

REPORT FOR: MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Date of Meeting:	9 th November 2016
Subject:	STRATEGY FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT IN HARROW
Responsible Officer:	Paul Nichols, Divisional Director of Planning, Enterprise and Regeneration
Exempt:	No
Wards affected:	Relates to Borough-wide Development
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: Major Development Sites

Section 1 – Summary

This Paper sets out and discusses the strategy, objectives and aims of the Council in dealing with and developing strategic sites within the Borough.

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

Policy Context

- 2.1 The starting point for strategic development and how it can shape the communities of Harrow is the Development Plan. The Development Plan is given legal status by the Planning Acts and its policies must be adhered to unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Harrow comprises The London Plan [LP] and the Harrow Local Plan [HLP]. The Development Plan provides the strategic place-making, environmental, economic and social plan for the Borough.
- 2.2 The Development Plan contains a wide range of policies covering topics such as: Place-Making and Design; Housing, Economics and Employment; Climate Change; Transport as well dealing with the practicalities of Implementation, Delivery and Review. In the context of the strategic objectives for Harrow set out in the Harrow Ambition Plan 2020 to: Build a Better Harrow; Be More Business-Like and Business Friendly and; Protect the Most Vulnerable and Support Families, it is evident that the Council should be particularly cognisant of those policies that achieve these objectives. These are discussed in the sections below: Housing Needs; Economic Development; Place-Making and Design; Transport and Parking; and Infrastructure Delivery.

Delivery Strategy

- 2.3 As the focus of investment and development is principally aimed towards the centres of Harrow and Wealdstone, the Area Action Plan [AAP] sets out the strategic focus for delivery. The AAP forms part of our Development Plan. The Council's Regeneration Strategy builds on the AAP, while further considering the corporate objectives of the Council, the recent adoption of the Harrow and Wealdstone Area as an Opportunity Area and its designation as a Housing Zone. The adoption of the Opportunity Area and Housing Zone provide the stimulus for investment and an opportunity to accelerate the place of housing delivery, through increased private interest in the area, a significant investment from the Local Authority as well as external grant and loan funding from the GLA. An accelerated pace of housing delivery also enhances Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL] receipts and allows the Borough to invest in improved infrastructure earlier in the Development Plan period, with subsequent economic benefits locally. A copy of the Major Projects progressing towards planning and in the planning system is appended to this report, which evidences the accelerated scale of delivery proposed.

Housing Needs

- 2.4 The problems facing the delivery of housing country-wide, and particularly in London, are well rehearsed: historic build-up of under-supply coupled with increasing demand have created a housing market inaccessible to many of London and Harrow's residents. The LP sets out the Council's targets for annual delivery of new homes within

Harrow, increased from 350 in 2011 to the current target of 593. In recognising the potential of the 'Heart of Harrow' to deliver new homes quickly, the area has also been designated as an Opportunity Area and Housing Zone.

- 2.5 The Development Plan encourages a mix of housing tenures across the Borough to reduce social and health inequalities. In order to cater for the full spectrum of housing needs as traditional housing products expand and diversify, and enhance the vibrancy of our communities, the regeneration programme places great weight on the provision of varied housing typologies, tenures and unit sizes. As an example, the Regeneration Strategy is committed to maximising the provision of affordable housing, using innovative models to increase overall housing provision. This includes ensuring that those frozen out of the property market have access to good quality rented units with a socially conscious landlord, through the Build-to-Rent programme. In this way, the Regeneration Strategy seeks to ensure that the most vulnerable are protected (through providing Temporary Accommodation for our homeless) as well as supporting families, key workers and others through the diverse range of housing made available.
- 2.6 The Regeneration Unit and Planning Team work closely with the Council's Housing Team to ensure that, in a rapidly changing housing environment, the needs of the most vulnerable are being delivered. Officers have developed particularly close working relationships with the GLA. Since the London Mayoral elections in May, officers have been discussing with the GLA the policies of the Mayor, in particular the level of affordable housing delivered on sites and implications of the London Living Wage.

Economic Development

- 2.7 The regeneration programme aims to ensure that business and employment offer a rich mix of uses in the Borough, the Borough doesn't become a residential dormitory, and resident opportunities to work, live and socialise locally are improved. The Development Plan encourages this rich mix of uses and the Regeneration Unit and Planning Team are working closely with the Economic Development Team to achieve these objectives and the economic aims of the Regeneration Strategy. The creation of 3,000 new jobs, provision of workspace, helping start-ups, addressing skills shortage and breaking down barriers to entry to work will meet the Council's objectives of being more business-friendly and protecting those most vulnerable in our society.
- 2.8 The Council has clear policies and procedures to implement the Regeneration Strategy. The use of Section 106 Agreements require developers to provide site specific employment & training plans detailing Key Performance Indicators and targets including local labour, apprenticeships, qualifications, training. The provision of new work space has been built into the development of Stanmore Place, ColArt, Kodak site, Palmerston Road site and the Gayton Road development.
- 2.9 Where the Council is the developer, the Council's procurement policy

will require potential contractors to state in their tender, how they would meet the council's social value objectives. This may include targets for using local suppliers, creating apprentices, and recruiting locally. Tenders can also provide examples of how the contractor would support local community initiatives.

- 2.10 To assist, demonstrate and monitor these objectives, the Council is developing a cost benefit analysis which will demonstrate the social and economic benefits of each development. This will include the financial benefits of providing new workspace, creating new jobs, supporting local people into work, using local supply chains and creating and hiring apprentices. The analysis also monetises the health benefits of regeneration and the economic benefit of designing out crime, ensuring the Council meets its objectives to be more business-friendly.

Place-Making and Design

- 2.11 Building a Better Harrow is a wide-ranging objective. At its heart is the strategy to make Harrow a richer environment by building places people can enjoy, use and take pride in. The place-making policies of the Development Plan seek to inspire, excite and delight and encourage innovation. They require a high standard of design and development throughout. Regenerating the Borough through high quality design is a core value for our development briefs for sites and provides the starting point for the Planning Team in negotiating on strategic sites.

Overview

- 2.12 Harrow has a distinctive mix of different architectural styles and layers of development. The bulk of Harrow, as we know it today, was built in the early C.20th as a result of the Metropolitan Line expansion. 1920s and 30s semi-detached housing, built in the 'Metroland' style, makes up the majority of the built fabric. A lack of major roads running through the Borough and limited major industry has helped keep Harrow as a network of low rise suburban villages. The few tall buildings are largely within Harrow town centre, and the prevailing height across the Borough is 2-4 storeys. Harrow is a Borough of extremes, with wealthy and highly desirable Pinner and Harrow-on-the-Hill adjacent to areas of neglected housing stock where the suburban idyll has deteriorated into concreted and car filled front gardens and stark street scenes devoid of greenery.
- 2.13 London's suburbs need to change to support housing growth, and the challenge now is to intensify and regenerate areas of Harrow, providing as many new homes as possible, whilst maintaining the Borough's unique character. A Harrow specific approach to intensification is needed, building on the Metroland foundations and developing a new Harrow vernacular for the C.21st.

Urban Design Principles

- 2.14 The typical London suburban neighbourhood is land-hungry and car-reliant, with only 15% of a residential plot actually built upon. Harrow is no exception, and areas of the Borough have been identified as the 10% least dense and best connected in the Capital, making it a prime

area for intensification.

Density

- 2.15 The London Plan density matrix supports significantly increasing densities in suburban areas. An increase in density is an inevitable challenge to the suburban principles of family orientated neighbourhoods with individual houses, generous back gardens and ample parking, but higher density development does not automatically indicate overcrowding and social decline. With careful design, future development can continue to uphold Harrow's existing values, reinterpreted as a sustainable form of C.21st suburbia. The question of building at the densities which are now required in suburbia and London is one which is subject to considerable debate, most notably through the 'Create Streets' movement and the Royal Mail site at Mount Pleasant. The development of buildings at human-scale is a consistent theme throughout the regeneration briefs.
- 2.16 Creating higher densities challenges the traditional perceptions of Outer London with typical dwellinghouse typologies and will often require significant levels of well-designed flatted development. The housing crisis needs to be tackled from both ends: Flats are both affordable to young households and provide a solution for under occupation. Flatted development provides the opportunity for 'empty-nesters' to downsize, freeing up much needed family housing and revitalising neighbourhoods.

Housing Typologies

- 2.17 In early C.20th London, alongside Metroland, a major movement in residential development was the mansion block. The suburban mansion block was typified by a modernist or Arts and Crafts movement aesthetic (also inspirations for Metroland) and leafy communal gardens. In essence, this was Metroland at high density, and mansion blocks remain some of London's best-loved and cared for housing.
- 2.18 Leading public figures have recently called for London's housing crisis to be addressed with midrise developments of mansion blocks and garden squares, and this is one of the typologies which offer a viable template for future development in Harrow. Mansion blocks are generous: Living spaces are well proportioned and blocks have civic appeal, with carefully designed elevations that make positive contributions to the street. The immediate setting of mansion blocks is an important feature. Increased densities allow a greater area of the site to be used as public and communal landscaped space – garden squares. In comparison with larger towers, mansion blocks can be readily accommodated within a familiar and comfortable townscape of urban streets, squares and spaces.

Tall Buildings

- 2.19 In many cases midrise development can deliver the required number of homes, but in some instances there is a role for taller buildings. Additional height helps subsidise, and free up the ground floor for, much needed community facilities such as libraries and affordable work space. Tall buildings can have an important part to play in defining and

signposting places. A high standard of design is expected across all development in the Borough, but the design of tall buildings requires a particular degree of care. This is recognised in local policy which requires tall buildings to be of exceptional architectural quality. In the appropriate context, tall buildings have potential to be community beacons and provide opportunities for innovation and landmark architecture for Harrow.

Design Quality

2.20 High quality design is central to building a better Harrow. Developing a reputation for design quality in Harrow will raise ambition and attract talent, improving the quality of architecture across the Borough, and the quality of life for Harrow residents and workers. The Council is promoting and managing design quality in a number of ways:

- In 2015 the first Head of Design and Regeneration was appointed to lead on urban design and design quality across the Council.
- A long standing service agreement with the GLA provides an urban design officer to assist with design expertise and advise on major planning applications.
- A refresh of the current New Residential Design SPD 2010 is underway to provide more robust design policy and guidance.
- A Harrow Design Review Panel is being established to provide external advice and guidance on major planning applications.

2.21 Consequently there has been a significant improvement in the design quality of recent major applications in the Borough. Schemes such as 51 College Road and Gayton Road, by multi-award winning architects, demonstrate this. Gayton Road is a good example of the new Harrow vernacular style that is emerging, with a contemporary reading of the mansion block type and generous, well designed open spaces. It is also an example of the value that high quality, innovative and experienced architects can add to the contemporary Harrow vernacular. This approach is reflected in the briefs set out for each of the regeneration sites.

Transport and Parking

2.22 The spatial development policies of the Development Plan and transport policies are interwoven at local and regional level. The overarching principle in all of these policies is to move towards an integrated and sustainable transport system using transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

2.23 Building a Better Harrow means taking the opportunity a large-scale development programme offers to shape the future of the Borough. The sustainable development of the Borough and policies of the Development also require the Council to ensure that there are progressive transport modal shifts over the course of the Development Plan, as the range of transport alternatives is improved. A traditionally high level of private car use in the Borough will no longer be sustainable within the parameters of housing required to be delivered over the Plan period and the delivery of the Transport Local

Implementation Plan [LIP] will assist by introducing network improvements and initiatives that will support modal shift towards more walking, cycling and public transport usage, a greater emphasis on travel planning with less usage of private cars in order to facilitate growth.

- 2.24 The Council are therefore working closely with the GLA and TfL to achieve the aim of the parking standard policy of 'significantly less than 1 space per unit' in areas with a 'Public Transport Accessibility Level' [PTAL] of good or above¹. The provision of car parking may be reduced further where it is evidenced that car ownership within specific housing tenures are low. For example, local Census evidence shows that car ownership within the Private Rented Sector is significantly lower than within the Shared Ownership or Market Sale sectors. These strategies will be complimented by sustained investment in high quality public realm, transport infrastructure and continued modelling and monitoring of transport data.
- 2.25 The Council nonetheless recognise that low or zero parking schemes can, in some circumstances, create the risk of parking overspill in surrounding streets and neighbourhoods. The Council needs to carefully consider the parking management regime in the vicinity of high density schemes, when evaluating low or zero parking proposals. Mitigation measures, such as permit use restrictions, travel plans and careful monitoring, to prevent the impact of parking overspill will be required.
- 2.26 Building at higher densities in well-connected areas, as advocated above, also has the potential to create more sustainable communities in Harrow. Harrow currently has some of the highest levels of car use in London and this has historically been linked to a dispersed and low density pattern of development. Harrow also has the lowest cycling rates in London. Increasing housing densities within the Opportunity Area and maximising the number of homes built within walking or cycling distance of local amenities (public transport, schools and high street shopping) will help to improve air quality, pollution levels and support the general health of communities. Walking to school and using local high streets are more feasible in high density neighbourhoods and these have been shown to strengthen community ties and would also support economic uplift of Harrow neighbourhoods.
- 2.27 Opportunity areas such as Wealdstone are an example of this approach and transport programmes in the LIP are already coordinated to maximise improvements to the transport network to facilitate the planned growth in homes and businesses. However, additional funds can also be sought from TfL via the major schemes bid process for a more significant investment in the public realm and transport networks in areas of need. This funding is additional to the annual LIP funding provided to Boroughs. Opportunity areas are ideal candidates for this type of investment, particularly in town centres, and currently Harrow

¹ Most of the Harrow and Wealdstone Opportunity Area is within areas with at PTAL of at least 'good' (PTAL 3 or above) and of the large sites significantly exceed this level

has submitted a bid for Wealdstone and is currently awaiting the outcome of the bid.

Infrastructure Delivery

2.28 The Council is committed to the delivery of infrastructure to support the significant growth the Borough will experience over the next 15 years. The development of each of the schemes will deliver significant CIL receipts, to be managed through the Infrastructure Assessment and Delivery Plan. CIL receipts (since its adoption in 2013) and monies gathered through s106 contributions to planning permissions have already made significant contributions to Headstone Manor and schools throughout the Borough. Further significant monies from the Harrow View West scheme and 51 College Road are already earmarked for investment in leisure and libraries respectively. The evolving Infrastructure Assessment and Delivery Plan will ensure that infrastructure is optimised and delivered in the right areas. Infrastructure and CIL priorities will be determined through the consideration of whether the infrastructure is identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, is located within the area to which the CIL was collected, involves an element of match-funding, benefits a broad geographical area, benefits a broad range of the population, is implementable within the short-term and whether a mechanism is in place for funding any on-going costs (CIL cannot generally be used for revenue funding).

Community Engagement

2.29 As part of the Regeneration Strategy, a Community Engagement Plan has been set out with reference to the Statement of Community Involvement. The Plan sets out how the objectives for the Regeneration Strategy will be communicated and identifies the myriad of stakeholders involved in the Regeneration of the Borough, tailoring consultation and engagement towards specific audiences. The Plan recognises the value of wide engagement and the role and perception stakeholders may have of a Local Authority as a Developer. The Plan is already in action on the regeneration sites, most notably on the existing Civic Centre Site (Poets Corner), Vaughan Road, Waxwell Lane and Roxeth Library.

2.30 Though third party developers do not have the same obligations to stakeholders for engagement and public consultation, the LPA continually advocates the value of such engagement. Working closely with developers and building these relationships has yielded positive results in terms of the level of engagement undertaken. On large-scale schemes, the LPA will expect developers to engage with local residents at least twice prior to the submission of applications.

Section 3 – Further Information

This report should be read in conjunction with the presentation to be presented to the Panel at the Major Developments Panel on 9th November 2016

Section 4 – Financial Implications

The report is for information purposes only and therefore has no financial implications.

Section 5 - Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? **No**

The report is for information purposes only and has no implications on Equalities

Section 6 – Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

Please identify how the report incorporates the administration's priorities.

- Build a Better Harrow
- Be More Business-like and Business Friendly
- Protect the Most Vulnerable and Support Families

The report is provided for information purposes, to demonstrate how the strategic development of the larger sites in the Borough will be developed in accordance with Council's priorities. The report details how, through developing place-making, infrastructure delivery, job and skills creation and transport at the core of design briefs, the Council can 'Build a Better Harrow'. The strategy for capitalising the assets of the Council and providing support to businesses demonstrates how the council can 'Be More-Business Like and Business-Friendly'. The Regeneration Strategy, planning policies commit to delivering the maximum viable amount of affordable housing and policies to support and develop employment skills demonstrate a commitment to 'Protect the Most Vulnerable and Support Families'.

Name: Dave Roberts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 26 th October 2016		

Ward Councillors notified:	NO
-----------------------------------	-----------

Section 7 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Fergal O'Donnell, Regeneration Manager (Planning), 0208 736 6664

Background Papers: N/A