

**REPORT FOR: MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PANEL**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2014
<b>Subject:</b>	Strategic Development Sites: Update
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Caroline Bruce, Corporate Director for Environment & Enterprise
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Stephen Greek, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration.
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	No
<b>Enclosures:</b>	None

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report provides an overview of progress on the delivery of key strategic development sites across Harrow and a general update on other planning issues affecting, or likely to affect, the management of development within the Borough.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Panel:

**Note** the progress being made on the delivery of development proposals on key strategic sites set out in the Council's Local Plan.

**Reason: (For recommendation)**

To update the Panel on the progress made in the delivery of key strategic site

allocations within the Local Plan, as part of the Council's commitment within the Regeneration Strategy to meeting its housing and jobs targets and supporting growth.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Since the date of the last MDP meeting in November 2013, the Borough has seen considerable progress made on the development of a number of key sites and projects spread across the Borough. This report seeks to provide a summary of this progress, and seeks to draw member's attention to a number of important emerging issues that the Council will face in the future.

### **Progress Update**

#### **2.0 Strategic Sites**

2.1 Lyon House & Equitable House site - Following the grant of planning permission in May 2012, the site has recently (December 2013) be acquired by Redrow Homes Ltd. Following discussions with the Planning Dept, an application is due at the end of March for some minor material amendments – notably to the car parking layout (basement level) and to change the floor-to-ceiling heights. An increase of circa 150mm is required per floor to enable space for the installation of the combined heat and power piping. Construction on site to commence in the summer.

2.2 Bradstowe House – The Comer Homes development was granted further minor amendments in October 2013 to replace the commercial units on the first floor with further residential units – taking the total residential units within the scheme to 177. That application also included minor amendments to the façade. Following grant, Comer Homes recommenced on site in January 2014 with a 66 week build programme.

2.3 ColArt – Pre-application discussions have been taking place with Barrett Homes since September 2013 regarding the submission of their reserve matters application. This was submitted in December 2013 and is programmed for reporting to the Planning Committee in April for determination.

2.4 51 College Road (Dandara site) – Confirmation was received at the end of February that the site has now been sold to the Hyde Housing Group. Pre-application discussions are to commence in the coming months.

2.5 Kodak – Council officers have been meeting with Land Securities recently due to Kodak’s decision to remain on site for foreseeable future. Land Securities are still committed to delivering the site but will need to vary the granted application to overcome a number of short-term issues. Land Securities will run through these in their presentation to the Panel.

2.6 RNOH – The Planning Dept have been in discussions regarding options for the discharge of a number of planning conditions associated with the grant of permission. An application is due in at the end of May for the Princess Eugenie House development, which now forms part of the phase 1 works.

2.7 Wood Farm – Development is well underway on the 10 homes. Substantial landscaping works associated with the extension to the country park have been undertaken and the management plan has been drafted. Further minor seeding and the installation of signage are still required. The developer has agreed to continue to maintain the area until such time as they have completed the housing development.

2.8 Bentley Priory – Build out of the residential homes and units continues at pace with significant tracks of the landscaping works also now well established. Completion of all 110 residential dwellings is on programme.

2.9 Amner Lodge – A full planning application was received at the beginning of February 2014 for redevelopment of the site, providing a 1,777sqm M&S supermarket and café and 120 residential units arranged across four blocks. Community consultation closed on 7<sup>th</sup> March with the principal concerns raised being traffic and parking impacts.

2.10 Stanmore Place (Former Government Offices, Honeypot Lane) – Following the completion of all affordable housing units in 2011, development of the market housing continues, with a further 163 units completed last year. The next phase is also to commence on the Stanmore Business Innovation Centre.

2.11 Edgware town Football Club – This stalled site was purchased by Weston Homes in 2013 who have submitted final details for the 189 flats prior to starting work on the site later in the year.

2.12 As set out in the Authorities Monitoring Report, a total of 736 further homes were delivered in Harrow between April 2012 and March 2013, taking the cumulative homes completed since April 2009 to 2,157. Notable contributions from the 2012/13 monitoring period include Peel Road (45 Units), Neptune Point (146 Units), Railway Approach (34 Units), Goodwill to All (42 Units), Mill Farm Close (63 units), Rayners Lane Estate phase F (27 Units), Douglas Close (31 Units) and Strongbridge Close (40 Units). As a result, the Council is well placed to meet and exceed its current housing target within the Harrow Local Plan.

### **3.0 Other Projects**

3.1 The bulk of the £2.06m project to upgrade St Ann's Road are now almost complete and work is due to commence shortly on the Lowlands Road landscaping and performance space, which is being funded through the Outer London Fund. Consultation with the community on the new public realm at the junction of Lyon Road and St Johns Road, as part of the S106 funded public realm improvements from that scheme, has also taken place, with positive feedback in support of a new small park space, in the town centre.

3.2 The proposed Harrow Business Improvement District (BID) for Harrow town centre was successfully voted in, in December 2013. It is expected that the BID programme will be operational for 1st April 2014. This could see £2m of private sector business funding, invested into the town centre over 5 year life of the BID.

#### **4.0 London Plan**

3.1 The Mayor of London published his further alterations to the 2011 London Plan in January 2013. A report on the key changes and implications for Harrow has been reported to LDF Panel and Cabinet, which includes the Council proposed representations.

<http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/documents/b18391/Supplemental%20Agenda%20Thursday%2013-Mar-2014%2018.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9>

3.2 The most significant change is the increase in Harrow's annual housing target from 350p.a. to 593p.a. This new housing target for the Borough will be very challenging to achieve and will require the delivery of all allocated housing sites as well as maximising further potential development opportunities within the town centres as these arise.

3.3 The other key change is the re-designation of the Harrow & Wealdstone area from an Intensification Area to a higher order Opportunity Area. This re-designation is recognition of the strategic contribution that Harrow's growth area can make to meeting Harrow's & London's future housing and employment needs. The Opportunity Area also secures additional buy in from the GLA and TfL in recognition of the additional infrastructure demands that accommodating further growth will entail. Opportunity Areas are given priority within the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy and Transport Strategy, and offers the ability to bid for Strategic Growth Funding, which should help to make the case for Station improvements at Harrow on the Hill when tied to the delivery of the higher growth targets.

3.4 Consultation on the alterations closes on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014. This will be followed later in the year by an examination in public before the final plan is adopted in early 2015.

#### **4.0 Office to Residential**

4.1 The effect of the office to residential permitted development measures, introduced in May 2013, have already seen applications 21 of the 37 applications received granted, with 2 refused. Should all 21 schemes be implemented, these will provided an additional 483 new dwellings in the

borough but will result in a loss of 32,510m<sup>2</sup> of Class B1(a) office floorspace.

4.2 At the time Prior Approval is granted, it is necessary for the Council to determine whether the applicable floorspace has been in occupation for at least six months of the past 12 months, for the purposes of determining CIL liabilities. Of the 20 granted applications, 14 were for occupied office floorspace. The level of occupied office floorspace amounts to circa 20,700m<sup>2</sup> or the equivalent of circa 1,005 jobs.

4.3 Although introduced as a means of providing residential dwellings through conversion of redundant and surplus office floorspace, in Harrow, the reality is the loss of often occupied and prime Class B1(a) office space primarily in town centres and replacement with low quality housing with very few amenities and foregone opportunities in terms of jobs and housing capacity.

## **5.0 Retail to Residential**

5.1 Despite strong opposition, there is a strong suggestion that the Permitted Development Order will be amended to provide for a temporary period (likely to be 3 years) for the conversion of retail units to residential homes via a similar prior approval process to that which exists for office to residential permitted development.

5.2 Through the alterations to the London Plan, both the Mayor of London and Harrow are seeking to introduce further policy criteria against which to assess the suitability of such applications given the long-term impact such development could have on town centre vitality.

5.3 If and when the changes are published, officers will bring a report to LDF Panel and Cabinet regarding the potential implications of these both for Harrow's town centres but also in terms of administration requirements. As with the office to residential proposals, officers will also put in place mechanisms to monitor the impact of this proposed change.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

6.1 As house prices continue to rise across the borough we expect to see significant construction commence on a number of our strategic development sites within the coming months. Such development is crucial if the Council is to maintain its strong position with respect to housing delivery and pipeline of supply over the coming years, and to deliver upon the new housing target which will come into effect in 2015. In this context, the emerging Regeneration Strategy will be a key consideration for the incoming administration post May 2014.

6.2 Officers will continue to follow the progress of the London Plan alterations through to adoption and will report back on further amendments if these have a potential impact on Harrow and the Council's ability to manage growth and development sustainably. In the same vein, officers will also continue to monitor the effect of the relaxation of permitted development rules on Harrow's supply of office floorspace and on town centre vitality.

## **Financial Implications**

7.1 The development consented over the past two years, has the capacity to deliver almost £1bn of investment into the borough in the years ahead, contributing to meeting the housing and job targets and supporting growth. The resources to manage these developments are derived from planning fees and the Council's budgeted staff and operational costs, spread across not just Environment and Enterprise, but the whole Council. Revenue income is supplemented by capitalisation of staffing costs where appropriate and grant based programmes (including schemes such as the Outer London Fund). The changes to planning legislation mean that the service has seen an increase in application numbers but fee income has been significantly reduced, which has impacted upon available resources and has resulted in an under-achievement on the planning income budget. The service is seeking financial contributions through planning performance agreements and discretionary pre- application charges where appropriate to help offset these losses.

## **Risk Management Implications**

8.1 Each strategic proposal is managed dynamically having regard to project specific risks. There are no material risk implications from this report.

## **Equalities implications**

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

9.1 Individual planning decisions are carefully considered against policies which have been robustly assessed for their impact upon the protected characteristics.

## Corporate Priorities

10.1 The redevelopment of Harrow's key strategic brownfield sites will contribute towards the realisation of the aspirations for a cleaner, safer and fairer borough through the provision of new affordable homes, new infrastructure, new skills and employment spaces & opportunities, along side improved green infrastructure and a renewed public realm.

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jessie Man	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2014		
Name: Abiodu Kolawole	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2014		

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Matthew Paterson, Senior Professional LDF Team,  
020 8736 6082

**Background Papers:** None