

Meeting:	Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel
Date:	25 April 2005
Subject:	Wealdstone Town Centre
Responsible Officer:	Anna Robinson, Tel 0208 4209442
Portfolio Holder:	Keith Burchell
Key Decision:	No

### **Reason for report**

Members of the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel have raised concerns for some considerable time about the situation in relation to the vitality of Wealdstone High Street and have made proposals for changes to road layouts, accessibility, parking and other matters that impact on the local environment.

At the January meeting of the Panel it was agreed that a recommendation be made to the relevant portfolio holder for a Vitality study to be undertaken of Wealdstone High Street in order to inform a regeneration strategy for the area. Approval has now been obtained and a budget established for this work.

This report provides an update on the latest position.

### **Vitality Study**

A brief has been drawn up for the Vitality study and, in accordance with Harrow's Procurement policy a number of Consultants have been asked to make written, costed proposals. The shortlisted Consultants will be interviewed by the WRAP selection panel of Councillor Nolan, Councillor Harriss, Mrs Harvey, Miss Hall and Mr Wood in early May.

### **Transport Issues**

An issue of ongoing concern to WRAP members is the importance of carrying out impact assessments in relation to proposed traffic movement controls and road alterations.

Over recent months a number of proposals have been debated, some of which are being taken forward, such as improvements to the junction of Headstone Drive/ Ellen Webb Way. The main transport and traffic proposals now under consideration number 22 and include:

- Increased short term parking. Evaluation of potential for more on-street bays in Headstone Drive by removal of double yellow lines near post office.
- Improvements to junction Headstone Drive/Cecil Road/Ellen Web way to improve traffic flow, but specifically, to allow car visitors travelling from Kodak vicinity to return direct without having to travel the wrong way along the length of Ellen Web Way to find somewhere beyond Ellen WW's junction with the High Street to make their return journey westwards.
- Examine proposals for introduction of disabled parking bays at Iceland/Woolworths end of High Street
- Promotion of Peel House Multi Storey Car Park. Following the introduction of the first hour free and the loss of surface parking in Grant Road and Canning Road to residential development, develop other promotions to benefit traders & shoppers.
- Enforcement of highway obstruction by traders.
- Improve Peel Road pedestrianised section and make it more user friendly with low level planting and reduced height walls.
- Better car park signage to Peel Road Multi Storey to include 'free hour'.
- Planters to be replaced in the High Street and attractive street furniture, planting baskets etc to be installed.
- Traffic travelling south be allowed to turn right at the Bridge (road parallel to the rail station) onto George Gange Way.
- Traffic to be allowed right turns either way at the junction of the High Street with Ellen Web Way/Masons Avenue just north of the railway station.
- Request for traffic to be allowed in one direction (northwards) up the High Street.
- Request for traffic to be re-introduced to Headstone drive to cross the High Street and turn left (south) or go direct to Peel Multi Storey.
- Very short-term parking to be introduced to one side of High Street.
- Transport proposal to introduce four disabled bays at rear of Wealdstone Centre questioned - Members feel the need is for disabled bays at the north end of the High Street to access Iceland, Boots, Woolworths.
- Safety assessment to be carried out to determine whether pedestrian guard rails in central retail area can be removed
- Re-introduce two way traffic into Gladstone Way Access to Peel House MSCP and improve access to surface parking off Gladstone Way
- Goods vehicles leaving Masons Avenue turn left onto the Bridge at the junction Masons Ave with High Street and drag their rear wheels over the footpath as the turn radius is too tight. Could the footpath/road highway line be realigned?
- Goods vehicles at the junction of the Bridge and George Gange Way that wish to turn left onto George Gange Way to travel north find the turn hard to negotiate as the radius is too tight and they repeatedly damage the pedestrian guard rail. Could the turn radius be made less sharp?
- Introduce a yellow box junction and right turn lane buses only travelling south into the High Street in front of Woolworths to better align buses queuing to turn right which can block traffic as they wait to make the Turn.
- Synchronise the lights at the junction mentioned in point 25 above with the lights at Lockett Road to smooth out traffic flow in this section of the High Street.
- Improve the shopping experience by removing all the 'control' signs, rusty unattractive barriers, etc and replace with themed signage, place names etc, that create a Wealdstone identity
- Introduce coloured pedestrian trail with crossing point from the streets on the Byron Park side of George Gange Way to the High Street encourage pedestrian footfall

This extensive list of proposals requires a dedicated resource, which cannot be provided by the transportation department, due to commitments on the 2005/6 capital programme that must be delivered in this year. The work required includes expert evaluation of the proposals, impact assessments, cost estimates, and, finally prioritisation of projects. Funding is unlikely to be available for all of the above projects.

Rather than continue in a piecemeal fashion it is intended to give responsibility for this work to an outsourced transport consultant who will report back to an agreed timescale on the range of potential projects. WRAP will be kept fully informed of progress on this matter.

### **Finance Observations**

All consultants should be appointed in accordance with the Council's approved procurement protocols and funded from approved budgets.

### **Legal Observations**

There are no legal observations at this stage.