

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PANEL MINUTES

9 NOVEMBER 2016

Chair: * Councillor Keith Ferry

Councillors: * Sue Anderson * Barry Macleod-Cullinane
* Stephen Greek † Varsha Parmar
* Susan Hall * Sachin Shah

* Denotes Member present

† Denotes apologies received

72. Attendance by Reserve Members

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

73. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interest was declared:

Agenda Item 8 – Strategy for Major Development in Harrow, 9.Major Projects Update

Councillor Susan Hall declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she owned a business in Wealdstone. If at any point it became a pecuniary interest she would leave the meeting.

74. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2016, be taken as read and signed as a correct record subject to the insertion of 'A Member stated that the housing zone bid documents encouraged developers to intensify development.' in minute 69.

75. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

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

RESOLVED ITEMS

76. Vaughan Road Regeneration Scheme

The Panel received a presentation from the Harrow Regeneration Team and Adam Khan Architects, who had been appointed by the Team in June, on the Vaughan Road Regeneration Scheme.

The development site, currently a Council owned car park, was situated between the urban district and the more residential suburban area and due to the very good transport links was considered in principle to be a car free development. The initial thoughts were to improve the existing cycling and pedestrian routes between West Harrow and the Town Centre, improve passive surveillance and create a green area. Plans included a distinctive courtyard with three blocks of varying height to work with the local context providing 3 x 3 bedroom with wheelchair access, 14 x 1 bedroom and 15 x 2 bedroom accommodation. The tenure of private rented and intermediate tenure would be confirmed on completion of the viability assessment. There would be no residential accommodation on the ground floor which would be for workspace and community use.

A number of public consultation events had been undertaken, which included a specific community meeting on transport and parking, and the responses made were outlined. Measures as a result of the feedback included the removal of the left turn restriction into Vaughan Road from Bessborough Road enabling additional parking spaces in place of double yellow lines, adjustment of the footprint to increase the notional green, and provision of an additional three disabled and three resident car parking spaces.

In response to questions from Members regarding the level of parking provision, it was stated that:

- the additional on street parking comprised seven or eight spaces together with six on site spaces including three disabled spaces;
- the PTAL rating and access to public transport enabled car free development and as such the occupants would be unable to apply for a parking permit in the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). The West Harrow census return indicated that the 70% overall car ownership reduced to 37% for those in rented accommodation. A 2015 Council survey which showed the car park to be underutilised had been confirmed by two subsequent surveys despite the closure of the Gayton Road car park. Officers were satisfied that there was sufficient alternative provision but were unable to control the car ownership of occupants;

- spaces were available in the Vaughan Road CPZ in the evenings and at weekends. A request had been received from residents for an extension of the CPZ from the current two hours a day to further discourage new residents.

A Member expressed concern that car parking problems would be exacerbated by the College Road development and indicated that the occupants of the Morrisons development used the Vaughan Road car park. There would be displacement to the area within the CPZ that did not have controlled parking. If the bollard to prevent a left turn was removed drivers would drop off passengers in Vaughan Road.

Reference was made to a 2015 travel survey that indicated that the Queens House car park was used to no more than 20% capacity. The Panel was informed that an improvement in the general condition of the car park would increase the usage.

The Panel was informed of the following:

- the regeneration team was developing the brief for the ground level use which was anticipated to be office type, flexible workspace and community use in the north and evening/community use for the flexible area to the south;
- the concern regarding demand for the ground floor use due to previous experience at Eastcroft and empty office blocks elsewhere in Harrow was not entirely comparable as Eastcroft had not had sufficient space and the disproportionate residential element had discouraged prospective tenants. With the right brief, there was demand from small businesses, particularly if the price, location and rent were right. The premises would be clearly targeted as employment space and not for major employers. It was noted that the Council's research department had calculated that 40,000 sqm of office space had been lost due to residential conversions and office rates in the Town Centre had increased by 10%;
- concern that a lower rent would result in tenants relocating from other office space which would then become empty and converted to residential was noted but the development would target start up businesses and demand would be high as positioned next to the underpass. The selection criteria would ensure that consideration would be given to businesses currently based in bedrooms rather than those already in office space and which would spend locally.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

77. Strategy for Major Development in Harrow

The Panel received a report regarding the strategy, objectives and aims of the Council in dealing with and developing strategic sites within the Borough. The officer introduced the report stating that the main focus was in the Opportunity

Area with the provision of in excess of 5000 homes over a ten year period and a significant increase in workspace.

Members made the following comments:

- to make a charge for tables and chairs outside premises was not business friendly and did not encourage business development;
- the possibility of the inclusion of targets for local suppliers in tenders could increase costs for new businesses;
- in the absence of consistent typologies there was no vision of what Harrow would look like;
- the strategy needed to consider the requirements of 'empty nesters';
- a car parking strategy was mentioned but development of car parks resulted in a loss of parking for current users. The effect on car parking of all the current development and potential development and on the capacity of roads and junctions should be documented;

A Member reported on a review undertaken for the London Assembly which indicated that a number of comparable boroughs to Harrow had adopted higher parking ratios of a least one car parking space per unit. The boroughs had not reduced the parking aspirations in the stage 2 response and this had not been challenged by Transport for London (TfL).

A Member who both represented and lived in Harrow Town Centre reported her experience that there was a lot less car ownership in the area and there were excellent transport routes to work. Car parking encouraged people to drive with the resultant health conditions.

In response to questions the officers reported that:

- the creation of 3000 new jobs would arise from new workspace, development of the Kodak site and retail. Small businesses moving from bedrooms would employ only one person. It was agreed that information on the location of 3000 new jobs would be circulated to the Panel.
- detailed work had been undertaken with regard to the town centre shopping centre but this was not the subject of the report which concerned the strategy for major development;
- the supply of 5500 homes was to implement the strategy. As it was not possible, to expand in order to reduce congestion, officers had to identify efficiencies. The town centre parking strategy provided a clear view of the required capacity. Scatter of sites in different contexts and not one size affects all;
- a robust approach to materials was required with bricks playing a major role being as the best lasting and local supply;

- downsizing requirements had been taken into account and included lifts and views;
- options of car clubs and car share and a car pool for the Council workforce.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) a report be submitted to the next meeting on the town centre, night time economy and how the 3000 new jobs would be created.

78. Major Projects Update

The Divisional Director of Planning and Regeneration updated the Panel on the major development projects in Harrow which provided summary data on each scheme.

In response to a question, it was reported that Barretts were delivering the development at 51 College Road on behalf of Hyde and were working with the original architects and plans.

With regard to Harrow Arts Centre, it was noted that there were currently no plans for development due to Cultura being unable to raise sufficient capital, the Council hoped to continue to run it although too early to say. The Regeneration Team was not considering the site.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the Council had the capacity to manage the listed developments, the list was a useful aide memoir as there was so much going on. It was noted that the Chair, as Portfolio Holder, would receive an invitation to the scrutiny review on regeneration business case.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

79. Future Topics and Presentations

RESOLVED: That reports be submitted to the next meeting on:

1. Redevelopment of the current Civic Centre Site (Poets Corner)
2. Linked Up Vision for Harrow Town Centre.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.45 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH FERRY
Chair