

**TOWN CENTRE PROJECT PANEL****4 APRIL 2006**

Chair: \* Councillor Burchell

Councillors: \* D Ashton  
\* C Mote\* O'Dell  
\* N Shah

\* Denotes Member present

[Note: Councillors Choudhury and Bill Stephenson also attended this meeting in a participatory role].

**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS****RECOMMENDATION 1 - Harrow on the Hill Station, Progress with Development Partners**

Your Panel received a report of the Director of Strategic Planning asking Members to extend the period of negotiations with developers for a further three months. In addition, developers made a presentation on their proposals for the Harrow on the Hill site in line with the Council's agreed Planning Brief.

The Director of Strategic Planning informed Members that revitalising the transport link interchange and the Town Centre was necessary in order to maintain and improve the position of the Town Centre. He went on further to explain that the presentations were 'work in progress' and further time was needed to develop them. He suggested a three month extension in order to finalise proposals prior to taking a final decision.

A Member endorsed and welcomed the work carried out so far.

**Resolved to RECOMMEND:** (to Cabinet)

That work with the developers for a further three months prior to considering entering into an exclusivity agreement be approved.

**[Reason:** To provide more time to bring forward proposals for the comprehensive development of the Harrow on the Hill site consistent with the adopted planning brief].

**PART II - MINUTES**70. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

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

71. **Declarations of Interest:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that the following interests were declared:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
9. Harrow on the Hill Station, Progress with Development Partners	Councillor Bill Stephenson	Declared a personal interest in that he was a Governor at Harrow College. Accordingly he remained in the room whilst matters were considered.
9. Harrow on the Hill Station, Progress with Development Partners	Councillor N Shah	Declared a personal interest in that he lived in the area. Accordingly he remained in the room whilst matters were considered.

72. **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>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
9. Harrow on the Hill Station, Progress with Development Partners.	The report contained exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) on the grounds that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

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

73. **Minutes:**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2005, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

74. **Petitions:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no petitions had been received at this meeting under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4D of the Constitution).

75. **Public Questions:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that the following public questions had been received:-

**Questioner:** Mr David Summers

**Question:** **Question 1**  
What opportunities have been identified which will exploit the opening of the new Wembley Stadium and what steps have been taken to take advantage of these opportunities?

**Question 2**  
What opportunities related to the 2012 London Olympics have been identified to date and what steps are being taken to identify additional opportunities?

**Question 3**  
Recognising that heights of structures in and around Harrow Town Centre (and indeed elsewhere in the Borough) are a contentious issue, what precise height constraints have been given to prospective Town Centre development partners? If none, what criteria will be used to determine if a proposed structure is "too high"?

[Notes: (1) The Chair indicated that the three public questions had been received but had not been submitted in accordance with Executive Procedure Rules 15.3 and 15.4. He advised that the public questioner would, however, be provided with an oral response to Question 3 and a written response to Questions 1 and 2;

(2) under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 15.4 the questioner was allowed a supplementary question, which he declined].

76. **Retail Capacity Study:**

The Panel considered a report of the Director of Strategic Planning, which asked Members to note the response of the 2006 Harrow Retail Study results and instruct officers to report back to a future meeting on proposals to accommodate further retail development in Harrow Town Centre.

An officer reported that the Council had commissioned Donaldsons to carry out the retail capacity study which included a number of elements such as a retail "health check", quantitative and qualitative assessments for food and non-food space, an on-street shopper survey, a household survey of local shopping patterns, and an assessment of potential development sites. It was noted that Harrow had less retail floor space compared to other Metropolitan Centres such as Brent Cross and Watford, which attracted the higher spend from consumers. In addition the Town Centre catered mainly for the lower market range of customer and lacked the more up-market shops and brands thereby restricting its attraction.

A Member sought clarification on the impact of development at Wembley. In response the Panel was informed that any major development would impact on neighbouring boroughs, and that Harrow needed to promote growth and improvement in order to accommodate ever-changing needs and demands.

It was explained that other retail centres had far more of a selection in terms of shops and department stores and that Harrow needed to be distinguished from its competitors. Members were advised that the Greenhill Way car park, together with the out of date Debenhams building and the former Littlewoods site, had the potential to accommodate a significant increase in retail floor space, and it was noted that the study had recommended that the Council open negotiations with adjoining landowners to promote a joint development of the site.

Another potential site was off Havelock Place, which was insufficient to accommodate the forecast growth in retail, but should the links to College Road and St Anns Road transpire, this was deemed suitable for redevelopment. The officer also reported that the Gayton Road library and car park had been identified as suitable for food or non-food premises, although being in a residential area, it was highlighted that this proposal would contravene the Harrow Unitary Development Plan (HUDP). Officers were not recommending this option. A Member commented that a café culture and entertainment venues ought to be encouraged to attract a diverse range of people.

A Member agreed that standing still was not an option as competition was fierce, and with the key sites available, and in consultation with stakeholders, wholeheartedly welcomed the opportunity to masterplan new shopping development in Harrow town centre.

**RESOLVED:** That (1) the Harrow Retail Study 2006 be noted; and

(2) officers report back to a future meeting on the proposals for accommodating further retail development in Harrow Town Centre.

77. **Harrow on the Hill Station. Progress with Development Partners:**  
(See Recommendation 1 above).

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.48 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH BURCHELL  
Chair