund subject to detailed design to enhance accessibility. Separate funds may also be available for redevelopment of the rail station subject to discussion with the rail service operator C2C and Network Rail.

- 3.9 The Council's work in Grays – including Grays South – had been included as a high priority within the South East Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan (SEP); the document through which Central Government distributes the Local Growth Fund monies. Grays was not included in the first round allocation of funds, which would need to be spent before implementation of this project. However further allocations will become available that are more closely aligned to the delivery programme.
- 3.10 Feedback from Government on the SEP has made it clear that for the Council to secure any funds it will need to commit its own land and funds towards delivery together with securing match funding from third parties. Accordingly, provision has been made in the Council's Capital Programme to support the costs of the project through prudential borrowing.
- 3.11 Development of the full funding strategy continues with work to investigate ways to optimise the likely return from the development plots, explore the potential for grant and third party funding and explore the potential for match funding from the Council, Network Rail and C2C. Work will also continue to consider how the design of the underpass could be improved to reduce cost of construction while meeting the Council's expectations of quality.

Engagement with Businesses, landowners and occupiers

- 3.12 The plans in Appendix A considered by Cabinet have been presented to the Grays Town Partnership who have supported the proposals. Following the resolution of Cabinet in March 2014, letters have been sent to all known land owners and occupiers within and immediately adjacent to the area illustrated on the plans to inform them about the proposals. To date 6 individuals have responded seeking further information and all have received a response.
- 3.13 The valuation work undertaken by Savills on the Council's behalf has been at a high level to date and it will be necessary to undertake much more detailed assessment in discussion with land owners and occupiers. A detailed acquisition strategy will be produced to set out the approach and phasing for land acquisition to enable the implementation of the project. Appropriate expertise will be procured to support the Council's role in land acquisition to deliver the project.

4 Reason for Recommendation

- 4.1 The development of an underpass and enhancements to the public realm around the rail station and to the new college are key elements of the Council's priorities for regeneration of Grays town centre. The project is complex and requires a robust approach with key stakeholders to ensure that it is properly implemented. The delivery strategy outlined in section 3 is considered to be the Council's best route through which to secure delivery of the scheme with key stakeholders.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The project was supported by Cabinet in July 2013 and March 2014. It has been subject to consultation with key stakeholders including the Grays Town Partnership, Network Rail, and C2C.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The Council's Adopted Community Regeneration Strategy and LDF Core Strategy identify Grays as one of the Growth Hubs in the Borough where regeneration activity is to be focussed. A vision for the town and early projects were approved by Cabinet in July 2013, including the regeneration of Grays South and Rail Station. Further development of the project was supported by Cabinet in March 2014.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
Management Accountant

The cost of constructing the underpass and the associated public squares will be in excess of £8million. This is expected to be funded from several sources detailed in the report. Funding arrangements will need to be confirmed and will be the subject of future reports to cabinet.

Provision for the costs of developing the project and for land acquisition have been included in the Council's Capital Programme.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Alison Stewart**
Principal Housing and Regeneration Solicitor

Formation of the delivery partnership and arrangements for joint delivery, funding, procurement and returns will need to be properly addressed in an agreement between the parties and will be the subject of further reports to Cabinet.

The project will require a range of statutory processes including land assembly and appropriations of unregistered land and open spaces, planning and highway consents.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development Officer

The project has been the subject of engagement with a number of stakeholders including businesses, landowners and occupiers - as summarised in the report.

Further engagement activity will take place as the designs are developed to consider issues affecting equality of access. Specific requirements to enable equal access have already been considered including the scale of access ramps and the land area required to upgrade the rail station and rail crossing.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None at present, relevant issues will be identified as design and the approach to delivery are developed.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- 10th July 2013 Cabinet report 'Grays town centre Regeneration Vision'
- 19th March 2014 Cabinet Report 'Grays South and Rail Station Regeneration'

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix A: Extracts from Ramboll module 3 study: Plans for an underpass and public square
- Appendix B: Extracts from BP Architects Development Capacity Study

Report Author:

Brian Priestley
Regeneration Programme Manager
Regeneration

Option A - Maximum demolition to form larger North High Street Square

- 1A Redevelopment to North High Street (larger square)
- 2 Redeveloped Station to North
- 3 Redeveloped Station and Network Rail buildings to South
- 4 Redevelopment of Network Rail buildings - south facing
- 5 Redevelopment of Station House site and surrounding area
- 6 New mixed-use accommodation overlooking square and church
- 7 Mulberry Square proposed development plot - north
- 8 Mulberry Square proposed development plot - south
- 9 Redeveloped private ownership plot - splayed to proposed college
- 10 New development in car park - north
- 11 New development in car park - south
- 12 Reorientated new station square
- 13 New town square
- 14 Relocated taxi rank
- 15 Shared surface
- 16 Enhanced streetscape
- 17 New link garden squares
- 18 Underpass with ramps, steps and lifts for access
- 19 Footbridge and area reserved for underpass



Option B - Alternative with minimum demolition to form smaller North High Street Square

- 1B** Redevelopment to North High Street (smaller square)
- 2** Redeveloped Station to North
- 3** Redeveloped Station and Network Rail buildings to South
- 4** Redevelopment of Network Rail buildings - south facing
- 5** Redevelopment of Station House site and surrounding area
- 6** New mixed-use accommodation overlooking square and church
- 7** Mulberry Square proposed development plot - north
- 8** Mulberry Square proposed development plot - south
- 9** Redeveloped private ownership plot - splayed to proposed college
- 10** New development in car park - north
- 11** New development in car park - south
- 12** Reorientated new station square
- 13** New town square
- 14** Relocated taxi rank
- 15** Shared surface
- 16** Enhanced streetscape
- 17** New link garden squares
- 18** Underpass with ramps, steps and lifts for access
- 19** Footbridge and area reserved for underpass



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Project	GRAYS TOWN CENTRE	Scale	1:1000 @ A3
Sketch No	178-MOD3-SK-007_01	Date	30.05.2013
		Drawn	JdB/JC



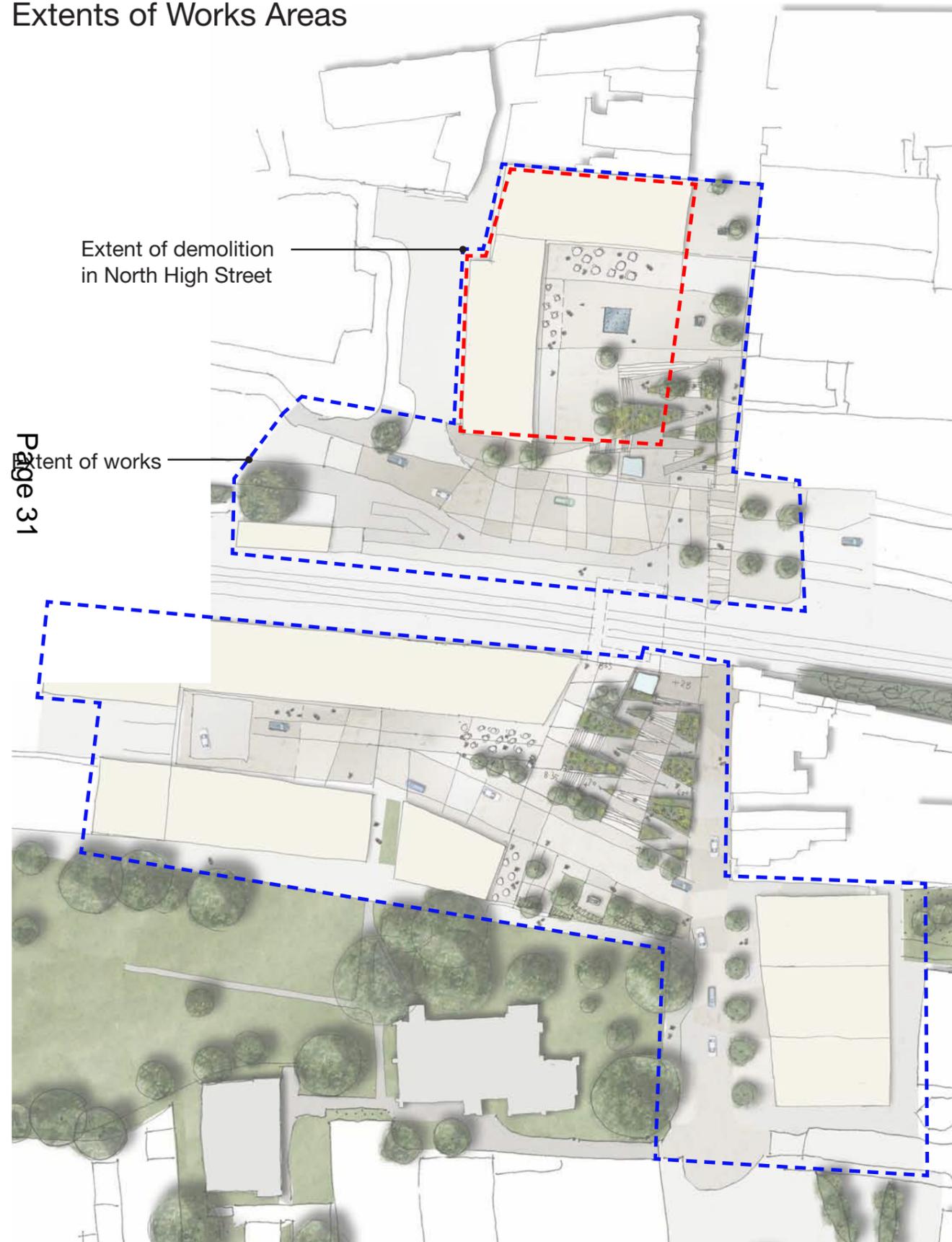
Title: **General Arrangement Plan - Option B (alternative)**



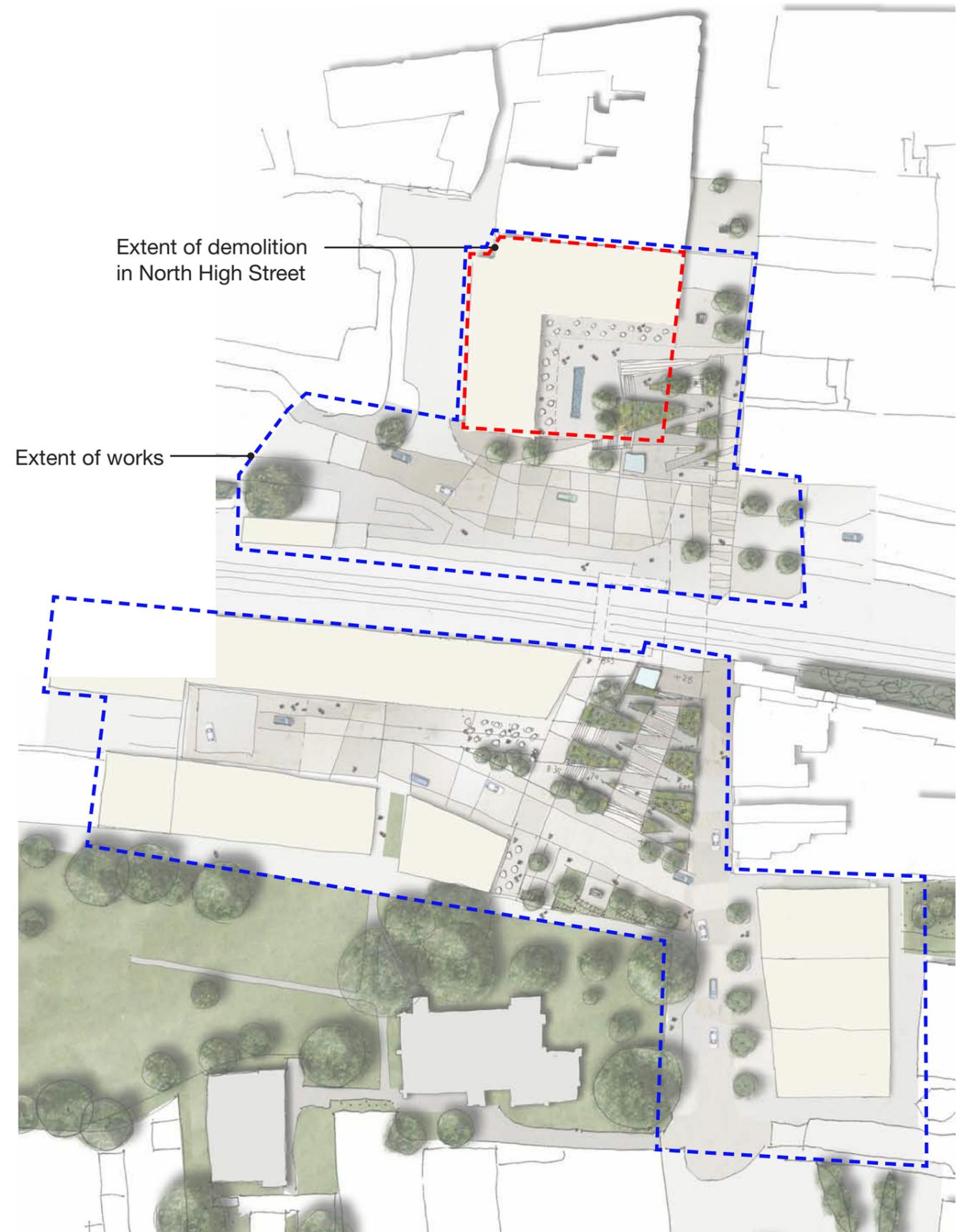
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Extents of Works Areas



Option A - Maximum demolition to form larger North High Street Square



Option B - Alternative with minimum demolition to form smaller North High Street Square

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Project	GRAYS TOWN CENTRE	Scale	1:1000 @ A3
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Title:
Extents of Works Plans



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North High Street Development Area

Option A - Maximum demolition to form larger North High Street Square

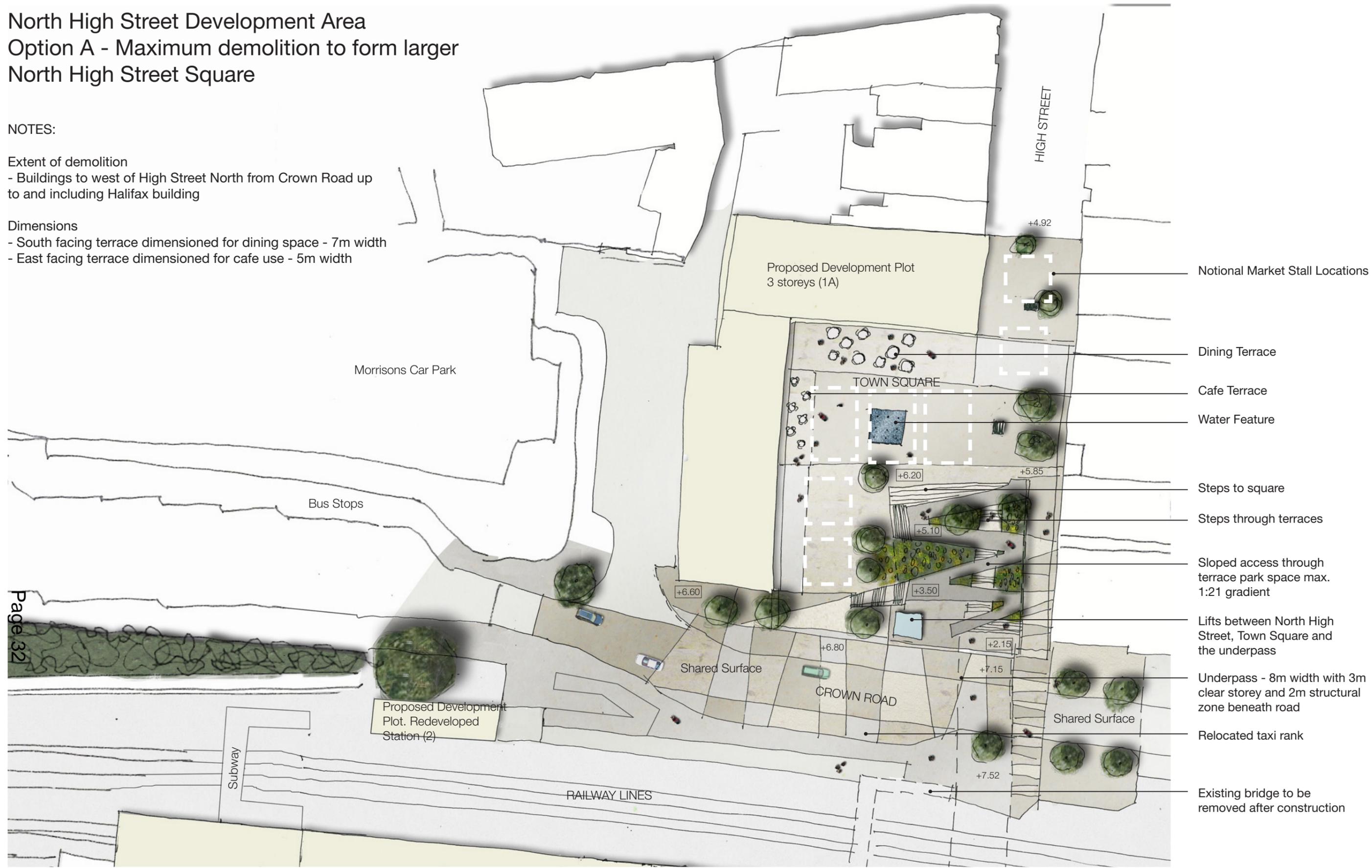
NOTES:

Extent of demolition

- Buildings to west of High Street North from Crown Road up to and including Halifax building

Dimensions

- South facing terrace dimensioned for dining space - 7m width
- East facing terrace dimensioned for cafe use - 5m width



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Project	GRAYS TOWN CENTRE
Scale	1:500 @ A3
Date	30.05.2013
Drawn	JdB/JC
Sketch No	178-MOD3-SK-010_01

Scale 1:500 @ A3

Date 30.05.2013

Drawn JdB/JC



Title.

Detailed Area Plan - North High Street




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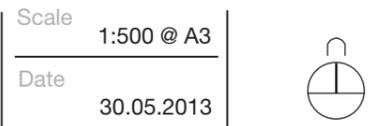
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South High Street Development Area



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Project	GRAYS TOWN CENTRE
Scale	1:500 @ A3
Date	30.05.2013
Drawn	JdB/JC
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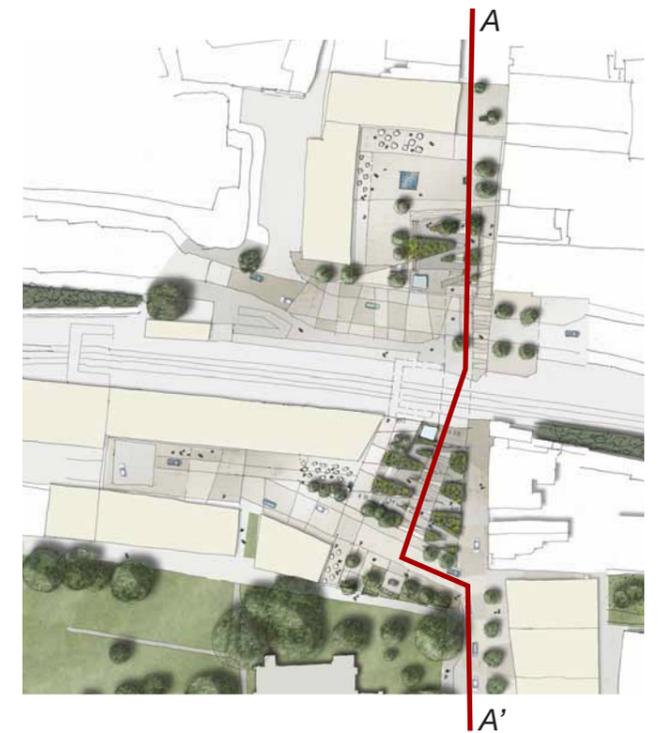
Detail Area Plan - South High Street



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Section A-A'
North-South Section facing East (North Underpass)



Project	GRAYS TOWN CENTRE	Scale	1:200 @ A3
Sketch No	178-MOD3-SK-012_01	Date	30.05.2013
		Drawn	JdB/JC



Title.
Section A-A' - North

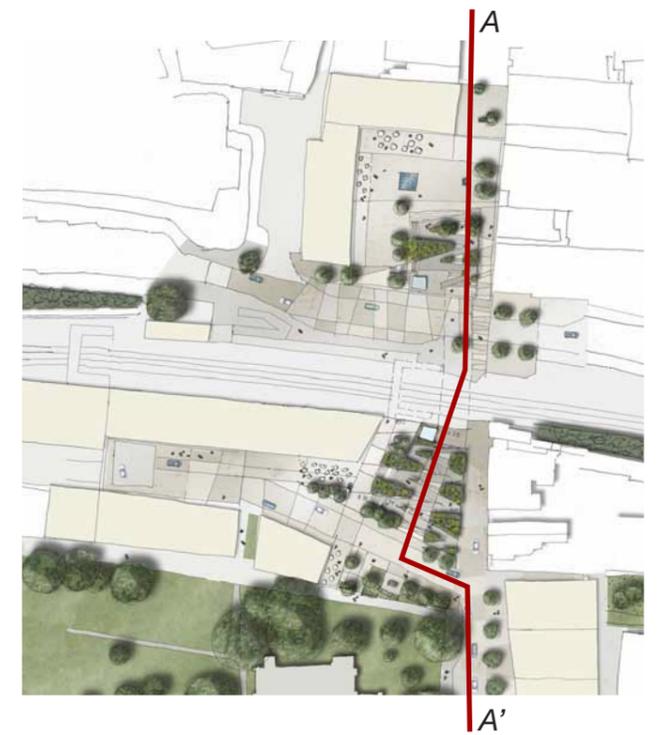


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Section A-A'
North-South Section facing East (South Underpass)

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Title.
Section A-A' - South

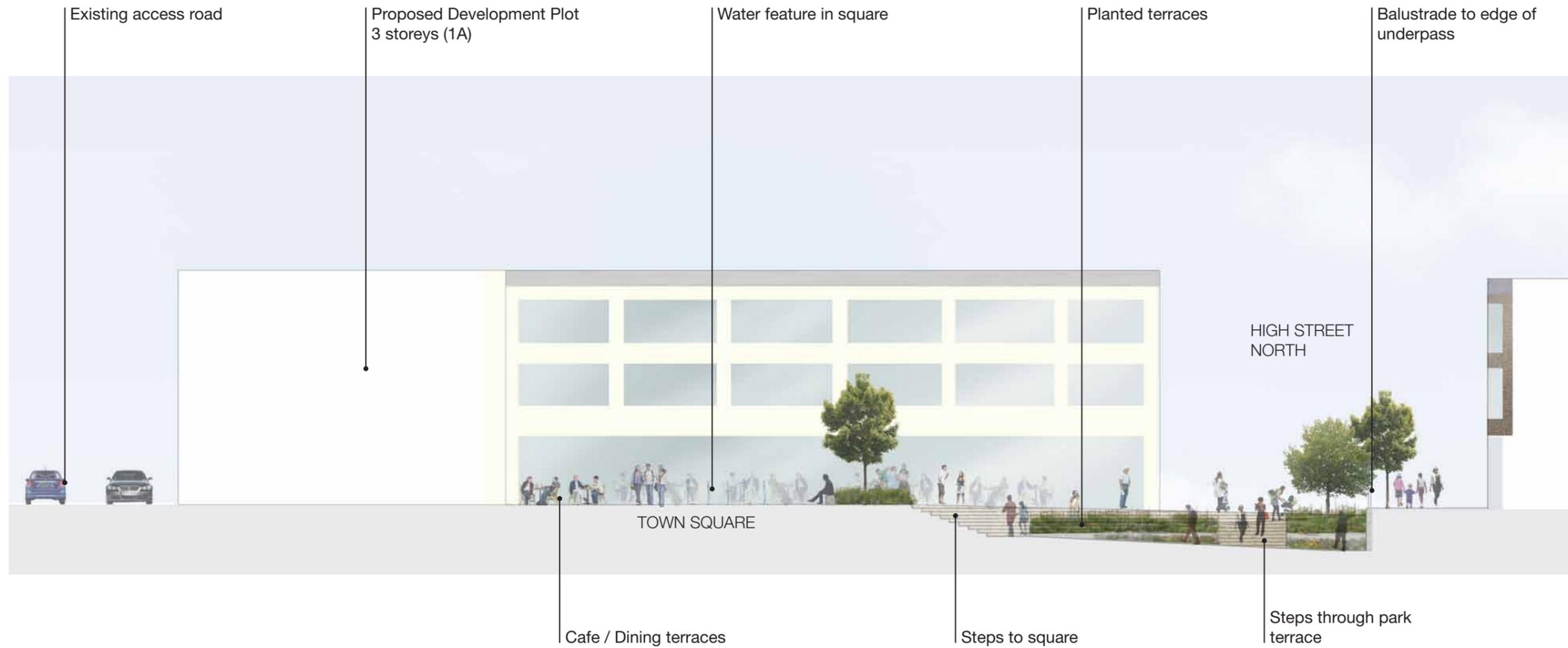


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Section B-B'
East-West Section facing North (North Underpass)



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Project

GRAYS TOWN CENTRE

Sketch No

178-MOD3-SK-014_01

Scale

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Date

30.05.2013

Drawn

JdB/JC



Title

Section B-B'

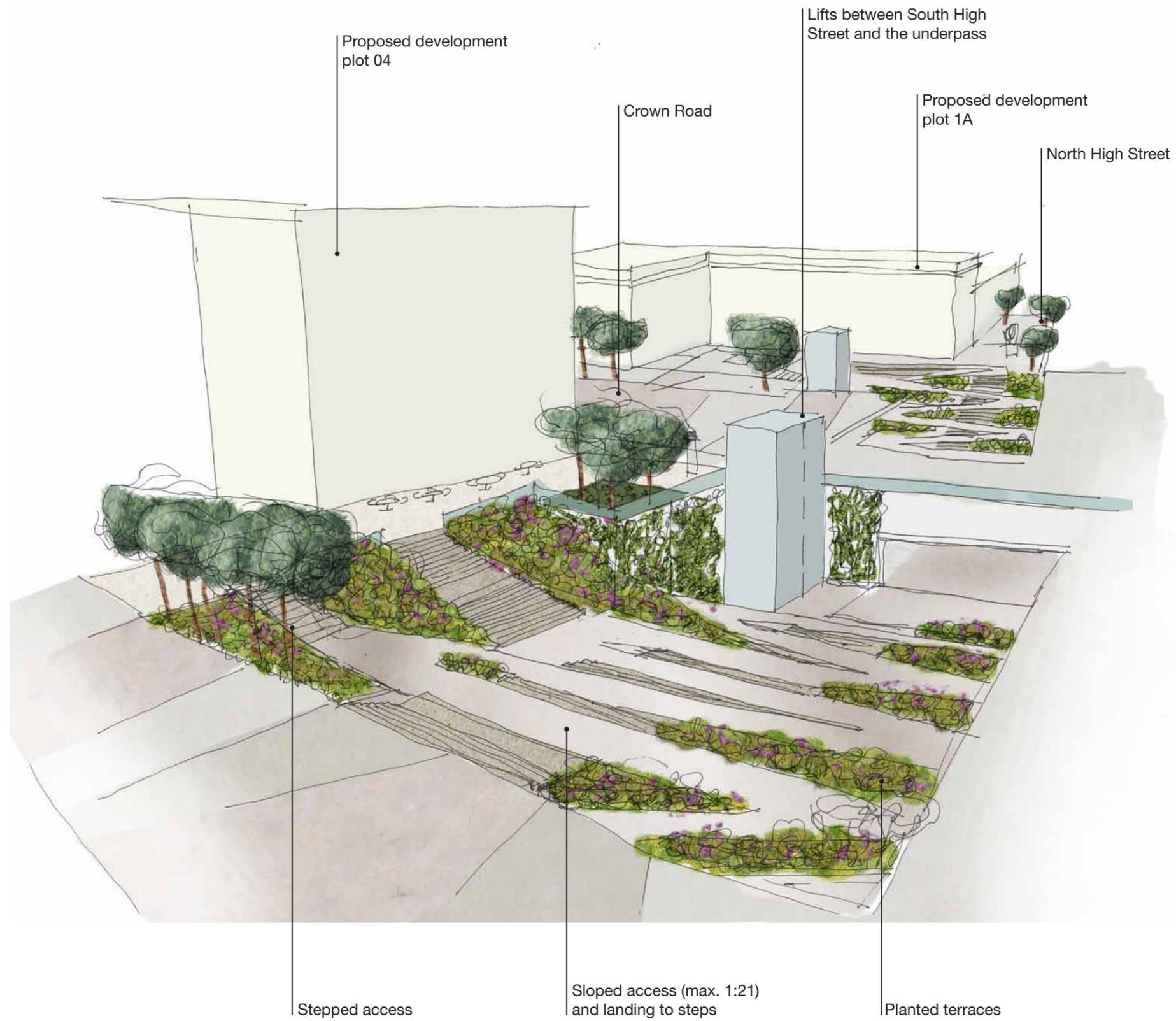


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View North from top of South Underpass

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Project	GRAYS TOWN CENTRE	Scale	nts @ A3
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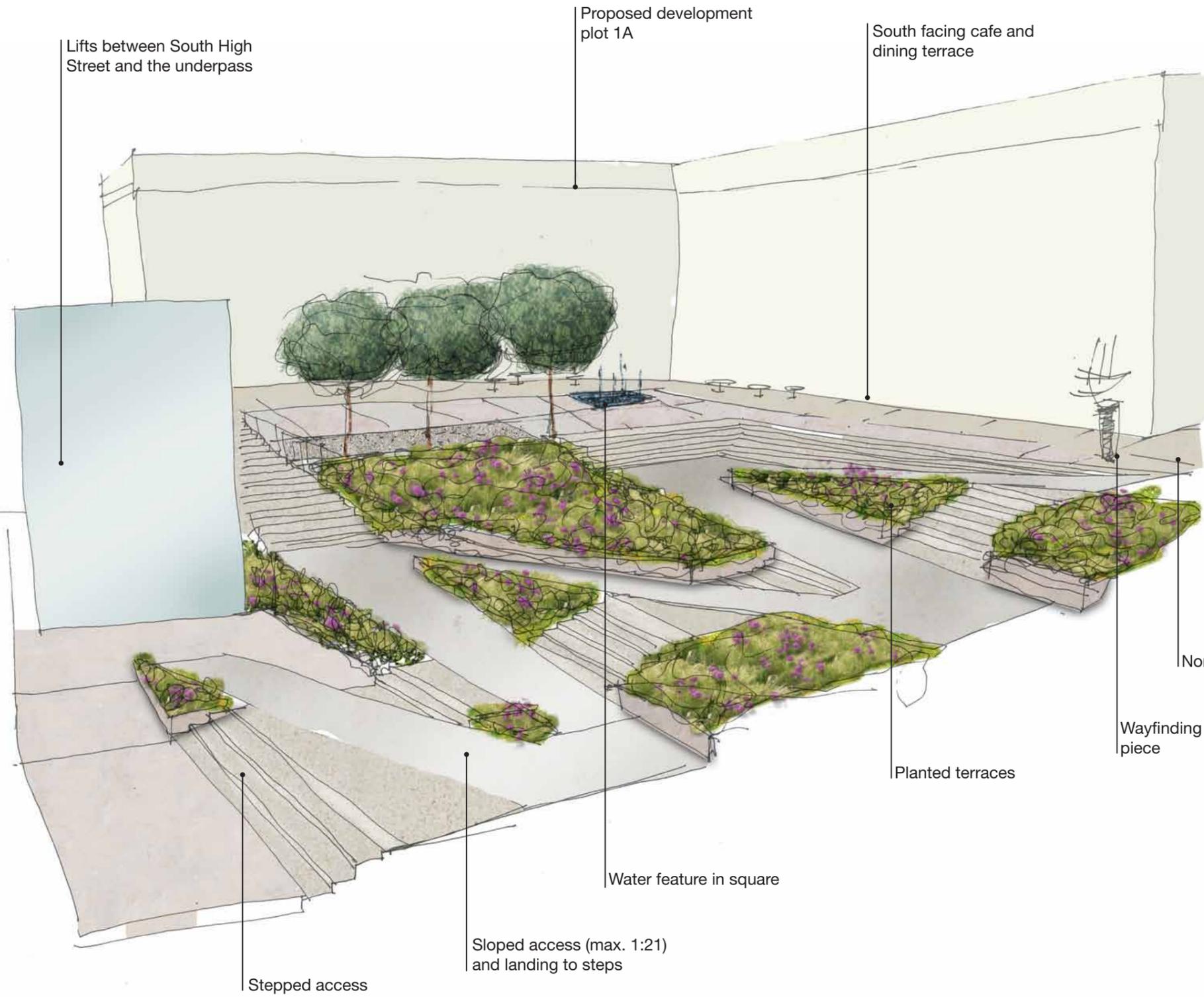
Title.
Sketch View 1



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View of Town Square and North Underpass



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Project	GRAYS TOWN CENTRE	Scale	nts @ A3
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Title.
Sketch View 2



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Design Precedents

Exhibition Road, London, UK



Rope Walks, Liverpool, UK



Grounds of Hargreaves Mall, Australia



Ravensbourne College / 02, London, UK



shared space

square

shared space

use of water

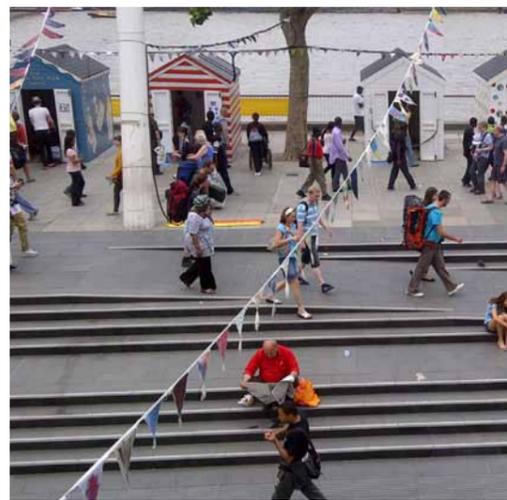
public realm on steps

square

use of water

markets and events

green wall to underpass edge



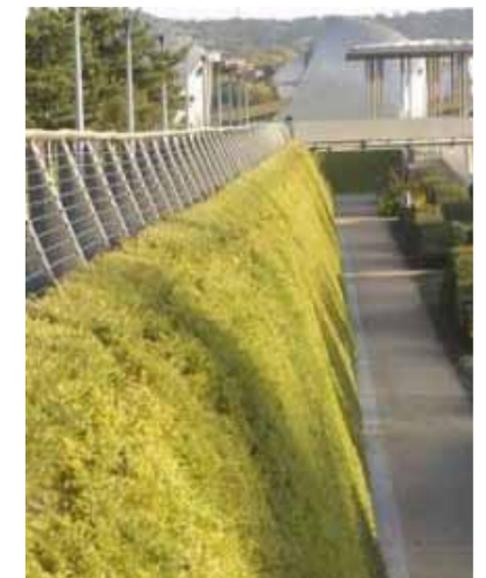
Southbank, London, UK



New Road, Brighton, UK



Brewery Square, Dorchester UK



Thames Barrier Park, London, UK

Project

GRAYS TOWN CENTRE

Sketch No

178-MOD3-SK-017_00

Scale

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Date

30.05.2013

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Title.

Design Precedents

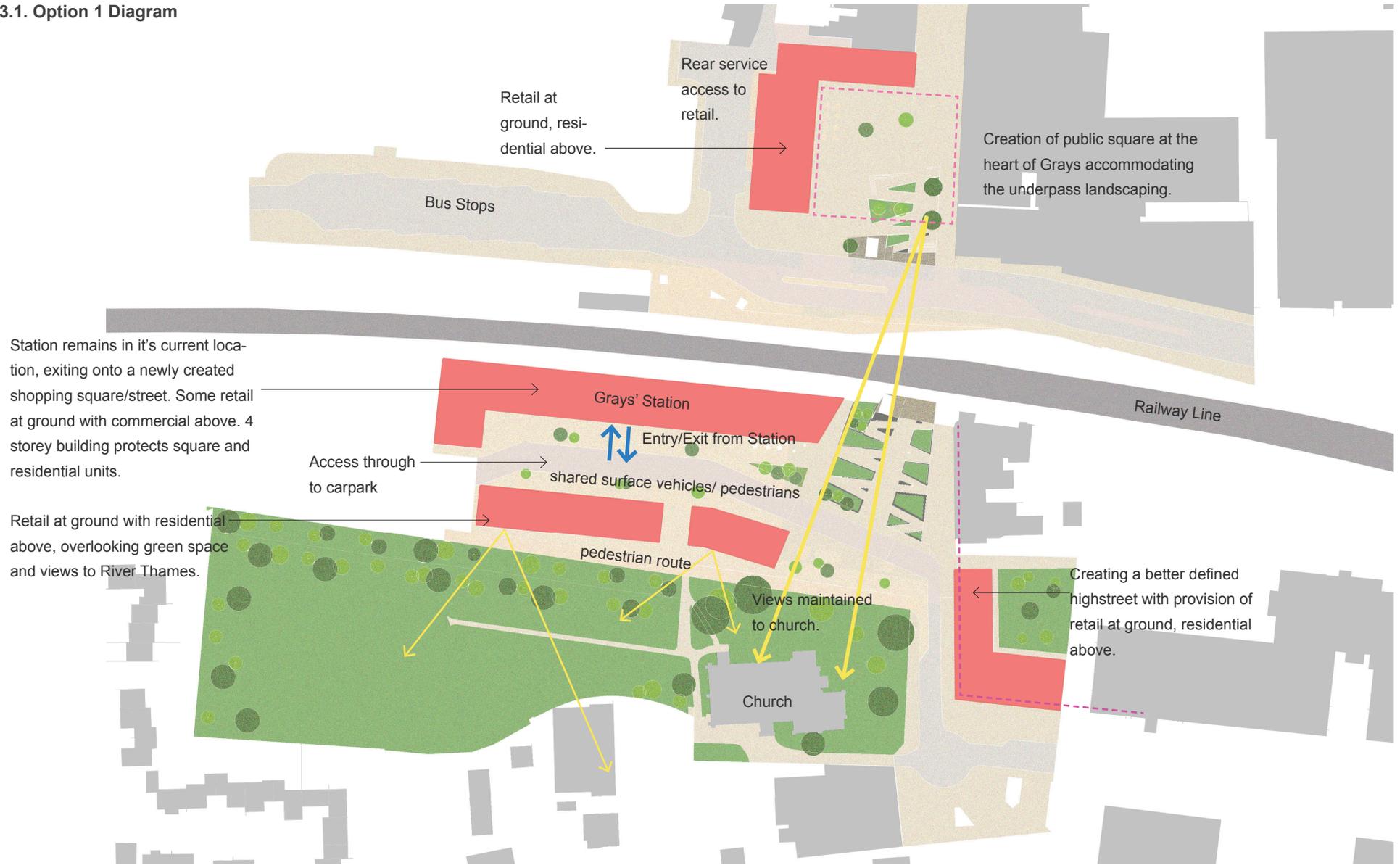


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3.1. Option 1 Diagram



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Station remains in its current location, exiting onto a newly created shopping square/street. Some retail at ground with commercial above. 4 storey building protects square and residential units.

Retail at ground with residential above, overlooking green space and views to River Thames.

4.1. Option 2 Diagram



5.1. Option 3 Diagram



Grays' Station moved to other side of the railway line, allowing for a better arrival, straight onto the high street.

High density residential in the highest value area. Benefits from overlooking green space and views to River Thames.

Private shared gardens for flats, separated from public footpath, benefitting from good passive surveillance.

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Work Programme

Item 7

Committee: Planning, Transport & Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny

Year: 2014/2015

Item	Date Added	Request By (Members/Officers)	Lead Officer	Progress / Update required
30 July 2014				
Budget Savings	April 2014	Members/Officers	Sean Clark, David Bull & Steve Cox	Members noted the report and asked that a Task and Finish Group be established to examine Community Transport
Local Highways Infrastructure (including public transport)	April 2014	Officers	Ann Osola	Members noted the report
SELEP Single Local Growth Fund Update	April 2014	Officers	David Bull & Steve Cox	Members noted the report
Purfleet Regeneration Update	April 2014	Officers	Matthew Essex	Members noted the report
Work Programme	Continuous	Members/Officers	Democratic Services Officer	Members agreed to include reports on Planning Standards and European Funding programmes to the work programme.
17 September 2014				
SELEP Single Local Growth Fund	April 2014	Officers	David Bull & Steve Cox	This was removed from the agenda after consultation with the Chair of Committee
Grays South and Rail Station Regeneration	April 2014	Officers	Matthew Essex	
European Union Funding Programme	July 2014	Members		
Work Programme	Continuous	Members/Officers	Democratic Services Officer	
12 November 2014 (Budget)				
Budget Savings	April 2014	Members/Officers	David Bull & Steve Cox	
Lakeside Update	April 2014	Officers		
Economic Development	April 2014	Officers	Matthew Essex	
Work Programme	Continuous	Members/Officers	Democratic Services Officer	
21 January 2015 (Budget)				

Work Programme**Item 7**

Item	Date Added	Request By (Members/Officers)	Lead Officer	Progress / Update required
Budget Savings	April 2014	Members/Officers	David Bull & Steve Cox	
Thames Enterprise Park Update	April 2014	Officers	Andy Millard	
Work Programme	Continuous	Members/Officers	Democratic Services Officer	
2 March 2015				
Local Plan Update	April 2014		Andrew Millard	
Purfleet Regeneration Update	April 2014		Matthew Essex	
Work Programme	Continuous	Members/Officers	Democratic Services Officer	

To Be Allocated				
Item	Date Added	Request By (Members/Officers)	Lead Officer	Committee Date
Lower Thames Crossing			David Bull, Andrew Millard & Ann Osola	
Comprehensive report on DP World			Andrew Millard	

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Full details of Member's decisions can be viewed in the Minutes on the Council's Committee Management Information System - <http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/thurrock/>

FOR CONSIDERATION

There are currently no items for consideration.