

Town centre forum update 30th April 2013

from Harrow town centre management team

Lowlands Rec: Landscape work started March 2013 and a large purple hoarding now encloses the site. Work has temporarily come to a halt while a variation to landscape planning approval is agreed. The trees required for the site have been paid for and lifted, and they are now growing at a nursery in containerised form, with tree planting taking place from November and the completion of the project expected by December.

The final design of the building is being evolved and a pre-application submission should be submitted to planning this week. If project board approval is then forthcoming on 9th May, a final planning application could be submitted on May 15th. With tenders required, this implies the building of the building probably starting in October.

St Ann's Road public realm improvements: The work programme includes new paving along the length of St Ann's Road, a better crossing at Havelock Place, new lighting and street furniture. Construction work began in March 2013 with new paving. This work between the Katie statue and Havelock Place will be continuing over the next few weeks. The police kiosk outside BHS has been removed making for great improvements to the sight lines along St Ann's Road. New tree pits have been created and temporarily filled with bitmac, until trees are planted in mid November.

Work has progressed well despite the poor weather in March and paving is complete up to the shop fronts on the South side. Many businesses have given positive feedback on the work. New lighting columns are replacing the old ones down the entire length of St Ann's Road, pending installation of the catenary lighting scheme.

Work began on Havelock Place yesterday (29th April). Havelock Place will remain open throughout so as not to affect business deliveries. However, there will be traffic controls to protect the workforce and the public.

Outside St Ann's shopping centre, investigative work has been undertaken to provide information for a new canopy design, which is being worked up for a planning application by St Ann's architects. The architect design for a sloping ramp to replace the existing steps has been examined by Harrow Association for the Disabled and some final modifications are being made before construction.

The Harrow town centre team is providing regular updates for businesses, including advance notification of work taking place immediately in front of particular premises. Work in front of entrances to business premises is being done outside of business hours wherever possible to minimise disruption.

Car Park Indicator Signs

Initial design has been provided and quotations are being sought for manufacture and installation. One quote received, waiting on others to comply with financial regulations.

Legible London signs

Fabrication of the signs started in April. The schedule of signs comprises 10 finger posts and 6 midiliths/monoliths. The finger post on Station Approach should refer to Harrow on the Hill.

Bespoke signs

Selection of panel visuals for the bespoke sign is complete and manufacture is being undertaken. We are in discussion with St George's centre about installing the sign on their wall in Kymberley Road. Completion by Christmas 2013.

Events

Events run in the town centre comprised a three-day continental market in February and a St Patrick's celebration in March, which attracted some good press coverage. We are now planning two market visits with a new operator as well as other events during summer and autumn.

Street activities and nuisances:

a) Charities

A draft Site Management Agreement has been offered by the PFRA, the umbrella body for face-to-face charity organisations. The agreement proposes 5 fundraisers on 3 days per week. It needs additional clauses to include advance notice of visits, labelling of bags, etc.

b) Buskers

We are drafting a proposal for a busking scheme, in line with the provision for licensing buskers under the London Local Authorities Act 2000.

c) Pigeons

Businesses and members of the public have commented on the pigeons as we have delivered our newsletters. The key is to stop people feeding them, which seems to take place several times each day by members of the public. We are looking at introducing signs and working with street cleaners and enforcement officers to target perpetrators.

Business Improvement District (BID) development: The BID consultant appointment has been extended to the BID vote due at the end of November. Work is continuing in line with the planned program and a consultation document has been finalised for discussion with businesses during April to July, and further refinement of the BID proposal.

A BID Development group has been identified, including the two shopping centres, Debenhams, WHSmith and Brian Cox and an independent, and a meeting will be held shortly.

The HA1BID.CO.UK website is now live.

Finance

The first year of the Outer London Fund round 2 programme was completed at the end of March. From the revenue funding award of £201,500 the town centre team achieved a spend of £199,120 or 99% against target. Against the capital award of £455,300 the team achieved spend of £433,450 or 95% of target, but, as the remaining funds were allowed to be carried forward, effectively 100% of funding was drawn down from the GLA.

Lyon Road – St John's Road Public Square

A potentially exciting small piece of public realm development in prospect, funded largely by £450k of s106 from the Lyon Road residential-led development. The project start date is uncertain with at least 30 months remaining on the planning permission.