

Planning Policy Advisory Panel

Minutes

4 May 2023

Present:

Chair: Councillor Marilyn Ashton

Councillors: Christopher Baxter David Perry
Stephen Greek Norman Stevenson
Nitin Parekh

Absent: Councillor Asif Hussain

35. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Zak Wagman

Councillor Norman Stevenson

36. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were none.

37. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2023, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

38. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions, petitions or deputations were received at this meeting.

Resolved Items

39. Proposed Harrow Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Scoping

The Panel received a report and presentation on a proposed Master Plan for Harrow Town Centre. It was proposed for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in order that it would be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

The presentation included the significant changes to Harrow Town Centre in recent years, the changes to the local economy and the importance of maintaining the Metropolitan Town Centre status. It was noted that the SPD would provide specific clarification on the types of businesses, uses, and activities that would be encouraged within the defined boundary. The current proposal was to use the town centre boundary as it would be within an existing framework but this would be confirmed as preparation of the SPD progressed.

The Panel was informed that it would provide the potential to create positive proactive change through redevelopment, for example TfL redevelopment of the underground station and bus station. It would make Harrow's vision clearer and show potential developers and people who want to invest and open businesses the increasing vitality of the town centre.

Members were invited to provide comments and discuss the proposed Master Plan.

A Member asked why it was important to retain Metropolitan Centre status, what the SPD would try to prevent, and for successful examples in other London Boroughs. The Panel noted that it brought status and prestige, investment and new business, and enabled it to compete with other town centres for investment by the Mayor of London. The Chief Planning Officer reported on his experience of successful implementation of such SPDs. It was not a site allocation process but could identify what was appropriate for each site. Furthermore, as a SPD alone it would not prevent wholly inappropriate development but would supplement existing policies for this.

A further Member stated that he had attended a meeting of the Harrow BID which was looking at the next five years. He sought further detail on the TfL development proposals. The officer reported that initial contact by TfL indicated high priority for the redevelopment of the underground station and bus station as the latter was at capacity. The SPD would give Harrow Council more of a proactive voice in the proposals.

A Member observed that town centre footfall was good but was concerned that it was not seen as an evening destination. Furthermore, there were not clear logical through routes.

In response to questions, the Panel noted that:

- the evidence for the change in the way high streets were used was provided by the Office for National Statistics and was contained in paragraph 4.3 of the report;
- the SPD would promote the vision, define its purpose and its relationship to other centres and regeneration areas in the Borough. It would identify the key spaces and preferred uses;
- it was not a new policy but provided more up to date information and would carry statutory weight as a SPD. It would not conflict but augment other policies.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the content of the report and accompanying presentation be noted;
- (2) the preparation of the draft Harrow Town Centre Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document be progressed.

40. Proposed West Drive and Bellfield Avenue Conservation Area Designation - Outcomes of Consultation and Recommendations

The Panel received a report and presentation which detailed the outcomes of the recent consultation on the proposed West Drive and Bellfield Avenue Conservation Area in Harrow Weald which ran for a period of six weeks from 20 February 2023 to 3 April 2023. It was noted that the matter had been previously considered by the Panel at its meeting on 30 November 2023 and Cabinet had agreed to its recommendation that consultation should occur on the proposed area.

Members were informed of the responses received and that, as a result, two minor amendments were proposed to the boundary. These amendments removed 30 and 32 Bellfield Avenue from the proposed conservation area and included 128, 130 and 132 Uxbridge Road. The revised boundary therefore comprised 1-41 consecutive West Drive, 1-29, 31 and 33-47 consecutive Bellfield Avenue, all of West Drive Gardens and 128, 130 and 132 Uxbridge Road.

In response to a question, the Panel was informed that 30 and 32 Bellfield Avenue were of more modern architecture and it therefore made sense to omit these. Numbers 128, 130 and 132 Uxbridge Road were 1930s mock tudor properties, with 128 being locally listed.

Historic England's response to the consultation was that there did not appear to be a clear case made for the special architectural and historic interest of the area to warrant designation. This was similar to the officer assessment

considered by the Panel in November 2022, which noted the case was 'marginal'. The Chair advised the Panel that residents of the roads under discussion had been upset and had campaigned when the roads had been removed from a conservation area in 2015. The consultation had provided the opportunity for the residents to redress this if they so wished.

In response to questions, it was noted that:

- the proposed areas had previously been in a conservation area but had been excluded from the formation of a new one in the area. As there had been no further review of conservation areas there had not been the opportunity for their inclusion elsewhere;
- the top of West Drive was already in a conservation area and the properties in Lakeland Close were of modern architecture;
- numbers 30 and 32 Bellfield Avenue were quite modern and distinctive so it was practical to omit them from the conservation area;
- Historic England had not raised formal objections to the proposals.

It was moved and seconded that the proposed West Drive and Bellfield Avenue Conservation Area not be recommended to Cabinet. Upon being put to the vote the motion was lost. The proposed conservation area together with the revisions arising from the consultation responses was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the outcomes of the consultation undertaken on the proposed West Drive and Bellfield Avenue conservation area be noted;
- (2) the responses received as a result of the additional letters sent in response to comments received during the formal consultation period and which impacted upon the proposed boundary be noted;
- (3) the amended proposed conservation area boundary be noted;
- (4) the revised area be recommended to Cabinet for designation as the 'West Drive and Bellfield Avenue Conservation Area', subject to any further consultation responses received which would be formally reported to Cabinet.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 7.50 pm).

(Signed) Councillor Marilyn Ashton
Chair