

Ealing Shopmobility – Final Report & Action Plan

Ealing Council
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Executive Summary

1. Ealing Shopmobility Feasibility

1.1 This Final Report and Action Plan gives summaries of the previous five Task Notes, which form the main body of this feasibility study:

Task Note 1: Learning from Practice Elsewhere

Task Note 2: Potential Demand and Stakeholder Interest

Task Note 3: Site Surveys for Pilot Location & Accessibility Audit

Task Note 4: Proposals for Pilot Scheme

Task Note 5: Dickens Yard Site Proposals & Delivery Model.

1.2 A summary is given of recommendations and conclusions that have been made in each of the Task Notes relating to the main decisions that would need to be made regarding the choice of hosting agency and procurement method, delivery of a pilot scheme, and the approach to securing the Dickens Yard site.

1.3 A detailed summary of options is given around financial resources and staff provisioning for both the pilot and permanent scheme. This is intended to allow for some variation of funding level to be accommodated, and considers the impact of various options around revenue availability, operation times, impact on service provision and outputs.

1.4 A number of the more feasible locations for the pilot scheme have been further researched to ascertain potential availability. The most favoured option of utilising Dickens Yard for the mobile unit remains viable subject to further discussions with Ealing Council. However, the suggested use of the Town Hall forecourt has been rejected due to weight constraints. The location is still available for the pilot scheme in conjunction with the mobile unit parked at Dickens Yard. A gazebo-type temporary structure could be used.

1.5 Results of a further survey of Dickens Yard assess its suitability for use with a large vehicle, and a plan of acceptable locations is included. However, whilst Dickens Yard appears at the time of the consultation to be favourable, it is important to emphasise that the choice of an appropriate location for the pilot scheme will need to be made by a Shopmobility steering group acting upon more up-to-the-minute information. The location for the pilot scheme, therefore, has not been finalised at the close of this study.

1.6 A delivery and action plan is incorporated which defines four phases (Development, Pilot Scheme, Dickens Yard, Sustainability & Growth). Each

phase comprises of key actions to be taken, along with an estimated chronology for the whole plan.

- 1.7 Further steps are suggested which cover Ealing council's internal management of the consultation findings, and wider publicity and disclosure concerns. The formation of a steering group and stakeholder event are proposed.

1.1 Context

- 1.1.1 A retail development at Dickens Yard, Ealing Broadway has provided an opportunity for a Shopmobility facility to be established, as indicated in Ealing Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance for the site, and the public statement by developer St. George of their intentions for the site¹.
- 1.1.2 Through temporary equipment loan, Shopmobility is an established means of enabling freedom of access to retail and civic amenities for those with mobility constraints, and its adoption at Dickens Yard is an indication of Ealing Council's planning policy to create an accessible environment, and thereby enhance its broader commitment to Social Inclusion.
- 1.1.3 Ealing Council has commissioned a feasibility study to provide a critical analysis of the range of issues that Shopmobility raises (operational, technical and strategic), and detailed proposals for an Ealing scheme, with reference to an initial temporary location, and to the Dickens Yard development itself.

1.2 Objective of this Report

- 1.2.1 This report forms a supplementary document to the previous five reports and seeks to summarize the salient points of the feasibility study, with emphasis on the final conclusions and recommendations that have been made.
- 1.2.2 Also incorporated is supplementary material requested by Ealing Council as a result of a full consideration of the earlier Task Notes, in some cases drawing upon information that was not available at the earlier stages of the study. This includes updates on various site availability.
- 1.2.3 Detailed budgeting projections will enable an appropriate level of financial provisioning to be made and the precise relationship between staffing levels, service availability, estimates of use, income generation, and revenue shortfalls / requirements to be understood.
- 1.2.4 A combined Delivery and Action Plan gives a realistic and pragmatic time frame through four phases of development of Ealing Shopmobility, allowing task by task planning development to be undertaken.
- 1.2.5 As a summary report, it is anticipated that this report will act as a portable and concise précis of the feasibility study from which Ealing Council can circulate more widely.

¹ See <http://www.dickens-yard.co.uk/stgeorgeproposaldickensyard.pdf>

2.1 Task Note 1: Learning from Practice Elsewhere

- 2.1.1 Shopmobility is an important means of ensuring a town centre environment is inclusive and accessible, through the temporary loan of mobility equipment. Many local authorities have instigated or supported Shopmobility schemes, and there are examples of a variety of approaches throughout the country.
- 2.1.2 Where there is an absence of proactive shopping centre management (either commercially or through the council), schemes are more usefully hosted within the voluntary sector. This would seem a likely option for Ealing, in line with the majority of current schemes. In order to avoid the challenges and delay in forming a new charity (with its need for a skilled management board of volunteers) and to enable planning for effective and swift delivery, a practical option would be to enter into a partnership with an existing voluntary sector organisation with the required skills in place.
- 2.1.3 Such an organisation would ideally already be working in the field of direct service provision for older and disabled people. Experience elsewhere has shown that there are additional benefits that derive from Shopmobility services being provided by Community Transport organisations. This has the advantages of an appropriate skills base (at board and staff level) as well as enabling practical benefits of integration with specialist transport operations.
- 2.1.4 Shopmobility yields benefits to individuals with mobility constraints, local authorities, the retail sector and the healthcare sector and is therefore worthy of support from a range of agencies. It cannot, however, be expected to sustain itself financially, and will require an appropriate mix of funding support / sponsorship from a range of stakeholders.
- 2.1.5 Task Note 1 highlights constitutional options, governance standards and the kinds of facilities and equipment a Shopmobility scheme needs to have in place to undertake its primary functions. Also identified are options to provide peripheral or secondary functions, and also to undertake trading activities.
- 2.1.6 A review of Shopmobility performance and local authority support in 10 towns indicates the levels of activity, outputs and financial standing of a cross section of other providers, in order to benchmark realistic expectations of such in Ealing.
- 2.1.7 Task Note 1 also highlights a number of planning guidance documents which particularly urge local authorities to investigate and launch Shopmobility schemes as a means of taking proactive measures to achieve high levels of accessibility and social inclusivity in their future planning and development.

2.2 Task Note 2: Potential Demand & Stakeholder Interest

- 2.2.1 Any Shopmobility scheme needs to be developed as a response to perceived need and anticipated demand. The scale, nature and detail of the service provision must take direct account of potential users' needs. The primary difficulty in planning such services is that would-be users are often 'invisible', and only emerge after the service has been launched.
- 2.2.2 There is no specific or exact method of gauging the scale of demand for any Shopmobility service. However, a demand predictor system for accessible and community transport can be utilised to give a good indication of levels of relevant disabilities in Ealing and surrounding Boroughs, and this data is equally valuable when related to Shopmobility.
- 2.2.3 Estimates of take up for Shopmobility are noted in this Task Note on a ward by ward basis for Ealing, along with mapping of residential locations of likely Shopmobility users. This data is also plotted against the locations of other Shopmobility services in neighbouring boroughs. This exercise indicates that within the scope of a 20 minute drivetime, a Shopmobility service in Ealing will be the nearest such facility for many residents of other boroughs.
- 2.2.4 Ealing Council – as a primary stakeholder – has anticipated the introduction of Shopmobility at policy level and has projected some financial support. A summary of policy documents from the previous few years suggests that the authority is firmly intending to establish a scheme in Ealing.
- 2.2.5 Many individuals have stated how a Shopmobility service will enhance their lives on several levels. Also, many organisations supporting or promoting access, independent living, disability rights and care services for elderly and disabled persons have affirmed that Shopmobility will benefit them as organisations or their clients / service users.
- 2.2.6 Identified stakeholders (representatives of likely service users, local authorities, planners & developers) and interested parties have offered broad support for the introduction of a scheme in Ealing, although there is a current lack of firm commitment from the developer St George regarding the extent to which they anticipate a Shopmobility facility will be required at Dickens Yard. There are some suggestions that an upcoming Arcadia development would be a more appropriate location.

2.3 Task Note 3: Site Surveys for Pilot Location & Accessibility Audit

- 2.3.1 In order to identify and consider potential locations for the pilot Shopmobility scheme in Ealing, a number of sites have been surveyed. These have been

assessed for their suitability for Shopmobility operations established in the following ways:

- via lease of a retail or office unit
 - via portacabin or temporary structure
 - via mobile unit
 - via shared occupancy with another agency.
- 2.3.2 Very few retail units are currently available and the rentals averaged £46,000 p.a., although a unit could be gained for £33,000. These units may need additional capital allocation to effect changes to improve layout and accessibility. Office units – whilst slightly cheaper – were largely located on 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors, and unsuitable for Shopmobility.
- 2.3.3 Of the sites surveyed with the installation of a portacabin in mind, several locations had advantages but it was felt that none offered any really tangible opportunities to adopt this approach, and that problems would likely prove insurmountable.
- 2.3.4 There were several possible locations where a mobile unit could be parked. This option is the most simple to effect and requires minimal site facilities. The use of Dickens Yard and the Town Hall frontage were felt to be the most favourable option.
- 2.3.5 The potential to share accommodation with another agency is considered and the Ealing Community Resource Centre identified as the only viable option for this approach. The Centre does not, however, have any space available for use in the foreseeable future, and there is a waiting list for tenancies. Also, the Centre is some distance away from Ealing Broadway. No voluntary sector agencies with spare space capacity are based at Ealing Broadway.
- 2.3.6 The findings of an accessibility survey of Ealing Broadway are incorporated, which indicate on a street-by-street basis the ease of movement and access that Shopmobility users can expect to find. There are some reasonable levels of access in Ealing but also a number of problem areas.
- 2.3.7 Finally, a report is included regarding the Ealing Town Centre development Framework Event.

2.4 Task Note 4: Proposals for Pilot Scheme

- 2.4.1 An operational area is defined in Ealing Town Centre which reflects the anticipated geographical scope, based on accessibility issues and equipment range. This includes an optional extension along Uxbridge Road to bring West Ealing into the scope of the service.

- 2.4.2 Five approaches are outlined which consider the different options covering the physical form that a shopmobility would take: buildings, temporary buildings and mobile units. These take account of the site surveys in Task Note 3 and also include comparative costings for each option.
- 2.4.3 The need to identify a suitable delivery agency is outlined, with criteria set out regarding the skills, capabilities and attributes required. In addition, it is recommended that a Shopmobility steering group is formed from a variety of stakeholders.
- 2.4.4 Ealing Council's procurement options are considered along with issues surrounding tendering.
- 2.4.5 The analysis concludes that the mobile unit approach offers the most immediate advantages, but that other options might be considered throughout the 5 year pilot period. The best location of the mobile unit would be to alternate between Dickens Yard and Town Hall forecourt on New Broadway.
- 2.4.6 Detailed specifications are offered for a pilot Shopmobility scheme to be delivered via a mobile unit, including vehicle details, budgetary costings, publicity and marketing issues.

2.5 Task Note 5: Dickens Yard Site Proposals & Delivery Model

- 2.5.1 This Task Note defines in as much detail as is possible the physical requirements that a Shopmobility service will require to serve Ealing from the site at Dickens Yard. It also gives further guidance on delivery approaches that are appropriate for the permanent facility
- 2.5.2 Estimates are given for the specification of resources needed to operate Shopmobility from Dickens Yard, including premises, parking bays and transport access. Around 100 m² of floorspace is required, divided into different rooms and areas. The external space required should permit ten vehicles to park within 40m of the doors. Doors need to be power operated.
- 2.5.3 Staffing levels are presented with a few permutations but will involve the engagement of a supervisor / manager and a number of part time staff. Strategic management and development functions will be expected to be provided by the hosting agency. Staffing costs are estimated to be £45,000 per annum.
- 2.5.4 Specifications for a stock of equipment is listed and costed at £25,000. Additional equipment and fittings for the unit are also detailed, totalling a further £19,000.
- 2.5.5 Budget estimates are given for total capital (£44,000) and net revenue (£39,500) in year one, which assumes an income charged to user totalling

£32,000 for 10,000 loans. A projected budget is given over a five year period which indicates a revenue and capital requirement that totals £244,917, which averages at £48,983 per year. Funding sources and approaches to financial provisioning are given, including trading activities.

- 2.5.6 Consideration is given to the functioning of the delivery agency and approaches to implementation and working procedures, including marketing, branding, networking, business planning, and user involvement.
- 2.5.7 Some areas of operational detail are covered recommending good practice around bookings, long term loans, equipment maintenance, security issues and data recording, etc.

3.1 General Summary

3.1.1 There are considerable strengths in the proposals for Shopmobility in Ealing. These circumstances include:

- a policy commitment from both Ealing Council and Transport for London recognising the value of Shopmobility and its desirability in Ealing
- initial funding allocation with which to develop the service
- subject to negotiation, a commitment from the developer St George to incorporate a permanent Shopmobility facility within Dickens Yard
- the potential to source an effective local delivery agency with existing trustees and staff members having all the necessary skills, experience, contacts and awareness of disability issues
- a town centre with reasonably good wheelchair access around its main retail environment
- an ability to adopt a pragmatic approach to a pilot scheme with delivery from a mobile unit
- the potential to be located in a bespoke and high-profile premises in Dickens Yard
- the potential to secure adequate car parking and public transport links
- significant interest from potential users

3.1.2 A shopmobility scheme in Ealing has the potential to bring great benefits to the retail, welfare and tourism sectors in the town, as well as improvements to the quality of life for a significant number of residents.

3.1.3 It would also be pivotal in facilitating stronger links between diverse sections of the community, in terms of age, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic group, and geographical location.

3.1.4 The challenge is for funders, developers and Ealing council to collaborate and provide the necessary resources and support which will harness the potential community action to create a new and much required facility in Ealing.

3.2 Hosting Agency & Procurement

- 3.2.1 In the light of many successful examples of voluntary sector Shopmobility provision, it is recommended that a hosting agency is sought who are able to fulfil the appropriate criteria as detailed in Task Note 4.
- 3.2.2 A steering group should also be formed to represent the wider range of stakeholders.
- 3.2.3 Ealing Council will need to clarify whether the Shopmobility service need be put out to tender or if a funding relationship with the provider can be managed through other procurement means.

3.3 Pilot Scheme

- 3.3.1 Taking into account the arguments presented in the earlier Task Notes, and the results of the site surveys and audits that have been undertaken, it is recommended that a mobile unit is adopted to deliver Shopmobility in Ealing for the pilot phase.
- 3.3.2 A mobile unit represents the option where the advantages can more clearly be brought to fruition and in which the disadvantages can be managed with minimal negative impact on service quality. Above all, it is a pragmatic response that is able to deliver a level of service provision to the residents of Ealing within an acceptable timescale.
- 3.3.3 A number of site surveys established that the mobile unit could ideally be situated on the Dickens Yard car park site, with the ability to use the nearby Town Hall frontage on New Broadway for promotional activities on an itinerant basis. The relative advantages of this site have been outlined in Task Note 3 (and recapped below 4). However, the unit would be able to respond to other opportunities and will allow maximum flexibility in a town centre environment that presents only limited location options.
- 3.3.4 The nature of the consultation is such that the surveys were undertaken at an earlier stage of the report and cannot reflect the options and possibilities in an up-to-the-minute way. Therefore it is not possible for this final report to be absolutely definitive in terms of locating the mobile unit. This function needs to fall to either the steering group or hosting agency who need to examine the options in the light of new developments and opportunities.

3.4 Dickens Yard

- 3.4.1 The opportunity to establish the Shopmobility facility at Dickens Yard should be taken and negotiations with the developer need to be entered into to establish the scale and nature of accommodation and location options that will be available.

- 3.4.2 Longer term financial provisioning and business planning should be undertaken to develop the service provision and move towards sustainability. Whilst Shopmobility cannot be expected to be self-supporting, there are possible options for income generation by undertaking trading activities.
- 3.4.3 As a parallel concern, the accessible transport arrangements for Ealing should be reviewed with a focus on access to Ealing for those without use of a private car.

3.5 Ealing Council and Developers – Planning Gain Issues

- 3.5.1 Whilst there are many different examples of Section 106 planning gain deals which have been made to enhance Shopmobility services, it is difficult to establish a benchmark around what is an appropriate level of contribution from a developer. Scrutiny of practice elsewhere is often obscured by the Shopmobility contribution being a smaller component of a bigger package that might include a variety of general access improvements and public services.
- 3.5.2 Also the nature and scale of the 'gain' might reflect a more complex set of relationships and policy commitments that exist between a particular Council and developer that are uniquely forged and not easily defined in a form that can be replicated elsewhere, or quoted as customary practice.
- 3.5.3 However, the essential commodity that is usually within the gift of developers is the location / accommodation, which is also often the biggest challenge for the scheme. This can be split into two parts:
 - a) Reserving appropriate space and location for Shopmobility needs (including car parking) at an early stage of the planning process, in which the service is accorded a priority and importance that is complementary (and not subservient) to retail needs. In other words, a prime site is reserved for Shopmobility and the service is not at the mercy of the competitive nature of the retail sector, and relegated to less attractive options or 'left-overs', and
 - b) Ongoing provision of the above site at a subsidized or peppercorn rental, and with a leasehold in place that provides a substantial security of tenure (minimum 5 years but ideally 10+ years).
- 3.5.4 Although in kind, the relative value of b) above would equate to a £40,000-£50,000 revenue contribution per year (depending on valuation of site), which would be the major component (around 50-60%) of any Shopmobility revenue budget if being paid as a full cost levy. Together with revenues displaced from car parking (circa a further £10,000), this would constitute a fairly major sum for any developer.
- 3.5.5 Precedent elsewhere indicates that this kind of provisioning – a choice location and rent-free tenure – presents the most common and effective planning gain

arrangement for Shopmobility. It may also be possible for some additional revenue support to be levered from such a deal, but this would be exceptional and less viable.

- 3.5.6 In short, Ealing Council should be expected to define the Section 106 commitment from St George in terms of a prime siting of an appropriately sized unit along with a rent-free tenure of around 10 years. In practice, it is usually more prudent for the council to resume tenancy or ownership of the Shopmobility unit, and lease it in turn to the hosting agency. This would provide some stability if the agency were to be changed or reviewed.
- 3.5.7 For deals with additional developers, or in the case of Shopmobility not being located within St George's development, it might be appropriate to negotiate for additional revenue contributions that would relieve the need of the project to be reliant upon other funding sources and grants. It is difficult, however, to put a specific value upon this.

4.1 Site Surveys for Pilot Scheme

- 4.1.1 The potential sites surveyed initially were considered in terms of the practicality of the Shopmobility service being offered from these locations. However, the survey reports in Task Note 3 did not provide any detailed data regarding the likelihood of planning / use permissions being granted, nor were they subject to any practical surveys that included a large vehicle. Further investigation has indicated the following.

4.2 Bar Ha-Ha Car Park

- 4.2.1 The Bar Manager has informed the consultants that the car park is busy from 11 am onwards with the lunchtime crowd. He cannot foresee a time that the car park would be available to park a mobile unit. Also there are only 20 car park spaces which are currently used by local residents, bar staff and customers, so there is no capacity for a mobile unit to be parked in this car park.

4.3 Britannia Car Park

- 4.3.1 Contact with the car park owners has now established that they would be unwilling to let any spaces on this car park for the use of Shopmobility.

4.4 BBC Car Park

- 4.4.1 The BBC car park cannot now be considered to be an option due to the tenant's plans to sub-let the building and therefore need to retain all the car parking space to improve the chances of finding a new tenant.

4.5 Mattock Lane

- 4.5.1 Although Highways management were approached, they indicated that they are only involved in design and delivery of traffic management schemes therefore cannot advise on the use of Mattock Lane and will forward the query on to Transport & Planning Policy for further advice.
- 4.5.2 Aileen Jones in Planning Control & Development has suggested that there is not sufficient space to park a mobile unit in Mattock Lane – both in terms of capacity (current car parking space is limited) and also due to the width of the road. A parked mobile unit would result in difficulties for passing cars.

4.6 Town Hall Forecourt

- 4.6.1 Gavin Leonard (Property Services Strategy) has indicated that this site is not suitable. The structural base is not concrete, therefore this area is too weak to hold the weight of a mobile unit. However Gavin suggests that the scheme would be able to use town hall forecourt for promotional purposes (and erect a gazebo, mobile structure, display boards etc). This can be organised through LBE Business Services Group facilities.
- 4.6.2 Due to the visibility and profile of this site, it would be valuable for promotional events to be staged here with some regularity.

4.7 Dickens Yard (Pilot Scheme)

- 4.7.1 Gavin Leonard (Property Services Strategy) suggests this is possible as does Aileen Jones (Planning Control & Development) who suggests that a planning application to change the use of a part of the car park will ensure the use of Dickens Yard.
- 4.7.2 A practical site survey was undertaken to ascertain suitability of the Dickens Yard parking area for locating and manoeuvring a larger vehicle. The survey indicated the following possibilities.
- 4.7.3 There are two options of where to park the mobile unit within Dickens Yard car park
- a) the South Eastern end (near the small alley way), and
 - b) the South Western end (near the Town Hall annexe).
- 4.7.4 South East end of Dickens Yard characteristics:
- there is sufficient space to park the mobile unit, and allocate car parking spaces and a training area
 - the ground of the surrounding area will need some improvement work to make it accessible for mobility equipment users
 - access to this site would be through a narrow alley way which leads onto Uxbridge Road
 - the alleyway is narrow enough for one way traffic and the ground needs some improvement work to ensure it is paved and flat. (The council may be reluctant to pay for this considering the site is going to be demolished and reconstructed during the redevelopment).
 - the area also needs to be cleaned.
- 4.7.5 South West end of Dickens Yard characteristics:

- there is sufficient space to park the mobile unit, allocate car parking spaces and room for training
- this site is ideal as the access and surrounding ground area is flat, well paved, wide and approximates perfect conditions for mobility equipment users
- it also feels safer as this site is near the Town Hall and the physical environment is more attractive
- some of the large bins would need to be re-sited
- a central cobbled drainage channel that runs through the connecting passage towards New Broadway would need remodeling
- the black bollards at the Broadway egress may need to be re-spaced to allow access for wider scooters
- the site is already accessible and most suitable for mobility equipment users

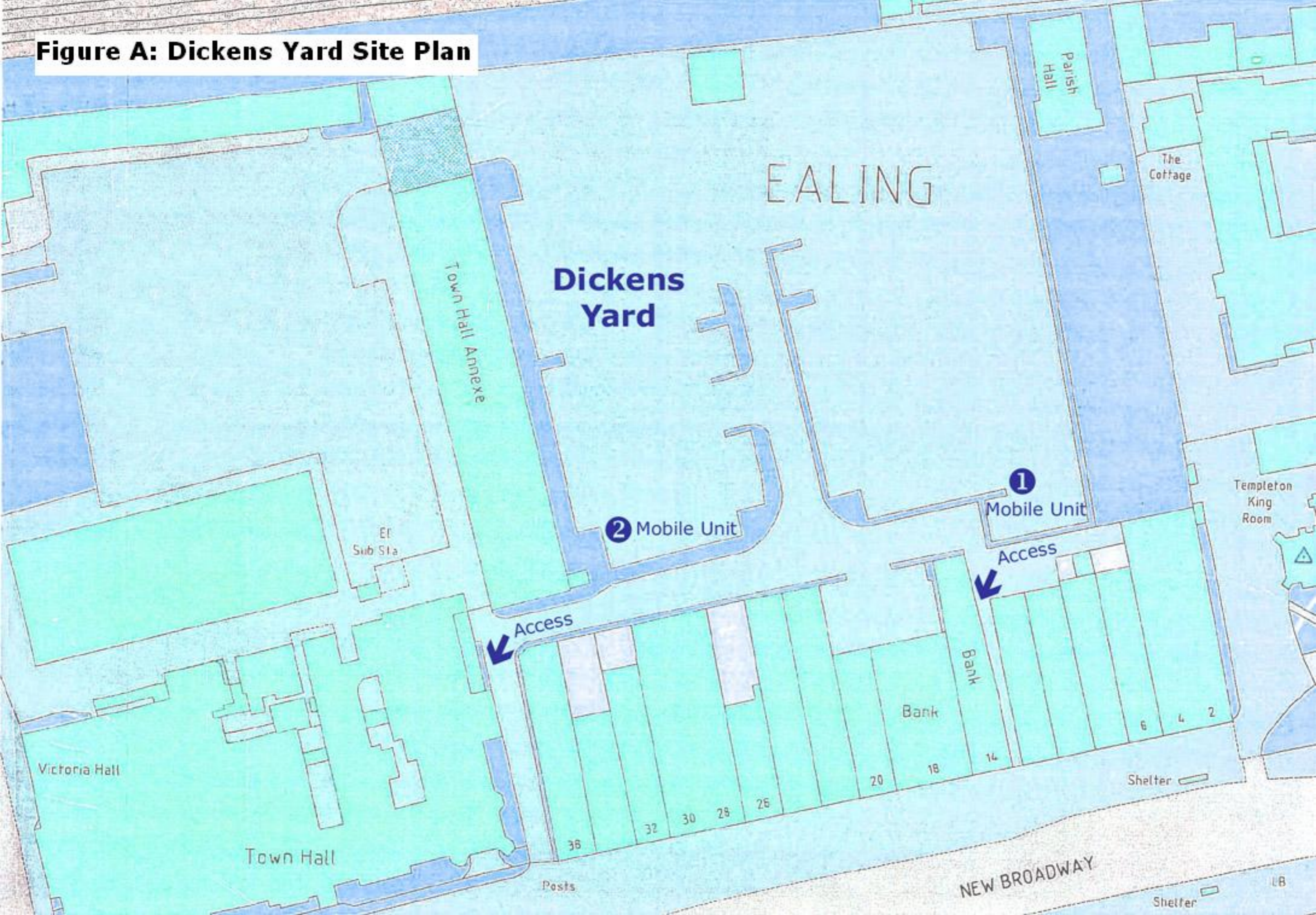
The two sites are marked on the map overleaf (see Figure A: Dickens Yard Site Plan).

4.8 Site Options Matrix

4.8.1 The sites considered in the matrix are as follows:

- Bar Ha-Ha Car Park (A)
- BBC Car Park (B)
- Britannia Car Park (Cinema) (C)
- Dickens Yard (South Eastern End) (D)
- Dickens Yard (South Western End) (E)
- Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre 1st Floor (Car Park) (F)
- Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre Delivery Area (G)
- Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre Floor Space (Tesco) (H)
- Ealing Broadway Station Forecourt (I)
- Ealing Green (J)
- Haven Green (K)
- Mattock Lane (L)

Figure A: Dickens Yard Site Plan



- Old Fire Station / Stables (Longfield Ave) (M)
- Sandringham Mews Car Park (High St) (N)
- Springbridge Car Park (O)
- Town Hall Forecourt (P)
- TVU Car Park (Q)

Table 1: Location Options Matrix A to I

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Pedestrian links	7	8	7	8	8	1	7	6	8
Public transport access	6	9	7	8	8	2	6	1	9
Minibus access	6	8	8	5	5	0	7	0	8
Car parking availability	2	7	8	8	8	8	6	6	7
General accessibility	6	8	6	6	8	4	7	5	6
Proximity to retail	8	7	7	8	8	9	9	9	7
Availability	0	0	0	8	8	4	0	2	0
Floor space / area	2	6	7	8	8	5	5	4	4
Total score	37	53	50	59	61	33	47	33	49

Table 2: Locations Options Matrix J to Q

	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
Pedestrian links	7	8	7	4	8	8	8	5
Public transport access	6	9	6	2	7	8	8	5
Minibus access	7	8	6	4	7	0	7	5
Car parking availability	7	7	7	3	8	7	7	5
General accessibility	7	8	7	5	4	3	9	6
Proximity to retail	8	7	7	5	9	8	8	6
Availability	1	1	3	4	0	3	7	0
Floor space / area	8	8	5	4	8	4	7	2
Total score	51	56	48	31	51	41	61	34

Table 3: Location Ranking

Location	Score
Dickens Yard (South Western End) (E)	61
Town Hall Forecourt (P)	61
Dickens Yard (South Eastern End) (D)	59
Haven Green (K)	56
BBC Car Park (B)	53
Sandringham Mews Car Park (High St) (N)	51

Location	Score
Ealing Green (J)	51
Britannia Car Park (Cinema) (C)	50
Ealing Broadway Station Forecourt (I)	49
Mattock Lane (L)	48
Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre Delivery Area (G)	47
Springbridge Car Park (O)	41
Bar Ha-Ha Car Park (A)	37
TVU Car Park (Q)	34
Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre Floor Space (Tesco) (H)	33
Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre 1 st Floor Car Park (F)	33
Old Fire Station Stables (Longfield Ave)	31

4.9 Locating the Pilot Scheme

- 4.9.1 There remain, however, questions as to how viable Dickens Yard would become when construction work commences. For this reason it is difficult for the feasibility report to conclude that this site presents the optimum choice. The above matrix which values the qualities and characteristics of each site should be periodically revisited to allow for changes in circumstance and new possibilities to be considered.
- 4.9.2 Additionally, a survey can only provide information of a limited kind. Actual operational experience can bring to light unforeseen problems or difficulties. Conditions can change at different times and days. So in placing a mobile unit on site, there needs to be some element of trial and error as the realities of day-to-day operational activity can be assessed.
- 4.9.3 Whilst a fixed location for the pilot scheme would be desirable, leastways for the marketing of the service and convenience of users, there must remain a fluid and reactive approach. This might entail periodically relocating during the pilot phase and / or utilizing two or more sites simultaneously.
- 4.9.4 The main reason that a mobile unit was recommended for the pilot scheme was due to the uncertainty of locations. This approach will ensure that service delivery and investment of resources is protected against the relative fluidity of the location options. The unit retains the flexibility to respond to both opportunities and problems whilst safeguarding a continuity and level of service.

4.10 Conclusions

- 4.10.1 None of the sites surveyed can be unreservedly recommended and a continuation of the approach here taken needs to be adopted by the steering

group / hosting agency until such time that a suitable location is finalised. The criteria selected on the matrix will remain the key factors in determining the ultimate location.

- 4.10.2 With the caveats noted above, the combination of Dickens Yard (with the Town Hall forecourt for promotional use) remains the most viable option for locating the mobile unit, at the time of the feasibility study conclusion. However, this should be subject to further investigation and trial.

Financial Resources & Staff Provisioning

Table 4: Operational Hours & Annual Staff and Revenue Costings (Pilot Scheme)

Operational Hours Per Week	Opening Times to Users	Operational Days Per Week	Estimated Users Per Year	Worker @ £10 per hour + 15% on costs	Assistant @ £8 per hour + 15% on costs	Other Staff Costs + Vols Exp	Total Gross Staff Costs	Total Gross Revenue Costs	Income from user Charges	Total Net Revenue Costs
19.5	10.30 – 15.30	3	1,000	£11,661	£4,665	£2,031	£18,357	£42,657	£3,000	£39,657
26	10.30 – 15.30	4	1,400	£15,548	£6,219	£2,708	£24,475	£48,775	£4,200	£44,575
32.5	10.30 – 15.30	5	1,800	£19,436	£7,774	£3,385	£30,595	£54,895	£5,400	£49,495
37.5	10.30 – 16.30	5	2,000	£22,425	£8,970	£3,906	£35,301	£59,601	£6,000	£53,601
45	10.30 – 16.30	6	2,800	£26,910	£10,764	£4,687	£42,361	£66,661	£8,400	£58,261
48	09.45 – 16.45	6	3,000	£28,704	£11,482	£5,000	£45,186	£69,486	£9,000	£60,486
51	09.45 – 16.45	6 + 1 eve (3 hours)	3,200	£30,498	£12,200	£5,312	£48,010	£72,310	£9,600	£62,710

Table 5: Operational Hours & Annual Staff and Revenue Costings (Dickens Yard)

Operational Hours Per Week	Opening Times to Users	Operational Days Per Week	Estimated Users Per Year	Supervisor @ £10 per hour + 15% on costs	Assistant @ £8 per hour + 15% on costs	Other Staff Costs + Vols Exp	Total Gross Staff Costs	Total Gross Revenue Costs	Income from user Charges	Total Net Revenue Costs
15	10.30 – 15.30	3	3,700	£7,049	£4,444	£1,875	£13,360	£41,268	£11,100	£30,168
20	10.30 – 15.30	4	4,500	£9,398	£5,925	£2,500	£17,823	£45,723	£13,500	£32,223
25	10.30 – 15.30	5	6,000	£11,748	£7,407	£3,125	£22,280	£50,180	£18,000	£32,180
32.5	10.00 – 16.30	5	7,500	£15,272	£9,629	£4,063	£28,964	£56,864	£22,500	£34,364
39	10.00 – 16.30	6	9,000	£18,327	£11,555	£4,875	£34,757	£62,657	£27,000	£35,657
48	09.00 – 17.00	6	10,400	£22,556	£14,221	£6,000	£42,777	£70,677	£31,200	£39,477
51	09.00 – 17.00	6 + 1 eve (3 hours)	10,700	£23,966	£15,110	£6,375	£45,451	£73,351	£32,100	£41,251

5.1 Operational Hours & Costings

- 5.1.1 With financial commitments unconfirmed, there is a variability around operational hours that bears a direct correlation to funding requirements for the employment of staff, staffing costs being the largest component of the revenue budget.
- 5.1.2 Table 1 provides an illustration of potential operational time options along with variations in staffing costs and gross revenue implications. The following points should be considered:
- there is a lack of precision in estimating the number of anticipated users within different opening time slots, and to an extent, shorter operational hours can merely concentrate and displace usage rather than reduce it
 - the pilot scheme needs to account for 45 minutes at the start and finish of each day for the mobile unit to arrive and depart and travel between its depot
 - operating the mobile unit during reduced hours will have a more direct impact upon the number of total loans due to the limitations on equipment stock
 - there will be other permutations of opening hours and days
- 5.1.3 The baseline cost for staffing averages around £18 per hour for the pilot scheme and £17 per hour for Dickens Yard facility. The staffing for the pilot scheme is more expensive due to the necessity for the senior staff member to be on duty as driver of the vehicle. For the permanent scheme, the balance of hours has been shift. The senior staff member is engaged for fewer hours, whilst the assistant has been increased.

6.1 Delivery Planning

6.1.1 In order to bring the Shopmobility service to fruition, the following actions need to be taken. These have been planned in four stages and will need co-ordination and time-planning. A suggested timeline is given as Figure B.

6.2 Phase One – Development

6.2.1 This covers initial planning and development work, drawing upon material produced during the TAS / ECT consultation, and responding to the outcomes of ongoing discussions between the developers and Ealing council. Timescale between 3 and 6 months. The following tasks fall into this phase:

- a) formation of a steering group to oversee the initial development. This group should comprise of all known stakeholders – relevant representatives from Ealing Council, TfL, developers, retail sector, VCF sector and other interested parties (some of whom were identified in the course of this consultation). Users and potential users should be involved in the group at all stages of this process.
- b) a hosting agency is identified by the steering group, either through
 - ◆ informal agreement
 - ◆ formal approach to a favoured agency
 - ◆ requests for expressions of interest
 - ◆ local authority tendering / procurement process
- c) a funding programme is agreed, establishing stakeholder support, setting budgetary levels and identifying need
- d) consultation with potential users
- e) a Phase Two business plan is drawn up which indicates appropriate output levels, outcomes to be achieved, milestones and a chronology of development
- f) quality standards are defined
- g) affiliation with National Federation of Shopmobility (and other appropriate bodies) to be actioned

- h) identification of a continuing role for the steering group to provide an ongoing dialogue with the hosting agency on a regular basis. Although formal management input would come from the hosting agency, the steering group would provide a more objective and advisory role as a multi-agency forum.

6.3 Phase Two – Pilot Scheme

6.3.1 The hosting agency needs to have been identified in order for the pilot scheme to be launched. The functions during this phase would largely default to the management of the hosting agency, with close collaboration of the steering group. Timescale: 6 months to 5 years. This phase would include:

- a) SLA / Contract put in place between Ealing council and hosting agency
- b) financial provisioning to be confirmed
- c) location arrangements to be confirmed
- d) staff to be appointed
- e) vehicle and equipment to be sourced
- f) health & safety / insurance needs to be addressed
- g) risk assessments to be carried out on locations / equipment
- h) systems and procedures to be put in place
- i) quality standards are achieved
- j) launch to be planned
- k) publicity and marketing strategy to commence
- l) service to become operational
- m) sustainable funding sources to be located
- n) continuing consultation with users and potential users
- o) negotiation with developer and council re. Dickens Yard
- p) business plan for Phase Three to be drawn up

6.4 Phase Three – Dickens Yard

6.4.1 The duration of the pilot scheme is indeterminate at this stage but has been assumed to be around 5 years. During this period, the Dickens Yard

development would be coming to fruition and planning functions would be ongoing. Timescale 5 – 10 years. The following tasks would fall under this phase:

- a) Site specification to be drawn up
- b) financial provisioning to be confirmed
- c) hosting agency is confirmed
- d) SLA / Contract put in place
- e) business planning
- f) unit to be fitted out and equipped
- g) Mobility equipment to be sourced
- h) health & safety / insurance needs to be addressed
- i) risk assessments to be carried out on locations / equipment
- j) systems and procedures to be put in place
- k) quality standards are defined
- l) launch to be planned
- m) Publicity and marketing strategy to commence
- n) Pilot scheme to cease
- o) Service to become operational
- p) Commence Shopmobility Charter project
- q) Business plan for Phase Four is prepared
- r) New function for mobile unit to be explored
- s) feasibility study is undertaken into trading options

6.5 Phase Four – Sustainability & Growth

6.5.1 With the Dickens Yard site becoming operational, the challenge for Shopmobility will be to sustainability and growth.

- a) develop funding programme
- b) continued publicity and marketing strategy

- c) service review and improvement initiatives
- d) quality standards are improved and developed
- e) continue Shopmobility Charter project
- f) business plan is revised and refined
- g) trading activities commence.

6.6 Anticipated Growth of Service between Phase Two and Phase Three

6.6.1 The feasibility study has assumed an increase of patronage (growth of around 350%) between the Pilot scheme and the Dickens Yard service. This is accounted for by the following factors:

- a) the mobile unit envisaged for the pilot scheme will only be able to carry around half of the stock of mobility equipment that will be available at the permanent facility, so restricting the number of loans
- b) travelling times to and from the operational site have to be factored into the operation of the mobile unit, thus limiting the availability window for users
- c) daytime electrical mains connectivity of powered equipment will not be possible from the mobile unit, restricting the recharging turn-around time for vehicles with multiple uses in one day, and
- d) the pilot scheme usage figures have been averaged on a yearly basis to cover the five year scope of the project. In reality this will be a period of growth for loans and an accumulation of registered users. Allied to this is the fact that publicity and marketing of such services do not necessarily produce an 'instant hit', and often take some time to reap dividends. So in effect, the pilot scheme will act as a taster for the full service.

6.6.2 Estimates of likely demand (Task Note 2) have suggested that 7,406 individuals in Ealing may wish to use the service. It is clear from this estimate that the pilot scheme can only ever hope to address a small portion of potential demand.

6.6.3 However, 10,400 loans per year (200 per week) is also projected as an optimum level of delivery. With proactive marketing, this can be achieved with around 500 individuals. It should be noted, though, that ease of access may have a strong bearing upon the output figure, and adequate provision of door-to-door transport will be a critical factor.

7.1 Suggested Next Steps

7.1.1 To commence Phase One, it is recommended that several issues are addressed and actions taken to move the project towards fruition. The following are recommended next steps. It is not necessarily pertinent that the steering group formation precedes the stakeholder event.

7.2 Ealing Council

7.2.1 In the first instance, the feasibility study has served to inform the council of the implications and issues of introducing Shopmobility, and the scale of the likely ongoing commitment required. The consultation findings need to be subject to

- a) appropriate circulation as discussion and briefing documents to relevant cabinets and personnel
- b) a disclosure policy which defines how much material is circulated beyond the council, and to whom.

It has been suggested that none of the consultation findings need be subject to any level of sensitive handling and are all potentially fit to be placed in the public domain. The council assumes ownership of this material at the close of the consultation process.

7.3 Steering Group

7.3.1 A steering group should be formed by inviting relevant and appropriate bodies and individuals to meet to oversee the commencement of the process. At this stage the group may be small and unrepresentative, and also subject to availability / willingness of various individuals to take part. It may, for example, initially be a duplicate of an existing panel (such as the Ealing Officers Forum on Access, Ealing Access Committee). However, representation should be sought from

- Ealing Council
- Retail sector
- St George
- Potential delivery agencies
- Voluntary, Community & Faith groups

- Interested individuals and potential users
- 7.3.2 The input from potential delivery agencies will be valuable but as a decision may need to be made around nominating a hosting agency, these bodies should abstain from specific debate on this matter, and distance themselves from any overt decision making processes or procurement issues. There is no reason, however, why such bodies should not be open and honest about their interests and aspirations, and the steering group should specifically ask for expressions of interest to be made in this regard in order for potential conflicts of interest to be managed transparently.
- 7.3.3 The steering group would be voluntary and need not have any specific framework or terms of reference, other than an agreed common activity:
- to collaborate as partners in the development of a Shopmobility service for Ealing, and
 - to represent the needs of potential Shopmobility users from the borough.

7.4 Stakeholder Event

- 7.4.1 A stakeholder event is also recommended as an appropriate conclusion to the consultation process. This would serve to:
- provide a focus and follow-through amongst those who have already participated in the consultation
 - demonstrate that the consultation has some element of public accountability
 - generate publicity for Shopmobility in general, and its anticipated introduction into Ealing Broadway
 - attract interested parties to get involved in the steering group
 - inform about experience of Shopmobility elsewhere
 - demonstrate the commitment of the council and developers to providing a Shopmobility scheme in Ealing.
- 7.4.2 Such an event would need managing as a stand alone project and does not fall under the provision of the present consultation. However, TAS / ECT will be willing to offer advice on such an event if required.