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**RIVERSIDE DEVELOPMENT DESIGNED TO MAXIMISE  
TWICKENHAM'S GREAT ASSET: THE THAMES**

DDSF Limited, a subsidiary of Dawnay Day, the investment and property specialists, today highlighted the various community benefits associated with the proposed Twickenham Riverside development.

David O'Neil, Head of Property Development at Dawnay Day, said: "The reality is that the Twickenham Riverside project will turn what is a blight on the Twickenham Embankment into a safe and pleasant aspect of the Thames area where all members of the community and visitors to the area will be able to avail themselves of various art and leisure facilities. The proposed development is visually, environmentally and community friendly and is clearly favoured by a great many residents."

Mr O'Neil added: "The scheme responds to the London Borough of Richmond Council's regeneration brief for Twickenham Riverside and follows detailed consultations with local associations and others in respect of the development."

He continued: "We look forward to the prospect of combining an environmentally friendly transformation of this Thames-side area with a project that will provide all sections of the community with an array of recreational opportunities. What we are doing is maximising the potential of one of Twickenham's greatest assets: the Thames."

Specific community benefits and amenities associated with the Twickenham Riverside project include:

**Regeneration of the Thames Riverside**

The design of the Twickenham Riverside proposal would improve the appearance of the Thames riverside. MacCormac Jamieson Pritchard, architects of the scheme, have replaced the long uniform block of the derelict pool with a more elegant structure that has an elevated "piazza" facing the river, for the public who wish to avail themselves of the leisure facilities and restaurants. A pedestrian passage from King Street is specifically designed to attract people directly towards the Riverside and the piazza. The residential accommodation above the piazza is designed as 4 elongated blocks showing their narrow side to the river, rather than a uniform long block like Thames Eyot.

The architects have ensured that the proposed development would not detract from Twickenham's existing landmarks such as the Church Tower or St. James School. It is envisaged that the proposed development will create an additional landmark for Twickenham through a new focus on the river.

## **Open space**

Areas of open space raised on a terrace and overlooking the Embankment and the River Thames are a feature of the scheme. Since the original plans were submitted this 'piazza' area of open space on the upper embankment has been enlarged (please see the Supplementary Planning Statement for further details). This open area could facilitate informal theatrical/musical performances such as those found in Covent Garden, together with arts and crafts markets, not dissimilar to those in the vicinity of Hyde Park.

In addition to the open piazza, the entire embankment stands to be improved in the second phase of this project. Some further study and consultation have to take place before a design is finalised which would achieve the Council's objective of turning it from a parking zone into a well landscaped area, making space for recreation along the riverside and improving the setting for existing pursuits such as the popular riverside walk. Future opportunities exist to create a stronger link between the Upper and the lower embankment which could provide spectator seating for viewing public performances. These may include official theatrical attractions during the Twickenham Festival and local events such as the Farmers' Markets and French Markets currently held in the Holly Road car park.

The future Embankment scheme will incorporate a solution for the service and parking problems of local residents and businesses. Closure of the lower embankment (other than for construction purposes) would not take place during the initial development process (Phase 1) and residents would continue to have access and parking facilities.

## **Entertainment and leisure**

The development will include various cafes, restaurants, bars and retail outlets, all of which are in keeping with the Thames River Strategy to increase the availability of amenities alongside the Embankment. It is envisaged that the bars, cafes and restaurants will attract both members of the community and tourists. Other outlets, which would include units off the pedestrian link to King Street, would be allocated to niche retailers. It is anticipated that the greater number of visitors to the new amenities will have a beneficial "rub off" effect on custom in Twickenham's town centre.

News of the proposed "Three Screen" Arts Cinema was particularly well received, not least because it will do away with the inconvenience of travelling as well as providing a programme geared to a range of interests and age groups. Auditorium Two in the cinema will serve as a community arts centre for 14 weeks of the year and would enable local art societies to stage musical, dance and theatrical events.

Provision has been made for a Health and Fitness club which will include a swimming pool. The swimming pool is proposed for community use during weekdays (10.00am-12.00pm and 2.00pm-5.00pm) and for one afternoon each weekend. It is proposed that the pool will also be used for special swimming sessions for school parties, families, young mothers and senior citizens.

### **Access and safety issues**

The proposed scheme would have a significant impact on security and safety issues at Twickenham Riverside. The introduction of shops, restaurants and other recreational facilities would inevitably increase public usage of the Thames frontage. These amenities will be operated in accord with the Council's regulations regarding opening hours and noise pollution. This, together with CCTV, feature lighting and the new found residential presence would effectively turn a "no-go" area into a safe harbour.

Accessibility represents a fundamental aspect of the proposals and the scheme totally conforms with the 'Design for Maximum Access' guidelines. This is reflected in many aspects of the design including numerous facilities for the disabled.

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### **For further information please contact:**

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### **Notes to Editors**

- ◇ The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council's detailed development brief was formulated following detailed consultation with specialist groups in the local community. The brief emphasised the sensitivity of the site's riverside location; the need to provide visual, functional and environmental enhancements to the embankment area (in keeping with the Thames Landscape Strategy) and the importance of preserving the character of the surrounding riverside conservation area. Broadly, the brief requested that a scheme be designed with two options – a cinema or a discovery centre option. The proposal is also required to meet the Mayor of London's developing strategy (The Spatial Development Plan).
- ◇ The Council's brief included a directive to facilitate public access to the river through the creation of a link from King Street, the need for the embankment to be opened up to pedestrians and detailed requirements in respect of a community leisure facility- in keeping with the site's 'swimming baths' tradition.
- ◇ Dawnay Day and MacCormac Jamieson Pritchard, the architects who were appointed in conjunction with local resident groups, held extensive consultations (between November 2000 and February 2001) with a broad range of local resident groups in respect of the proposed development.

- ◇ Local groups involved in the aforementioned consultation process included: Eel Pie Island Association, The Twickenham Society and Strawberry Hill Residents Association, Riverside and Centre Working Parties, Traffic Access and Parking Working Party, Richmond Environment Trust, Twickenham Town Committee, York House Society, local residents, and local businesses. In the event, more than 35 public meetings were held with the “Cinema Scheme” (Option A) being chosen in preference to the “Discovery Centre” (Option B).
- ◇ In addition the LBRuT Council consulted the following statutory consultees: English heritage (archaeology and conservation area), Environmental Agency, Port of London Authority, Royal Fine Art Commission and Thames Water. Consultations also took place with the following departments: Education, Environment, Policy, Trees, Transport and Urban Design.
- ◇ In February 2001, the two schemes were presented to the LBRuT Resources Committee in response to the two options outlined in the Council’s agreed development briefs. The LBRuT Resources Committee approved Option A on the grounds of the commercial non-viability of Option B.
- ◇ The current application was submitted on 26 September 2001. In addition a Supplementary Planning Statement was submitted to the LBRuT Council on 4 February 2002, together with drawings from the architect MJP, photographs and photomontages and a separate report on Transportation produced by traffic consultants WS Atkins. This provided certain improvements and clarifications to the original plans in response to further public consultation. This statement is available from Richmond Council Planning Department and through the Council’s website.