

The Twickenham Riverside Park Team

Misleading Claims that 'the Building Footprint has been Reduced'

The Twickenham Riverside Park Team object to Planning Application 17/4213/FUL on the grounds that the Council have presented residents with incorrect claims that the building footprint of the planned scheme has been reduced, and thus, crucially, that external public open space has been increased.

In the Autumn 2017 consultation it was claimed in the consultation document that '*the Council has reviewed the footprint of the scheme. As can be seen **the footprint has been reduced.***'

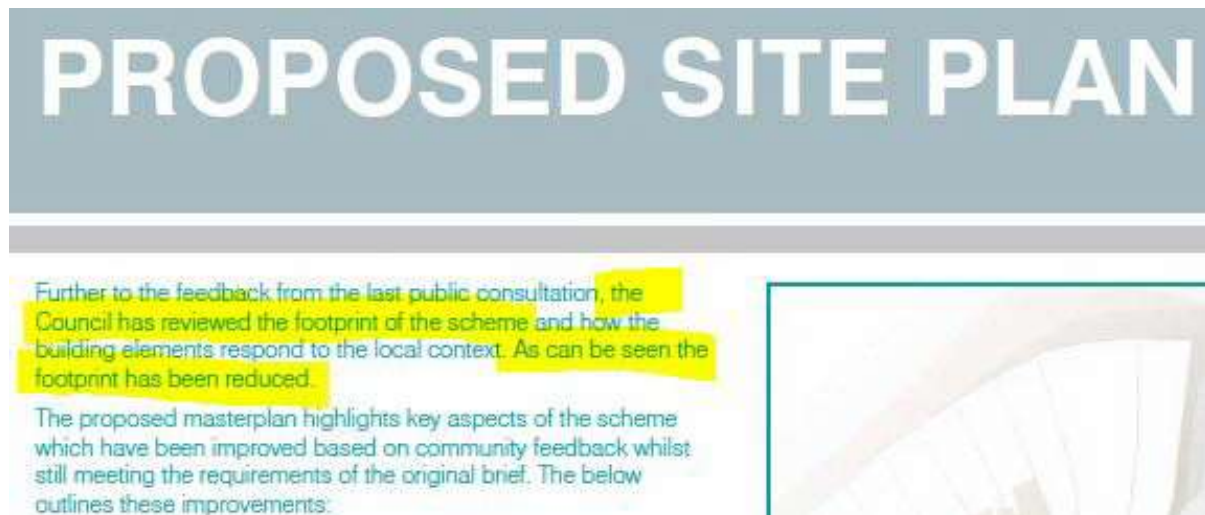


Image: Proposed Site Plan, from the Autumn 2017 consultation document

However, no evidence was provided to support this claim, only an image of the site plan with the buildings footprint shown very subtly in white. We cannot see how or if the footprint had been reduced.

Additionally, we witnessed officers and councillors repeating the Council's claim that the footprint had been reduced at the consultation exhibition events in October 2017.

This was important because the consultation questionnaire had a specific question: ***To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Proposed Site Plan?***

The Autumn 2017 Consultation results continued this claim, but strengthened it by saying that the '***building footprint has significantly reduced from early proposals***'. Again, no evidence was provided to substantiate this claim.

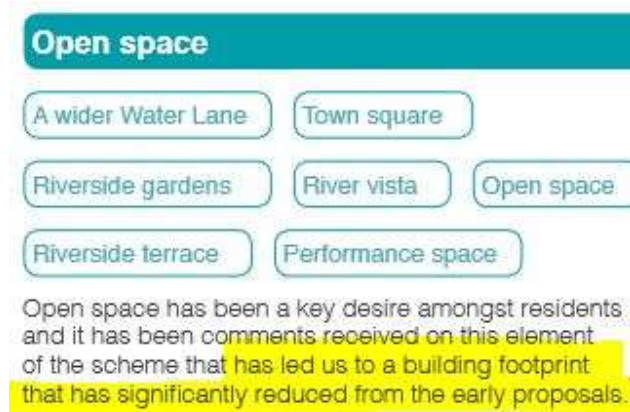


Image: Open space, from the Autumn 2017 consultation results.

No changes were made to the building footprint between the Autumn 2017 consultation and the planning application in December 2017. As a result, residents are still mistakenly under the impression that the final building footprint has been reduced.

We found the claims that 'the footprint has been (significantly) reduced' rather incredible and really quite unbelievable, especially considering that the number of flats (finalised at 39), the amount of retail, and the number of storeys of the buildings have all remained constant throughout the last three rounds of consultation and into the planning application.

We looked at the footprints of the various proposals from Winter 2016 through to the planning application and could see no apparent change in footprint size, only variations in the layout with some swapping of the footprint area between the King Street and Embankment facing buildings.

So, with professional input, we calculated the external footprints of the last three sets of designs. FYI, the professional input was required to accurately calculate the footprint areas from the different sets of dimensions provided in the proposals/plans.

Building Footprint Areas

Winter 2016 Consultation (approx. 40 flats)

Total Building Footprint:

Option1 = approx. **1600m²** (King St =800m², Embankment =800m²). This was the preferred option.

Option2 = approx. **1550m²** (King St =1100m², Embankment (3 buildings) =450m²)

Option3 = No dimensions provided. Hence, we were unable to calculate accurately.

Summer 2017 Consultation (35-40 flats)

Total Building Footprint = approx. **1600m²** (King St 780m² + Embankment 820m²).

Autumn 2017 Consultation and Planning Application (39 flats)

Total Building Footprint = approx. **1600m²** (King St +Water Lane 1350m² + Embankment 250m²).

Therefore, there was NO reduction of the overall building footprint from the Winter 2016 preferred option (1) to the Summer 2017 proposal, and NO reduction of the overall building footprint from the Summer 2017 to the Autumn 2017 proposal and the subsequent planning application.

The only significant change has been to increase the length and footprint of the building running from King Street down much of Water Lane (see image below). This has had the undesirable result of closing off access to the service road from Water Lane (contrary to the TAAP objectives), and leaving only a tiny area for the 'riverside square', which at 300m² is far too small and difficult to access for events such as farmers' markets (which was also included in the TAAP objectives). The elongated footprint of the building down Water Lane also blocks convenient access to Diamond Jubilee Gardens from King Street.

Proposed Ground Floor Plan

The ground floor frontages will be activated with a variety of commercial units, which will provide the opportunity for outdoor seating areas around the new square. The proposed use along the King Street elevation is a retail unit which is in keeping with the existing uses.

The residential units are accessed by two different cores. One entrance lies off Water Lane and the other is on Water Lane Walk.

A new square at the southern corner of the site is created between the two proposed buildings and is surrounded by café / restaurants (use type A3) which will attract people to the area and provide active frontages to two sides of the square. The square can be accessed via the steps along The Embankment or through Diamond Jubilee Gardens or along the podium level from King Street.

The square will act as a multi-purpose high quality local amenity space, which will complement the existing public realm and maximise the riverside setting of the scheme.

All refuse and recycling and plant space is located at ground floor.

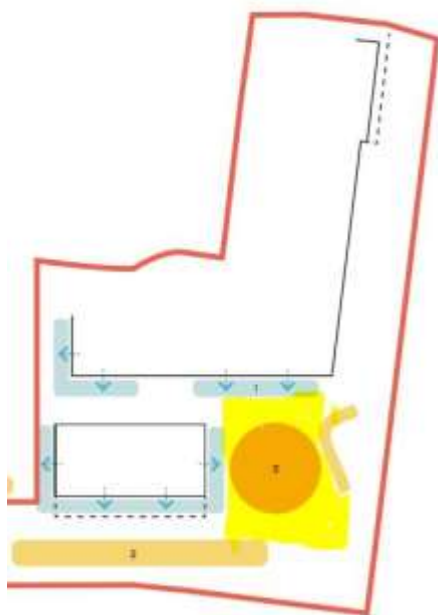
- Residential Core/ Entrance
- Residential Unit
- Commercial Unit
- Shared Amenity Space
- Refuse Store
- Plant Space



Image: Proposed Ground Floor Plan (planning application: design and access statement).

The planned building footprint is outlined in black for clarity. The planning site boundary, which includes pavements and some street parking spaces is outlined in red.

The Square – Usable Area



Use & Programme

Diamond Jubilee Gardens is a well-loved local place with a series of events taking place throughout the year. As set out in the brief, the proposed programme for the new public space should complement and expand on their offering. The Square provides a substantial public open space, just under the size of two tennis courts, approx 300m², on the corner of Water Lane and the Embankment. Bordering the square on two sides is ground-floor flexible commercial space, with predominantly restaurant / café uses.

The square will be a public flexible space for performances, markets and sitting out benefiting from the potential for event lighting. The community will be encouraged to put forward ideas for usage of the square and it is envisaged that it will provide an area for extension to some of the existing events within Diamond Jubilee Gardens. Pop-up electricity outlets will be incorporate on the north-eastern edge of the square to facilitate this range of uses.

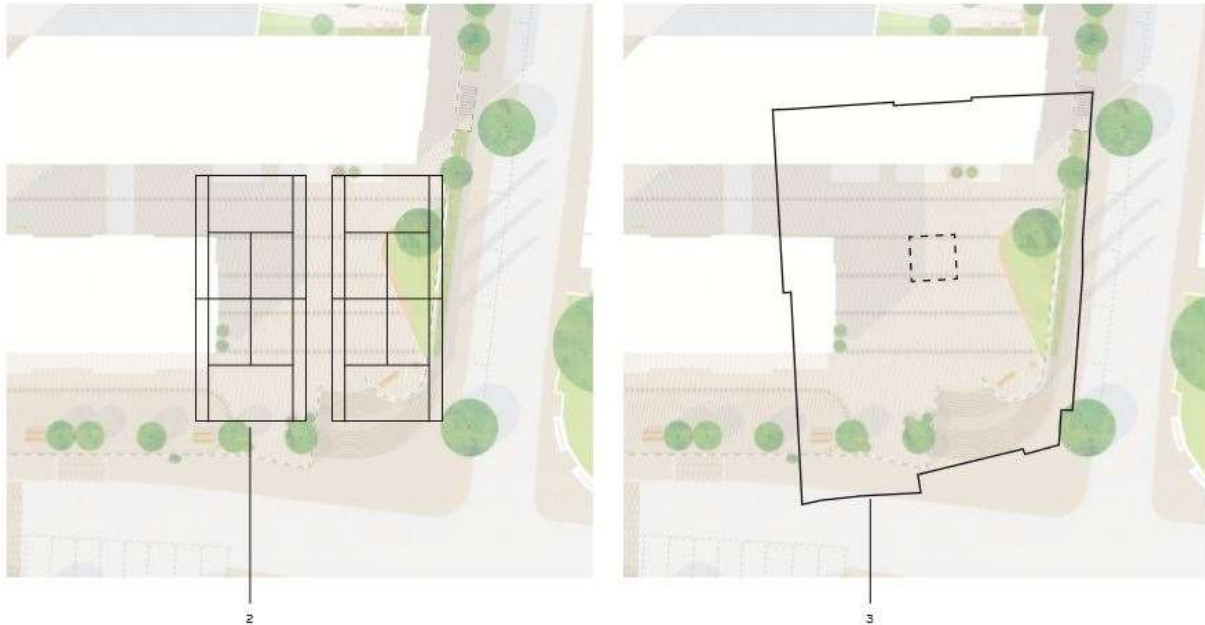
The new spaces can be defined as:

- Spill-out space for cafés, shops etc.
- 'Dwell' space - sitting and watching the world go by, resting
- Event space - for activities, games, performances.

Further information on the programme for the public square can be found on Figure 4.7.

This image is from the Landscape & Public Realm Design Statement. The usable area of the square is highlighted

The usable area of the square of 300m², is clearly much less than the area of two tennis courts (520m²) as the boundary of the courts, even without baselines and sidelines, extend over the buildings, steps, tables and landscaped areas. More significantly **the square is only 30% of the size of Richmond riverside's Heron Square** (1000m²) which is regularly filled by their farmers' market. This is very clearly inadequate to fulfil the TAAP objectives.



Left: Comparison with tennis courts (minus base and sidelines), Right: Comparison with Heron Square (1000m²)

As the primary reason given for the claimed reduction of the building footprint is to 'increase' the 'open space' between buildings, this claim is therefore entirely spurious. Not only is the claim that additional open space having been created between buildings spurious, but the distribution and shape of the open space does not lend itself to any meaningful form of public amenity use. With the possible exception of the miniscule square, the remaining space is literally 'space left over on the plan' in the form of unusable space, and the square too small to host public events of any consequence.

Usable open public amenity space, in particular a town square large enough to host large scale public events such as farmers' markets, is admitted to being 'a key desire amongst residents.' As per the TAAP, usable open public amenity space should have been the primary driver for these proposals, and not a desire to cram as much building onto a restricted site – with public amenity space relegated to pure tokenism. The layouts of buildings dominate the small site, effectively preventing the aggregation of outside spaces into areas suited to public amenity use.

Consequently, we conclude that the Council has presented residents with unsubstantiated claims about reductions in the building footprint, and consequently increased open public space, that are incorrect and misleading. This has led some residents, including some of those in the 'stakeholder groups', to be misled into supporting the planning application for an invalid reason – e.g. because 'the footprint has been reduced'.

Unless the Council can provide proof that the building footprint has been reduced (significantly) as claimed, we ask the planning officer to recommend the planning application is refused and that the planning committee refuse or defer the planning application until these claims and their implications can be corrected.

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