

**WEALDSTONE REGENERATION ADVISORY
PANEL****24 JANUARY 2005**

Chair:	* Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan	
Councillors:	* Marilyn Ashton * Blann (2) * Harriss	* Lavingia * Vina Mithani
Co-opted Member:	Councillor Miss Lyne	
Advisers:	Mr S Addy	– Harrow Association of Disabled People
	Dr O Amele	– Wealdstone Traders' Association
	* Mr T Arens	– Heriot Catering
	† Mr M Garratt	– Kodak
	* Mrs S Hall	– Wealdstone Traders' Association
	* Mrs B Harvey	– Wealdstone Active Community
	Mr R Page	– North West London Chamber of Commerce
	* Mrs J Skidmore	– Wealdstone Active Community
	* Mr A Wood	– Harrow Public Transport Users' Association

* Denotes Member present
 (2) Denotes category of Reserve Member
 † Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS**RECOMMENDATION 1 - Wealdstone Town Centre**

Further to the Panel having identified, at its last meeting, the need to improve the attractiveness of Wealdstone to shoppers, the Panel now considered a report of the Director of Strategy (Urban Living), which set out actions taken to date and the likely timescales for implementing further recommendations. A revised version of the report was also tabled at the meeting.

The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) displayed a sketch detailing the planned development of four disabled parking bays at the rear of Premier House and the associated re-routing of traffic which had been agreed by the Transport Department. An Adviser to the Panel expressed the view that the disabled parking at the rear of Premier House was too far from the shopping area and reported that disabled drivers had complained that there were no parking spaces at the north end of the High Street.

An Adviser to the Panel reported that poor signage meant that drivers seeking a parking space were unaware of the locations and sizes of car parks in the area and the times of operation of the resident permit holders only restrictions. The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) stated that improved signage was planned for April 2005.

The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) stated that a report by the Government's Social Exclusion Unit supported the removal of barriers, following consultation, in pedestrian areas. A Member of the Panel suggested that a risk assessment be carried out to ensure that the removal would not create an unsafe environment for pedestrians.

In response to a query in relation to the "cauldron" style planters, the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) advised that it had been agreed with local residents that the planters would remain until replacement designs were ready for installation.

The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) reported that discussions with representatives from some of the major food stores had taken place, but so far none had expressed interest in opening a store in Wealdstone due to the proximity of the Tesco supermarket in Harrow.

An Adviser to the Panel expressed the view that traders would like to see the High Street opened up to traffic. There was a lengthy discussion on this issue and Members and Advisers to the Panel made the following comments:

- The type of shops in Wealdstone did not attract shoppers who were likely to spend a lot of time browsing. Opening up the road would enable shoppers to park close to the shops for short-targeted visits to particular traders.
- Many people travelled to the shops by bus or foot and therefore opening up the road to satisfy the needs of car drivers might not be the solution.
- There would be no financial assistance from Transport for London (TfL) to open up the High Street to traffic and therefore any changes would have to be funded by the Council.
- The pedestrian area attracted groups of youths and there was a perception that it was an unsafe environment.
- Harrow Police and Community Consultative Group had suggested that a crime audit of the area be carried out.

In relation to the improvement of the road junctions outlined in her report, the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) suggested that a site consultation was necessary with a small sub-group of the Panel. In addition, the consultation currently being carried out by TFL on the proposed cycle lane could be discussed at that meeting.

The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) stated that consultants had carried out an initial analysis of the possible models for the regeneration of Wealdstone. The consultants' report had not been published but their initial comments had indicated that maximising local shopping was likely to be more successful than trying to compete with larger shopping centres such as Harrow town centre. The consultants had not recommended opening up the High Street to traffic. The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) advised the Panel that a further study by consultants would cost in the region of £40,000-£60,000. She estimated that the consultation would take ten to twelve weeks to complete once a consultant had been appointed.

In discussing the further use of consultants in relation to the regeneration of Wealdstone, the following comments were made:-

- The consultation should include people who lived, worked and traded in Wealdstone, as well as people from outside the area, to establish what would make Wealdstone attractive.
- The consultants' report should contain positive recommendations on what would make Wealdstone better, and not simply focus on which regeneration models would not work.
- Traders should be asked their views on what type of questions should be included in the consultation questionnaires, and destination surveys should be conducted on people travelling by bus through Wealdstone.
- The perception of crime in the area should be taken into consideration by the consultants.
- The consultants should not be the same organisation as that carrying out the Harrow town centre consultation.

The Panel, having made requests in relation to Police representation on the Panel, the re-alignment of the CCTV cameras in the High Street and for further information on the location of disabled parking bays in Wealdstone and temporary car park signage,

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to the Planning, Development and Housing Portfolio Holder)

(1) That a consultant be appointed to carry out a further study on Wealdstone Town Centre;

(2) that a steering group, to include Councillors Marie-Louise Nolan and Harriss, and Mrs Harvey, Ms Hall and Mr Wood, be established to assist in the selection of the consultant;

(3) that the Panel be advised of timescales and be kept informed of progress throughout the consultation;

(4) that a subgroup of the Panel, to include Councillors Marie-Louise Nolan and Marilyn Ashton, and Ms Hall and Mr Arens meet on site to discuss the road junction issues.

(See also Minute 207).

PART II - MINUTES

198. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note (1) the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Harrison	Councillor Blann

(2) apologies received from Mr M Garratt, a representative of Wealdstone Businesses, an adviser to the Panel.

199. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interests made by Members present arising from the business to be transacted at this meeting.

200. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) under the provisions of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following late item be admitted to the agenda by reason of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency stated:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
10. Wealdstone Town Centre	The Panel was asked to consider this item, as a matter of urgency, as the report was not available at the time the main agenda was printed and circulated.

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

201. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2004, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

202. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

203. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

204. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

205. **References from Council and Other Committees/Panels:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no references from Council or other Committees or Panels to be received at this meeting.

206. **Byron Park Regeneration:**
The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) gave an oral update on the Byron Park regeneration.
- The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) stated that draft plans were now complete and would be discussed with local people and organisations prior to their consideration at a one topic meeting with members of the Panel. She proposed that the meeting take place at the Leisure Centre during week commencing 14 February 2005. Depending on the Panel members' availability, she suggested that this meeting could usefully take place during daylight hours, to enable a site visit.
- In response to a Member's question, the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) confirmed that subject to the approval of the plans by the Portfolio Holders for Planning, Development and Housing, the draft plans would be circulated to members of the panel prior to the February meeting.
- RESOLVED:** (1) That the position be noted;
- (2) to note that the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) would be arranging a meeting at the Leisure Centre with Members of the Panel in the week commencing 14 February 2005.
207. **Wealdstone Town Centre:**
Further to Recommendation 1 above, it was
- RESOLVED:** (1) That the sergeant in charge of the Wealdstone Safer Neighbourhoods team and the Council's Crime Reduction Manager be invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel to hear the Panel's concerns in relation to policing in the area;
- (2) that the Police be invited to nominate a representative to act as an Adviser to the Panel;
- (3) that the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) be requested to submit a report to the next meeting of the Panel on the location of disabled parking bays Wealdstone Town Centre;
- (4) that the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) be requested to arrange for the consultant to provide an update on the realignment of the CCTV cameras in the High Street and to meet on site with Wealdstone Active Community to discuss signage;
- (5) that Officers be requested to investigate whether temporary signage in relation to car parking could be displayed on the Acton Housing hoardings, as an interim solution, which could include details of the recently approved scheme to allow free parking for the first hour in multi-storey car park once the scheme became operational on 28 February 2005.
208. **Key Worker Housing in Wealdstone:**
The Panel received a report on Key Worker Housing in Wealdstone.
- The Panel expressed the view that the scheme could be better publicised as some visitors to the recent Working in Harrow open days had not realised who was eligible for the shared ownership schemes in the Borough.
- A Member advised that some applicants had not been able to consider buying a shared ownership flat because of the high service charges. She suggested that the effect of the service charge on annual costs should be factored into the examples of the average income needed to buy these properties. It would also be useful to give an indication as to the types of repair/maintenance covered by the service charge.
- A Member suggested that area newsletters and "Harrow People" could feature details of the schemes being developed in Wealdstone to provide people with positive information on the length of time building works would take and dates of when new developments would be completed. Officers undertook to investigate whether this information could be displayed on the Dominion Housing hoarding, possibly with artists' impressions of the finished buildings.
- RESOLVED:** That the position be noted and that a regular update on housing developments in Wealdstone be submitted to the Panel.

209. **Wealdstone Active Community:**
A representative of Wealdstone Active Community (WAC) updated the Panel on recent activities as follows:-

- To date, £952.79 had been raised for Children in Need.
- Plans for a St George's Day parade through Wealdstone town centre were underway.
- WAC was waiting to find out whether a grant had been awarded which would enable them to publish their newsletter again.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

210. **Wealdstone Centre:**
The Chair advised the Panel that the Wealdstone Centre had recently been launched and that the use of the library had increased significantly.

RESOLVED: That an update report on the use of the Centre be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel.

211. **Date of Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Panel be held at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 23 March 2005.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 9.33 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN
Chair