

11th February, 2008

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Dear Miss Dell

Tayfen Road Master Plan – Consultation Draft

1. The Suffolk Preservation Society (the Society) are pleased to be able to submit the following representations aimed at assisting the LPA in formulating the final version of the Master Plan. It would ask they are conveyed in their entirety to Members of the appropriate committee for consideration.

Principle

2. Redevelopment of the area offers the potential to significantly improve the appearance of this part of the town and help with the regeneration of the area in general. Any redevelopment must accord with the test set out in paragraph 34 of PPS1, which states:-

“Planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all developments, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be acceptable.”

The Society strongly supports the redevelopment of this run down area on that basis.

What land is included?

3. The Society has not yet received a copy of the final version of the Station Hill and Tayfen Road Concept Statement on which it submitted comments in August 2007. It is essential that the Master Plan accords in all respects with it. It notes that the boundary in the Concept Statement draft included land not in this Master Plan. This is confusing, does not portray any joined up thinking and also brings into question the ability of the Borough Council as LPA to deliver what the Concept Statement requires.

The need for comprehensive planning and redevelopment.

4. The area needs comprehensive, sympathetic, sustainable, and well designed redevelopment which in turn requires comprehensive planning and delivery. This Master Plan suggests a piecemeal ad-hoc approach to the planning of this important area and delivery of the Concept Plan. The Society questions why it is being taken forward in this way. Is it the Borough Council's intention to continue to deliver the Concept Statement by a series of Master Plans? Why? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach?

Land not in the Master Plan.

5. The Society notes with concern the omission of three parcels of land from the Master Plan which will in its view prejudice the proper and comprehensive planning and redevelopment of the area. These three parcels of land are:-

1. The public park area – the Society is concerned that the future of this area will become uncertain as the area around it is redeveloped;
2. The mixed use area to the south of Tayfen Road currently occupied by uses associated with the automotive industry - why is this site omitted? and;
3. The Toyota car dealership and workshop area in the north-east corner – again why has this site being omitted given its critical importance?

The Society is of the view that sites 2 and 3 above are required in order for any comprehensive to be successful. Therefore the Borough Council should if necessary consider using its CPO powers to assist with land assembly to help deliver the proper redevelopment of the area.

Retail and commercial uses.

6. In itself this part of the redevelopment appears innocuous. However, with other developments under construction or in the planning stage it will add further to the draw of the Parkway, Tayfen Road and Station Hill commercial/retail areas not complementing the town centre but in direct competition to it. Far more thought needs to be given to the increasing important role this area is and will have and its potential impact on the historic town centre.

7. At this stage the Society welcomes the mixed use development provided it is demonstrated beyond all doubt that they will not have an adverse impact on the viability or vitality of the town centre uses.

Transport issues.

8. Linked with 6 above is the concern over potential traffic flows associated with other redevelopments (Cattle Market etc) and this site. The Society is not at all convinced at this stage the road system will be able to accommodate successfully the additional traffic flows notwithstanding the managements system planned or in place. Tayfen Road is a part of the town's strategic road network and must not be allowed to become congested

because of redevelopments and uses which have similar traffic generation characteristics to other uses in the area.

Road and other uses interface

9. The treatment of the roads in this area is very urban in form and most unattractive. The need for development to be screened from it, is an indication of the problem. The Society is of the view that the interface between developments and uses along the road needs more careful handling. It is essential that the skills of a first class Urban Designer are commissioned to help advise the Council. Otherwise the Society fears we will end up with more highway tarmac running through a concrete jungle rather like Parkway. Surely the Borough Council does not want to repeat that!

Car parking joint uses

10. The Society has stated on other occasions to the Borough Council that the ever growing surface car parks in the town waste a precious resource - land. They also disfigure the town. The Society hope this redevelopment offers an opportunity to experiment with the joint uses of car parking to service and provide for at different times the need of residential commercial and other uses.

The Society hopes the above comments are useful to the Borough Council and its advisors.

Yours sincerely

Richard Ward DipTP, MRTPI

Director

Cc Andrea Walton/Hannah Cash, Rapleys PLC

Cc David Rees, Sarah Platt, Sue Tamlyn

Cc Chrissy Harrod, Bury Chamber of Commerce

Cc David Ruffley, MP

Cc Media consultants