

## TOWN CENTRE AND MAJOR PROJECTS PANEL

18 SEPTEMBER 2007

Chairman:	* Councillor Marilyn Ashton	
Councillors:	* David Ashton	* Phillip O'Dell
	* Susan Hall	* Bill Stephenson (1)
	* Chris Mote	
Advisers (non-voting):	* Mr Abe Hayeem	– Canons Park Residents' Association
	* Mr David Summers	– Harrow Agenda 21
	* Mrs J Verden	– Harrow Heritage Trust
	† Mr A Wood	– Harrow Public Transport Users' Association

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

**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS****RECOMMENDATION 1 - Public Realm and Access Strategy**

An officer introduced the report of the Director of Planning, Development and Enterprise, which summarised the initial results of the consultation on the Strategy and outlined the next stages in taking the project forward. He identified the key points, details of which were set out in the report.

The Panel was informed that:-

- the results of the consultation were encouraging and that the issue of the design “palette” and provision of samples could be addressed at the outline design stage;
- bids had been submitted to Transport for London (TfL) and that, in the event that TfL did not support these, a report would be submitted to Members with a view to reviewing the Council's Capital Programme;
- the report was seeking endorsement of the draft Strategy for consultation with key stakeholders and, thereafter, the final Strategy would be submitted to the Panel and the Cabinet for approval;
- discussions with Accord MP, who would be involved in the implementation of the project were underway.

The Panel also received a presentation from Urban Initiatives (UI), a consultant design team, appointed by the Council to prepare a Public Realm Strategy for Harrow Town Centre, in this regard. The representative from UI outlined the timescales for the delivery of the three highest priority schemes over a 3-year period. It was intended to progress to an outline design for St Ann's Road and to review the situation when the decisions on the bids submitted to TfL were known. A further report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel scheduled to be held on 19 November 2007, which would also set out maintenance costs as requested by the Panel.

The Vice-Chairman informed the Panel that the issue of maintenance was being addressed and that negotiations were underway with a view to encouraging sponsorship. Climate change needed to be considered and it was intended to ensure that the infrastructure installed was manageable and the design vision was achieved.

Some Members and advisers to the Panel made the following comments/suggestions:-

- there was a need to test the ‘palettes’ sooner rather than later and that this could be done at no cost to the Council;
- the impact of the works on businesses needed to be taken into account. The Director stated that the works would be project managed and effective communication with businesses was essential;
- a seamless interface and a de-cluttered Town Centre were essential;

- the draft Urban Design Framework, Public Realm Strategy & Access Study needed reviewing and errors corrected when the final document was produced. It was important that reference to the proposed Business Improvement District was made in the document. There was also a need to state how the schemes would address the personal accident data;
- planting of greenery and the siting of seating areas needed careful consideration. It was noted that UI would investigate the provision of water storage systems at a later time;
- the paragraph on heights of buildings needed refreshing and it was noted that UI would discuss this matter with planning officers;
- tall buildings would cast shadows and encourage graffiti.

Members commented on the boundary of the Town Centre, as set out on page 18 of the document, and noted that the boundary was the same as in the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

The Director of Planning, Development and Enterprise confirmed the Council's aspirations for Havelock Place and its intention to create a through route from St Ann's Road to College Road. A coherent development, which incorporated the existing service yard, was possible and discussions with the owners of the St Ann's Centre were underway. This proposal would not deter from improvements to the public realm being carried out in the interim.

Members were in agreement that a demonstration project was beneficial before phase 1 – work to St Ann's Road - of the project commenced. The Chairman asked UI to ascertain if this was feasible and to identify the costs of the demonstration first. The alternative was to visit other Town Centres in order to see how surfaces had 'weathered' over time.

Officers suggested that any further comments on the Urban Design Framework, Public Realm Strategy and Access Strategy be sent to them directly. The Chairman and the Director outlined the Council's desire to make progress on the Strategy and that doing 'nothing' was not on the Council's agenda. The Strategy presented a real opportunity to rejuvenate a 'tired' Town Centre and engage with businesses whilst ensuring attention to detail.

**Resolved to RECOMMEND:** (to the Portfolio Holder)

That (1) the initial results of public consultation on the draft Public Realm and Access Strategy for Harrow Town Centre having been considered be noted;

(2) the draft strategy be endorsed for further consultation with key stakeholders;

(3) the outline design for the concept schemes for St Ann's Road and Greenhill Way, be progressed as set out in the delivery strategy described in the officer report;

(4) a demonstration project be considered by UI, as set out in the preamble above.

**Reason for Recommendation:** To note the response to public consultation and move towards the next stages in the preparation of the Public Realm and Access Strategy for Harrow Town Centre.

**RECOMMENDATION 2 - Land at Harrow on the Hill Station and Harrow College**

The Director of Planning, Development and Enterprise introduced the report, which set out the latest position on proposals for development around Harrow on the Hill Station and Harrow College following a presentation to the Mayor of London and a meeting with the Transport Commissioner. He also shared the presentation made to the Mayor of London with Panel Members and advisers.

During the presentation, the Director made the following key points:-

- both options had been presented in detail to the Mayor of London, as requested by the Panel at its last meeting;
- Harrow College, Dandara and the Council were working jointly;

- there was no prospect of Metronet funding being released to help finance the relocation of Harrow on the Hill Station for the foreseeable future;
- planning applications from Dandara and Harrow College were expected in the New Year;
- Harrow bus station would be replaced with an increased capacity and approaches to the station would be improved;
- access for people with disabilities from the south side of the railway would be investigated. Whilst this was not an ideal solution, it might go some way towards making the station fully accessible;
- a new foot bridge would be built. The Council was mindful that the bridge would have to be strategically placed taking into account any future developments in the area;

In response to concerns from some advisers about the heights of buildings that might be proposed around the station, the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Director stated that Harrow Town Centre was facing increased competition from surrounding Town Centres and that a significant amount of development around the station would be required to fund public transport improvements. A balance needed to be achieved in order to ensure that a new and viable Town Centre was built, that it was competitive, vibrant and attractive. Planning applications would have to be considered on their own merit and that views of Harrow on the Hill had evolved over time and would continue to do so.

The Director also stated that the Council was under increasing pressure to achieve its housing targets and that it was inevitable that high-density developments would appear in the Town Centre. This would also help enhance the viability of the Town Centre.

**Resolved to RECOMMEND:** (to the Portfolio Holder)

That (1) the approach to improving public transport facilities at Harrow on the Hill Station be endorsed;

(2) the progress in bringing forward proposals for the development of Harrow College and Dandara sites be noted.

**Reason for Recommendation:** To note the presentation made to the Mayor of London and bring forward proposals for the development of Harrow College and Dandara sites.

(See also Minute 55).

## **PART II - MINUTES**

### 54. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

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

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Navin Shah

Councillor Bill Stephenson

### 55. **Declarations of Interest:**

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

- Agenda Item 9 – Land at Harrow on the Hill Station and Harrow College  
Councillor Chris Mote declared a personal interest in that he knew the planning consultant for Dandara, owners of the site at 51 College Road (Old Post Office site).
- Agenda Item 10 – Priorities and progress 2007 – Update  
Councillors Marilyn Ashton and David Ashton declared a personal interest in that they lived next to Bentley Priory. Councillor Marilyn Ashton clarified that their interests were personal as no decision was required.

Accordingly, they would remain in the room whilst the matters were considered and voted or noted, as appropriate.

56. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

**RESOLVED:** That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following appendix 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>
8. Public Realm and Access Strategy - Appendix 2	Appendix 2 was not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated as it was awaited from the consultants. Members were requested to consider Appendix 2 together with the report in order to make an informed decision.

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

57. **Minutes:**

**RESOLVED:** That, subject to the following amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2007, be taken as read and signed as a correct record:

- (i) Minute 42, resolution (2), replace '30 March 2007' with '13 March 2007';
- (ii) Minute 52, paragraph 2 to read: "The Director reported that Quintain had sold its leasehold interest in 79 College Road and that the freehold was retained by Transport for London (TfL). As a result, ...".

58. **Petitions:**

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

59. **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 16 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

60. **Deputations:**

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

61. **Public Realm and Access Strategy:**

(See Recommendation 1).

62. **Land at Harrow on the Hill station and Harrow College:**

(See Recommendation 2).

63. **Priorities and Progress 2007 – Update:**

Members considered the report of the Director of Planning, Development and Enterprise, which set out the latest position on strategic projects. He responded to questions as set out below:-

**Headstone Manor**

A Councillor expressed concern that the Headstone Manor project had not been included in the report. In response, the Chairman stated that this was unfortunate and asked the Director of Planning, Development and Enterprise to provide a briefing note to all members of the Panel and ensure that the item was included in future reports to the Panel.

**Sites in Gayton Road**

The Director stated that the design brief was not yet available for public consumption and that he would report back on this matter to the next meeting of the Panel and thereafter to the Cabinet in November 2007. A re-appraisal of the site was continuing. An adviser suggested that the proposals should be opened up to competition.

Travis Perkins Site, Pinner Road

An officer reported that Urban Initiatives had met with the owners of the site and discussions on how the site could be linked to the Town Centre development were continuing.

Kodak

The Director stated that he had no additional information to add to his written report.

Bentley Priory

An adviser made a number of comments in relation to this site and the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). He referred to a consultation statement and was concerned about the lack of comment in relation to an ecology centre on this site. He also sought clarification on the footprint of the site and that available for development, which needed to be clarified in the SPD.

The Chairman stated that because of her interest she would not comment but explained that it was within the remit of the Council's Local Development Framework Panel to consider the SPD and that the public could make representations at the meeting within the confines of the Council's Constitution. She stated that she would not be chairing the meeting because of her interest.

**RESOLVED:** That the report and comments be noted.

**Reason:** To note the latest position on a range of strategic projects in the borough.

(See also Minute 55).

64. **Any Other Urgent Business:**

Project and Programme Management

An adviser sought feedback on the Price Waterhouse Coopers report. The Director of Planning, Development and Enterprise stated that he had recently received the final copy of the report, the results of which would be reported to a future meeting.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.47 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARILYN ASHTON  
Chairman