

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Meeting:	Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel
Date:	21 July 2003
Subject:	Wealdstone Community Centre (Land at Grant Road, Wealdstone and Premier House, Wealdstone) Update
Key decision:	No
Responsible Chief Officer:	Report of Interim Director of Environmental Services
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development Housing and Best Value.
Status:	Part I
Ward:	Marlborough & Wealdstone
Enclosures:	None

1. Summary

- 1.1 The regeneration of Wealdstone is a key Council objective within its wider regeneration strategy for the Borough. The Wealdstone Community Centre at Premier House is an important and ambitious anchor project towards meeting this objective. The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the current position.

2. Recommendations (for decision by Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel)

- 2.1 To note.

3. Consultation with Ward Councillors.

Some Ward Members are members of the Panel.

4. Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)

Cabinet 30th September 2002 approved the progression of the project and the making of applications for the relevant consents to implement the project.

Cabinet 20th May 2003 which inter alia endorsed the scheme and for it to be added to the Capital Investment Plan.

- 4.1 As discussed at previous meetings of this Group the objective at Premier House is to provide an innovative, multi-agency community services centre. On the ground floor the centre will include:

- a new replacement library
- a new youth and community facility
- a P.C.T facility
- a healthy living centre (including a cafe` run by young disabled as a training facility); and

the next stage will include a nursery on the first floor; discussions are being undertaken with an experienced Operator.

- 4.2 As well as providing improved services and facilities from the centre and a focus for the regeneration of the town, the project also aims in partnership with Acton Housing Association to deliver 65 affordable homes in the Borough, with the Council receiving 100% nomination rights.

Current Position

Acquiring Premier House and Disposing of Land at Grant Road

- 4.3 On 13th June 2003, the Council simultaneously exchanged:
- i) contracts for a new lease and simultaneous leaseback with Acton Housing Association (“Acton”) of the combined Wealdstone library, Grant Youth & Community centre and adjoining car park (“Grant Road site”); and
 - ii) a new lease for 30 years from Benesco Charity Limited (“Benesco”) of the former Safeway shop unit on the ground and mezzanine floors at Premier House.
- 4.4 When the Premier House works are complete, the Council will vacate the Grant Road site and transfer the freehold to Acton
- 4.5 The Grant Road sites have outline planning permission for 65 residential units.

Refurbishing Premier House

- 4.6 Detailed planning permission for the refurbishment has been obtained. Work has started on detailed design and contract documentation for the refurbishment. The refurbishment will be very substantial and involve significant electrical and mechanical work as well as fitting out. Different methods of contracting are currently being considered. Initial works on stripping out the existing fittings has commenced but the main works will start early in the New Year following completion of detailed design, contract documents and specifications, and the seeking and evaluation of tenders. Completion of works are anticipated in the Autumn of 2004.
- 4.7 Terms have been offered and accepted in principle by the PCT, although documents are not yet signed, The Healthy Living Centre has secured lottery funds and negotiations will be commencing shortly on their documentation.

Bid to London Development Agency

- 4.8 The proposal for the centre also includes a separate bid to the London Development Agency (LDA) to further boost the implementation and future success of the centre. The bid is to fund a project/business manager. Winning this funding would be a further bonus for the project.

The Project Manager would be responsible for managing the whole process, ensures it keeps to time, budget and liaison with partners.

5.0 Relevance to Corporate Priorities

The proposal supports the stated priorities of strengthening Harrow's local communities, improving the quality of health and social care and developing a prosperous and sustainable economy.

6. Background Information and options considered

6.1 Previous reports to the Panel.

7. Consultation

7.1 Extent of consultation outlined at previous meetings of the Panel. Consultation has also taken place through the Planning Process.

8. Finance Observations

Provision has been made in the Council's capital programme for the capital cost of the development.

9. Legal Observations

9.1 No additional comments.

10. Conclusion

Substantial progress has been made towards the implementation of the project.

11. Background Papers

11.1 None.

12. Author

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