

SOUTH OXHEY INITIATIVE

SECTION 6

LEVITTBERNSTEIN

SECTION 6

Public Consultation & Feedback



Public Consultation

Public Consultation
An exhibition was organised and held on 27th September 2012 for the local residents and businesses to comment on and view the current development proposal. LBA and Three Rivers District Council held the consultation between 10am and 6pm within in the Watford Rural Parish Council.

Consultation boards will be shown on the following pages

290 people attended the consultation. All were encouraged to provide written feedback, of which we received 134 responses.

Consultation Aim

Date of Consultation Event:

27th September

Location:

WRPC Hall

The Purpose of the Consultation

The purpose was to air some of the design issues likely to be faced by developers in submitting an application, with the local residents/stakeholders to introduce them to some of the concepts that they will have to consider during the planning application consultation period and gauge local feeling.

It is also an opportunity to draw some concepts up in 3D to help residents, retailers and neighbours understand the quality of the transformation that may be possible and hopefully enable them to get behind the project.

The Target Audiences

The residents living in the flats above the current shops, the retailers, and the wider community. The three groups are likely to think of the new development differently.

WHO ARE WE?

levittbernstein

Levitt Bernstein are award winning architects who have designed many successful retail and residential projects. We are specialists in working with local communities to design and deliver buildings for them.

We shall be working with you to help you achieve your aspirations and we recognise the need to revitalise the heart of South Oxhey.

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE STORY SO FAR...

In January 2012 following public consultation and appraisal of three options, Three Rivers councillors voted to progress with the redevelopment of the South Oxhey Initiative area.

Aims of this initiative:

- Attractive and relevant shopping facility fit for the 21st century.
- New high quality community facilities
- Replacement housing for rent and sale
- Create a more vibrant local economy.

To achieve this the council will hold a competition to find a suitably experienced developer who will bring forward a planning application and then construct the new development.

In May 2012 the Three Rivers Planning Department consulted the community on a "Master Plan" setting out the basic ideas behind the redevelopment incorporating feedback gained during public consultation.

Since then architects Levitt Bernstein have been commissioned to help the council understand the capacity of the areas for new development and to help residents and other stakeholders visualise how this might look and what impact it might have.

THE AIM OF THIS WORKSHOP...

The purpose is to air some of the design work that has been done and invite feedback on design issues. It is also an opportunity to show some of the ideas in 3D to help residents, retailers and neighbours understand the quality of the transformation that may be possible.

This is not the start of a formal planning application process. That is likely to happen next summer when the successful developer has been chosen along with his or her architects and you will be formally consulted on the final design at that point. However this workshop is designed to give you an idea of what might come in from a developer in a planning application.

We will summarise your feedback and include it in information given to the successful developer to help him or her draw up a design for planning application.

Public Consultation

Boards 2 & 3

SOUTH OXHEY NOW

Strengths of the area

- Strong sense of community and desire to improve the area
- Well served by local facilities including pre schools, primary schools, community and sports facilities
- Residents like living in the area, which has lots of green space, trees, good transport links and low density family housing
- Established local support networks and dedicated community groups/ activity organisers

Weaknesses of the area

- Limited retail offer in South Oxhey to make it a destination and create employment opportunities
- Restricted local facilities such as medical and community services
- In need of improved range of housing
- A need to improve links between South Oxhey, Carpenters Park, Oxhey Hall and to the surrounding area
- Roads and footpaths in need of repair as well as problem parking areas
- In need of improved green spaces, play areas and sports pitches

Messages from the Open Day:

- The precinct is the most widely used facility in South Oxhey and is viewed as its 'heart'
- There is a major desire to see an improved shopping experience including a better market
- Support for a community hub within the 'heart' to contain a variety of uses
- Strong desire to improve the roads, footpaths and parking areas
- Want to protect the green open spaces within South Oxhey
- Potential to expand the local market

AREAS OF INTEREST AND POSSIBLE PHASES

The area for transformation

Development Phases

The transformation of the area will happen over several phases. The phases shown here are indications of what these stages might be. Homes will be built first to replace the ones that are demolished. Approximately half of the shops will be kept open at any one time to maintain the current amenities.

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Public consultations and selection of a suitable developer. <i>Where we see us</i>	Application(s) for planning permission for redevelopment of the town centre.	Construction of new housing for residents of the current flats in the Precinct.	Residents of current flats in the north of the Precinct move to new accommodation and relocation of shops.	Redevelopment of the north Precinct.	Residents of current flats in the south of the Precinct move to new accommodation and relocation of shops.	Community facilities on Oxhey Drive move to new community hub building in the Precinct. Redevelopment of Oxhey Drive for housing.

Public Consultation

Boards 4 & 5

SUCCESS STORIES

BEFORE

THE BRUNSWICK CENTRE A project to repopulate public spaces by providing elegant seating, planting and successful retail spaces, as well as renew housing.

AFTER



HOLLY STREET Project to replace existing residential with high quality mixed community housing. Examples of successful housing with different storey heights.

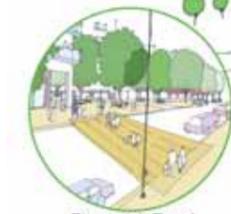


POTENTIAL FUTURE OF SOUTH OXHEY

Market Square



St Andrew's Road



Prestwick Road

Green Orchard



Fairfield Avenue



Station Square

SOUTH OXHEY

Public Consultation

Boards 6 & 7

MARKET SQUARE

Flexible market space in the square and transition to St. Andrew's Road Gateway

Continuation of public space from market square to St. Andrew's Road.

View of Market Square from St. Andrew's Road Gateway.

- Places to sit and meet under trees and in cafes.
- Lively cafe spill out areas at Gateway to St Andrew's Road
- Vibrant tree planting and cycle parking spaces
- Dedicated pedestrian crossings along Prestwick Road
- Clear cycle paths to connecting destinations
- A public focal point where locals can meet, get involved with the markets and other weekend activities.

SOUTH OXHEY

ST. ANDREW'S ROAD

Well defined Gateway to St. Andrew's Road from Prestwick Road

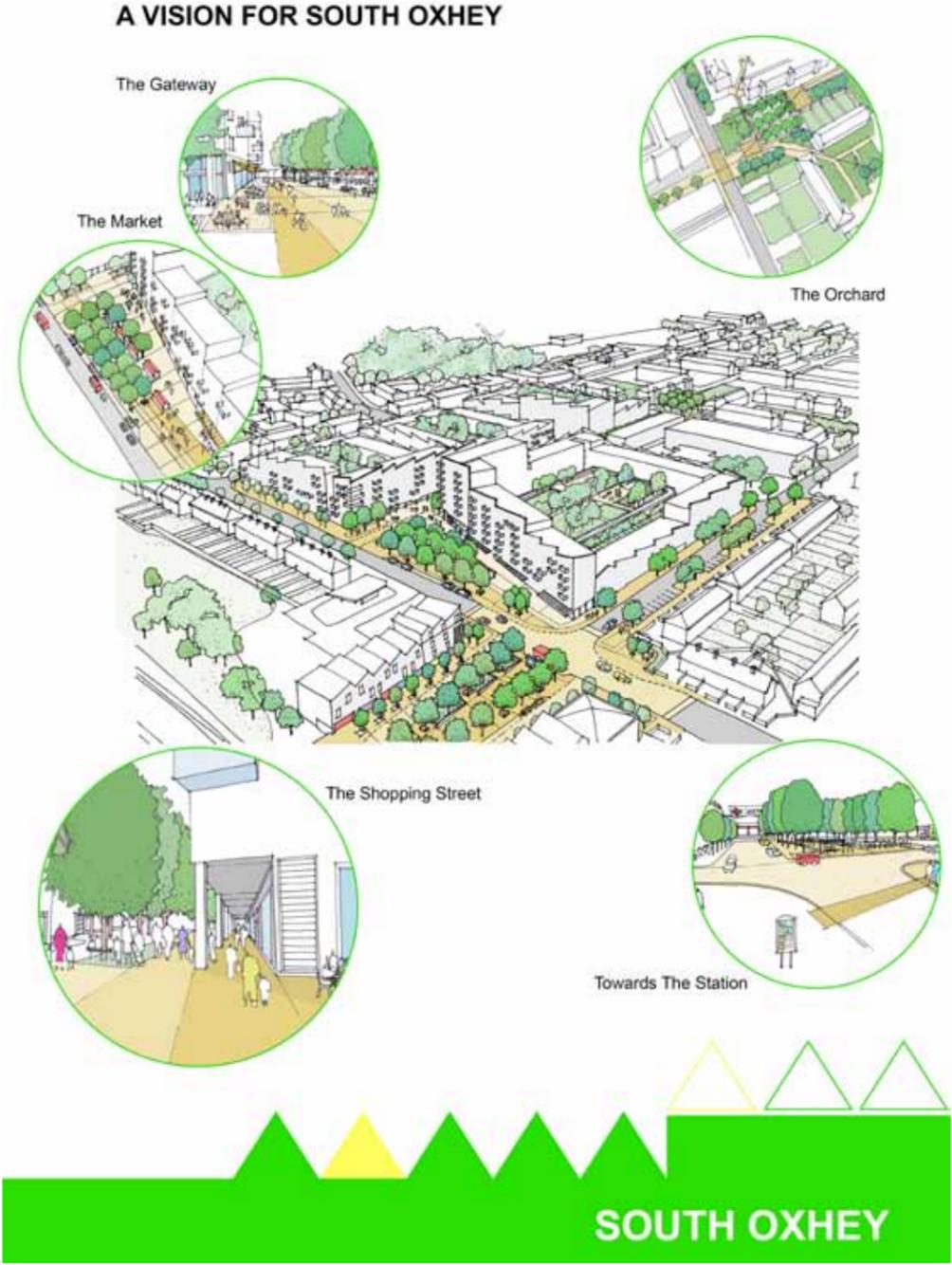
- Tranquil places to sit and rest along the pedestrian street
- Cafe spill out areas onto the market square at the start of St Andrew's Road creating an exciting community vibe.
- Tree planting and beautiful paving to define the public spaces and create shaded retreats.
- Dedicated pedestrian crossings along Prestwick Road
- Continuation of paving from the pedestrian street across the road to give pedestrians priority and expand the public realm.
- Narrowing of the pedestrian street and introduction of a colonnade to provide intimacy and create attractive entrances along the shopping street.

St. Andrew's Road from the existing Gateway on Prestwick Road

SOUTH OXHEY

Public Consultation

Board 10



Main Concerns

Parking

- Parking costs
- Additional parking needed for increase of population created by proposal
- Security of underground parking

Building Heights

- Belief that 8 storeys is too high
- Concerned that height of buildings will not fit into the surrounding context

Retail

- Concern for loss of local retailers
- Disruption of trade during the construction process

Residential density

- Concerned about strain on current resources with an increase of residential

Community facilities

- Worries about coexistence of different community facilities and space for them all under one roof

Key Positives

Public spaces

- Covered walkways, seating areas, tree lined boulevards, the narrowing of St. Andrew's Road
- More user friendly with meeting spaces where locals can gather

Green spaces

- Preservation of existing green spaces
- Being provided with communal gardens/courtyards

Overall proposal

- Positive attitude to all aspects of the proposal

Additional/new housing

- Huge need for renewed, better quality housing
- An increase in housing as mixed residential

Supermarket

- Necessary for those who need easy access retail
- Has the potential to create more jobs in the area

Residents Feedback

290 people attended the consultation. Of the 290 people encouraged to give written feedback, 134 feedback forms were received.

Total: 134
In favour of the proposal: 74 (55%)
Against the proposal: 36 (27%)
Neutral to the proposal: 24 (18%)

Demographics
Gender Male: 41%
Female: 59%

Age 0-19: 3%
20-34: 12%
35-49: 22%
50-64: 31%
65+: 32%

Area South Oxhey: 74%
Carpenders Park: 15%
Oxhey Hall: 9%
Other: 3%

Feedback Summary

On the 27th September 2012 the South Oxhey Initiative design consultation was held at Watford Rural Parish Council Hall. There were 290 attendees on the day between 10am and 8pm. On arrival visitors were given a feedback form to fill in and return at the end of their visit. A team from Levitt Bernstein Associates were on hand to guide the residents through the proposal illustrated on the consultation boards and freestanding model. Of the 290 visitors 134 of them returned written feedback. The feedback forms included a series of questions enquiring into the visitor's response to the proposals presented on the day. The outcome was a majority 55% in favour of the proposal. On the day of the consultation we experienced a majority in support of the proposal. It has been our experience, that more negative than positive concerns get relayed back in the form of written feedback. It is therefore more probable that the proposals have in excess of 55% support.

The result of the 27th September consultation has shown some development from the previous consultation that took place on the 25th June 2012. Where previously there was concern over the risk of the demolition of the library, residents felt encouraged by the decision to preserve the newly built/refurbished library. There is still support for the introduction of a large supermarket.

Key themes from the 27th September Consultation Feedback forms

Parking

There was a lot of discussion regarding parking and many residents were keen to know about the parking strategies. Residents expressed support for an increase of private residential parking and liked the fact that the spaces were hidden by communal courtyards and residential development. Residents appreciated the need for more parking but were apprehensive about multi-storey parking and underground parking, particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour. The accessibility of parking was raised with particular reference to the ease of shopping for the elderly and disabled.

Building Heights, Residential Density and Traffic

Building heights and residential density were talked about in much detail with the residents. Many liked the fact that height along St. Andrew's Road would create a focus of facilities towards the centre of South Oxhey, allowing for the lowering of density along Fairfield Avenue and Oxhey Drive. Although many residents were concerned about the 8 storey building heights towards the centre, some were encouraged by the widening of St. Andrew's Street at Prestwick Road to create a market square, which would distance the heights from the residential housing on Prestwick Road.

Residents recognised the need to increase density to improve South Oxhey's business potential and local facilities, however several were concerned about the impact a larger population would have on the existing infrastructure and community amenities, such as schools and traffic. Useful to further development, the traffic on Prestwick Road by the petrol station and station approach was flagged as a current concern.

Retail

There were 25 mentions of support for increased retail variety and opportunities, with particular focus on the proposal of a new supermarket. Many were excited about the prospect of an easily accessible supermarket that is not too large. A few residents highlighted the possibility of the supermarket providing local people with employment. On the other hand some were worried that the introduction of a large supermarket would hinder local retailers from continuing business in the area. Some were worried about the disruption of trade during the construction process.

Community Facilities and the Local Community

With community spirit being strong and highly valued in South Oxhey, residents were concerned that this would be lost through the redevelopment process. Many were encouraged by the indicative phasing strategies to ensure as little disruption on the local community as possible. 12 people were very supportive of the proposal to re-provide the existing community facilities and concentrate them into the centre of South Oxhey. Many were supportive of a more efficient and flexible community space that could cater for a wide range of activities, such as choir practice, youth groups, Ascend facilities and so on.

Public Spaces

The public and green spaces were the most supported proposal element with 46 mentions. Many appreciated the preservation and enhancement of all the existing green spaces with the addition of tree lined boulevards and squares. There was also support for the covered walkways and seating areas on St. Andrew's Road providing meeting spaces for the local community. It was recognised that a narrowing of the main shopping street, St. Andrew's Road, and improved surface treatment would make the spaces more user friendly and accessible. Many liked the idea of communal courtyard gardens. Other aspects that gained particular attention were creating a more open and dynamic Station Approach which would act as the gateway into South Oxhey and the introduction of a Market Square with designated space for pop up market stalls, also acting as an event space for local community events.

Redevelopment and New Housing for the area

Mentioned 35 times, many expressed a support for the comprehensive scheme as they believed renewal of South Oxhey was overdue and housing standards were in great need of improvement. The introduction of mixed-use buildings with both residential and retail was received very positively as it was understood this would revitalise the main high street, St. Andrew's Road, and encourage people from outside the area to come and use the local facilities. Despite some qualms about the prospect of more people coming to the area, many were encouraged by the new lease of life that would be given to South Oxhey through landscaping of public spaces, increased accessibility, improved retail opportunities and enhanced housing standards. With South Oxhey's proximity to London and improved rail connections, many recognised the area's potential and need to expand with residential and retail development. Many concerns were focused on the preservation of the existing local community spirit. It is however recognised that through careful phase planning and giving priority to the existing residents and retailers in the area, these concerns could be diminished.