

**WEALDSTONE REGENERATION ADVISORY
PANEL****20 SEPTEMBER 2005**

Chair:	* Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan	
Councillors:	* Marilyn Ashton * Harrison * Harriss	* Lavingia * Vina Mithani
Co-opted Member:	Councillor Paddy Lyne	
Advisers:	Mr S Addy	– Harrow Association of Disabled People
	* Mr T Arens	– Heriot Catering
	* Mr E Diamond	– North West London Chamber of Commerce
	* Mrs S Hall	– Wealdstone Traders' Association
	* Mrs B Harvey	– Wealdstone Active Community
	* Sergeant A Jackson	– Metropolitan Police
	* Mr M Rughani	– Wealdstone Traders' Association
	* Mrs J Skidmore	– Wealdstone Active Community
	* Sergeant C Walker	– Metropolitan Police
	† Mr A Wood	– Harrow Public Transport Users' Association

* Denotes Member present
† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**246. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.

247. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following interest was declared:

- (i) Councillor Marilyn Ashton declared an interest arising from the fact that she was Vice-Chair of the Development Control Committee.

248. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda item be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
14. Wealdstone Vitality Study and Traffic Study and Update on Byron Park Liaison Meeting	This report was not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated. Members were requested to consider this item, as a matter of urgency.

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

249. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2005, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

Attendance list – That it be recorded that Mr E Diamond, an adviser representing North West London Chamber of Commerce, was present at the meeting.

250. **Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put, or petitions or deputations received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rules 15, 13 and 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution) respectively.

251. **Appointment of Advisers to the Panel for the 2005/2005 Municipal Year:**

RESOLVED: (1) To note that Mr M Garratt had retired, and therefore would no longer be representing Kodak as an Advisor to the Panel;

(2) that the Chair would invite Kodak to nominate an alternative representative to act as an Advisor to the Panel.

252. **Study to Improve the Ellen Webb Drive/Headstone Drive/Cecil Road Junction:**

Officers introduced a report of the Director of Strategy (Urban Living), which provided a progress update on an investigation which was looking into the removal of turning restrictions and the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities at the Headstone Drive/Cecil Road/Ellen Webb Drive junction, and which put forward a proposal that partially met these objectives.

In response to a question from a Member, officers confirmed that Transport for London (TfL) had already been involved in discussions regarding the proposals, and had expressed concern about the possible impact that the redistribution of Cecil Road traffic would have on the Strategic Road Network. Officers advised that the Council would need to seek TfL approval for any proposal and, in doing so, demonstrate the effect that this traffic would have on the surrounding road network.

A Member asked how non-local traffic could be prevented from using local roads as 'cut throughs'. Officers responded that the intention would be to deter such traffic by creating long delays on the Cecil Road route but that, if necessary, other deterrents, such as road closures, could be implemented to ensure that cut throughs were no longer viable and to discourage drivers from using local roads. However, any such measures would also disadvantage local people who used the roads to access their homes and businesses, and so had not been included in the proposal that was before the Panel.

An Advisor stated that drivers regularly turned right illegally at the 'no right turn' junction on Headstone Drive (East), and asked whether this restriction could be removed immediately, while other schemes for controlling the traffic were being considered. Officers advised that their primary aim was to find a solution that met all of the objectives, rather than treating the right turn issue in isolation from other traffic issues. Another Advisor expressed frustration that the proposed scheme seemed complicated and that, in her view, it would be common sense to remove the right turn restriction immediately.

In response to a question from a Member, officers confirmed that there had been one accident in the 'slight' category involving cars illegally turning right at the junction. Officers advised that, before the right turn restriction could be removed, a safety audit would need to be carried out to ascertain whether it would be safe to do so.

RESOLVED: That (1) a reference be made to the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel proposing that a safety audit be carried out to ascertain the feasibility of removing the right turn restriction before other schemes for controlling the traffic were considered;

(2) it be noted that the Panel did not support the option proposed in the officer's report.

253. **Neighbourhood Renewal:**

The Chair introduced a report of the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) which had been considered by Cabinet on 28 July 2005, when Members had approved, in principle, the establishment of a Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA) in Wealdstone. The decision to approve the NRA had received cross-party support.

The Chair reported that Wealdstone would be the first ward in Harrow to benefit from the Neighbourhood Renewal scheme and serve as a pilot for projects in other parts of the Borough. It represented an opportunity for Wealdstone to be looked at as a whole. Consultation with residents and others with an interest in Wealdstone would be

undertaken to identify the views of local people and ensure that any plans were relevant to local needs.

An Advisor to the Panel expressed concern that the designation of Wealdstone as an area of deprivation might deter people or businesses who might otherwise have been interested in coming to the area. The Chair responded that it was important to be realistic so that the needs of the area could be properly identified and benefit from any available assistance such as special funding.

An Advisor to the Panel commented that the officer's report did not mention how new businesses, whether profit-making or charity, would be encouraged to start up in Wealdstone. The Chair reported that it was her understanding that Bone Wells Associates, the consultants who had been appointed to undertake a vitality analysis of Wealdstone Town Centre, intended to consult with trades people and the Chamber of Commerce with a view to addressing the needs of businesses in their final report, which would be available at the end of October 2005. The Advisor suggested that the Council consider introducing incentives, such as reduced rates and better accommodation and training, to attract businesses to the Borough. A Member commented that the Council's Grants Advisory Panel did support Wealdstone by making some grants available to communities moving into the area.

A Member stated that it would be important for the needs of young people to be taken into consideration, and suggested that a survey be undertaken to identify school playing fields that could be made available to young people for sporting activities outside of school hours. The Chair reported that the Extended Schools Programme was investigating how to utilise school facilities outside of teaching time. An Advisor added that, in his opinion, it would also be important to identify leisure facilities for adults in the age range twenty-five to forty.

A Member expressed the view that improving Wealdstone would generate income for the area, and, as private home ownership increased, raise the value of housing stock.

The Chair advised the Panel that the report that had been considered by Cabinet had not intended to be exhaustive with regards to the issues that the NRA would cover, and offered assurance that the detailed studies would follow later.

RESOLVED: To note that the Panel were keen to be involved in progressing the NRA for Wealdstone.

254. **Update on Key Worker Housing in Wealdstone:**

Officers presented an update report on Key Worker Housing in Wealdstone and advised the Panel that, in future, the report would also cover developments that were not key worker housing. Officers also provided the following statistics on residential conversions that had been requested by the Panel at its last meeting:

- During the year 1 September 2004 to 1 September 2005, the Council's Planning Department had received 159 applications. During the same period, 166 applications had been approved.
- 13 of these applications had been within Wealdstone ward, and 15 applications had been approved.

In response to a question from an Advisor regarding affordability of key worker housing, officers stated that the income level required to buy a property varied within the range of £17,000 to £40,000 per annum, and that most properties required an income of approximately £25,000. The Advisor expressed the view that, in his experience, key workers had complained that they were unable to afford key worker housing, and queried whether the policy in this regard was appropriate. Officers stated that the Government definition of key worker housing was very specific and that Harrow had broadened these rules to suit local needs.

A Member commented that it was important to provide a mixture of shared ownership, social, key worker and low cost market housing.

An Advisor asked how long a property would have to remain unsold before it became rental accommodation. Officers responded that such a situation had not arisen yet.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) officers be requested to provide an analysis of the incomes of key workers who had applied for housing at the next meeting.

255. **Byron Park Regeneration Project:**

Officers reported that an event was being held at Byron Park Leisure Centre to show a number of different options and 'mock-ups' of ideas for the regeneration of Byron Park. The event would be held on Wednesday 28 September (4.00 pm to 8.00 pm) and Thursday 29 September (1.00 pm to 8.00 pm). Officers and Ward Councillors would be present to answer questions. After the event, the plans would be moved to Wealdstone Library with a suggestion box available for members of the public to put forward their views. All local residents and businesses in the area surrounding the park would be sent an information leaflet about the event.

Officers tabled a report of the Director of Strategy (Urban Living), which discussed the proposed development of a new 50m Olympic sized swimming pool on the site of the redundant outdoor 50 yard pool adjoining Harrow Leisure Centre. Consultants had been asked to investigate the ability of the site to accommodate a 50m Olympic size pool hall and associated ancillary reception, changing and spectator accommodation, the estimated capital cost of the proposed build and the revenue implication of the development of a 50m pool.

The report concluded that the site was not of an appropriate size to accommodate the pool, and that the proximity to existing residential properties to the west of the site meant that it was unlikely that planning consent would be given for such a large scale development. The report also stated that the revenue and management implications of the proposal would be significantly detrimental to the existing operation of Harrow Leisure Centre.

Members of the Panel expressed concern that the report indicated that planning permission for the development was unlikely to be granted, yet this had not been sought. As the Development Control Committee judged each application on its individual circumstances, the view was expressed that the decision of that Committee should not be pre-empted.

A Member reported that it was his understanding that the Harrow and Wealdstone Swimming Club had been raising capital from trust funds to finance the development and had expressed an interest in managing the new swimming pool, if the development went ahead.

An Advisor stated that it was his understanding from stories reported in the press that the Council intended to build houses on the site. The Chair advised that some press reports might have been misleading since discussions were still underway and that the future of the site had yet to be fully determined.

RESOLVED: That (1) a reference be made to Cabinet expressing the Panel's concern that the report (i) did not appear to have fully taken into consideration the views of interested parties, and (ii) had pre-empted a decision of the Development Control Committee.

[Note: The dates for the event at Byron Park Leisure Centre given at the meeting were incorrect. The correct dates are recorded in these minutes].

256. **Wealdstone Vitality Study and Traffic Study and Update on Byron Park Liaison Meeting:**

The Chair introduced a report of the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) which provided an update on the Wealdstone vitality study and traffic study, and the Byron Park Liaison Meeting.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) it be noted that the consultants' report would be finalised at the end of October 2005.

257. **Wealdstone Active Community:**

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

- 'Blooming Wealdstone' had successfully taken place on 9 July 2005.
- On 8 October 2005, a 'Living History' event would be taking place, and any donations of tape recorders or microphones to assist with this event would be greatly appreciated.

On behalf of WAC, the representative asked the officer from the Traffic Department, present at the meeting, a number of questions, to which an oral response was given.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

258. **Any Other Business:**

At the request of the Chair, the Advisors representing the Metropolitan Police provided an update on recent activities as follows:

- There had been a twenty-eight per cent reduction in the number of disturbance calls made to Police.
- There had been a fifteen per cent reduction in the number of crime allegations.

The Panel agreed that these reductions were a positive indication that the community support initiatives taking place in Wealdstone were having a beneficial effect.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

259. **Date of Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Panel be held at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 15 November 2005.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 8.20 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN
Chair