

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PANEL MINUTES

27 FEBRUARY 2019

Chair: * Councillor Keith Ferry

Councillors: * Ghazanfar Ali * Stephen Greek
* Marilyn Ashton * Paul Osborn
* Simon Brown (2) * Varsha Parmar

* Denotes Member present
(2) Denote category of Reserve Members

13. Attendance by Reserve Members

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

Ordinary Member

Councillor David Perry

Reserve Member

Councillor Simon Brown

14. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members.

15. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2018 & the minutes of the Special meeting held on 7 January 2019 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

16. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that 2 public questions were received and responded to as set out below:

Public Question 1

Questioner: John Cobb

Asked of: Councillor Keith Ferry, Chair of the Major Developments Panel

Question: What is the Council's position and what representations have been made regarding the development of greenbelt land both east and west of Oxhey Lane right up to the London Borough of Harrow boundary by Three Rivers Council as part of their 20 year proposals for new residential development areas?

Chair's Response: Three Rivers District Council undertook an informal consultation at the end of last year on sites that had been put forward by land owners and development for consideration for residential development. As the foreword to the consultation document notes: 'None of the sites have been agreed or indeed discussed by Councillors. No sites have been ruled in or ruled out'.

The two sites to the west of Oxhey Lane were previously considered but not allocated for development in the current Three Rivers Local Plan. The sites to the east of Oxhey Lane have more recently been put forward in response to a 'call for sites' by Three Rivers' as part of preparing their new Local Plan.

All of these sites are located in Green Belt, for which the National Planning Policy Framework indicates there is a strong presumption against inappropriate development. Proposals for these sites to be allocated for residential purposes as part of the new Local Plan would need to be fully evidenced and justified by Three Rivers District Council and subject to independent examination. At present Three Rivers District Council have not indicated whether the sites will be taken forward for potential residential development; this will become evident when Three Rivers' publishes its draft Local Plan later this year.

Consequently Harrow does not have a position on these sites other than to note the presumption against development on Green Belt and that any changes in Green Belt boundaries require exceptional circumstances that are fully evidenced and justified. We will review any proposals and supporting evidence and justification when available.

Public Question 2

Questioner: David Summers

Asked of: Councillor Keith Ferry, Chair of the Major Developments Panel

Question: The recent second public exhibition of the so-called step free access proposals for the redevelopment of the Harrow-on-the-Hill station area confirmed that it is planned to have a lift at both the north and south entrances - the latter subject to funding. There would be no escalators from street level to concourse level. The current steps are steep and non-compliant. There was no consistency in response to the question - will the existing north and south steps be replaced. There also appears to be no direct pedestrian access to the new bus station without crossing a bus lane and no direct pedestrian access to St. Ann's Centre without descending to street level and crossing College Road. This is not a 21st Century development.

Will the Council insist that the existing north and south concourse steps be replaced in the absence of escalators, an independent review is carried out to determine the adequacy of the lifts at all times, and ensure that pedestrians are segregated from all traffic?

Chair's Response:

With regards to the concourse steps, these are currently proposed to remain as existing on the northern side; however there are ongoing design discussions with regard to the southern side steps and the feasibility of providing this as part of the redevelopment. The only works proposed to the station is for the step free access which is to be funded through the redevelopment. There are no proposals to make any changes to the underground station internally itself. However Officers are working with the design team to ensure the environment leading to the station on both the north and south is improved in terms of its street presence and pedestrian environment.

The lifts to be installed would be designed to be suitable as a passenger lifts adequate to serve the development. However, the technical specification of such would remain outside of the remit of planning legislation; the only requirement would be to ensure that the dimensions of such meet the minimum requirements set out in the Council's Access for All guidance, which will be considered as part of any formal planning application.

Direct access to the bus station from the underground station is not feasible due to the level changes and the need to ensure that buses are able to turnaround in the direction of travel. However, through appropriate layout and landscaping, sufficient safeguards would be incorporated to ensure that adequate pedestrian crossings are incorporated within the design. Direct access to St Anns Centre would not be feasible due to a number of reasons, specifically, the level changes between the buildings, the different land ownerships, funding of such and maintaining appropriate vehicle/ bus access along College Road.

17. Petitions & Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that none were received.

RESOLVED ITEMS

18. Tesco, Station Road, Harrow

The Panel received a presentation by Notting Hill Genesis, architects Conran and Partners, and planning consultants, Rolfe Judd, regarding the proposed re-development of the Tesco site on Station Road, Harrow.

Following the presentation, the presenters responded to the Panel's questions and comments as follows:

- the need for family housing had been factored into the plans and would be provided, although the siting of these had yet to be decided. The units would be built to London Plan standards, would be affordable and would include access to private amenity space;
- the developers and architects had carefully studied the previously refused Tesco scheme and had taken on board the reasons for refusal and Members comments regarding the scheme;
- some of the proposed blocks would be up to six or seven stories high with others up to fourteen stories in height. This would allow the developers to maximise on the site possibilities and yet remain sympathetic to the locality in terms of design;
- there was a massing and site strategy as well as a robust contemporary architectural style which would reflect the emerging character of Harrow and along Station Road/within Harrow town centre;
- parking at the Tesco site would be reduced by one third. The site was located in a high PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level) and residents' parking would be allocated at between 10-23%. The developers were in ongoing discussions with the planning and highways authorities regarding the matter;
- a transport consultant had been engaged and a transport assessment would be undertaken to ensure that the correct levels of parking were achieved.

Members urged the developers to take the following comments on board with regard to the proposed development:

- height and massing of the proposed development should not be excessive. The construction of tall buildings at the site should not make residents in the area feel closed in as this may lead to residents objecting to the plans. It was crucial to bear in mind the already constrained and busy nature of the site;
- the development should be sympathetic to the local vernacular and its design should complement what was already there;

- reducing parking by a third would cause difficulties for shoppers as the Tesco car park was often full at key times of the week and throughout the year;
- the developer for the Tesco site and the architects for the Safari Cinema development should collaborate to ensure that the two developments were sympathetic to each other. Specifically, their frontages should be unified in character and their design and should complement each other.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

19. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - proposed amendments to Neighbourhood CIL allocations process within the Harrow and Wealdstone Opportunity Area

The Panel received a report of the Interim Chief Planning Officer which set out a change to the process of allocating the 'neighbourhood portion' of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts within the Harrow and Wealdstone Opportunity Area, which had been agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 7 December 2017.

Following questions and comments from Members, officers advised that:

- he did not have to hand a list of all ongoing projects that were being proposed to be funded by CIL monies. He would circulate the information to Members after the meeting;
- the CIL process was administered by the Community Engagement Team. Using CIL funds across Ward boundaries was not precluded, and neighbouring Ward Councillors had the option of entering into informal agreements;
- he would circulate the guidance information and the form used to bid for these funds to Members after the meeting;
- the Borough CIL monies were included as part of the Council's overall annual Capital Programme. There was an assessment process, and a review of both existing and proposed Capital Programme projects that could potentially be funded by CIL.

A Member proposed that the Process be reviewed in a year's time. This was agreed by all the Members of the Panel.

The Chair stated that he would ensure that all 12 Ward Councillors would have an opportunity to provide their feedback regarding the Process before the next Cabinet meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

20. Update on Various Projects

The Panel received an update on the major development projects in Harrow.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

21. Future Topics and Presentations

RESOLVED: That Members would advise the Interim Chief Planning Officer of any suggestions for future topics and presentations.

22. Any Other Urgent Business

RESOLVED: To note that all future meetings of the Panel would have a 6.30 pm start time.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 7.40 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH FERRY
Chair