

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY
PANEL**
10 JULY 2003

Chair: * Councillor Keith Burchell

Councillors:	* Idaikkadar	* Marilyn Ashton
	* N Shah	* Mrs Bath
	* Anne Whitehead	* Mrs Kinnear (1)

* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS
RECOMMENDATION 1: Draft Town Centre Development Strategy

Your Panel received a report of the Chief Planning Officer regarding the Draft Town Centre Development Strategy. It was explained that external consultants had been commissioned to prepare a strategy which examined the needs of the Town Centre holistically and proposed specific objectives which, together, would contribute to the overall aim of transforming Harrow Town Centre into a thriving, distinctive and adaptable centre, which would meet the long term needs of the community.

The key objectives identified by the draft strategy were:

- To promote activity in the centre that meets the needs of a modern economy and contributes to the overall aim of making Harrow special and distinctive.
- To ensure effective transport and pedestrian access to and within the centre.
- To make the centre look and feel attractive and safe.
- To celebrate the history, diversity and greenery of Harrow town centre.
- To make the centre feel more alive with people.
- To promote more community and civic activity in the centre.

The strategy set out measures to achieve each of these individual objectives and the officer report outlined possible sources of funding.

Members and stakeholders had been extensively involved in the production of the draft and it was now proposed that Cabinet agree the strategy for the purposes of consultation with the public and a wider range of organisations. Your Panel were invited to make comments on the draft strategy, prior to Cabinet's consideration of it. A consultant's brief in respect of Proposal Site Six (Harrow on the Hill Station) had also been drafted, with the aim of maintaining momentum in the future development of this site, and this was also to be submitted to Cabinet for approval. Your Panel's comments on this document were similarly invited.

During the debate which followed, the Panel raised, inter alia, the following issues:

- It was suggested that, in the section of the strategy which dealt with objective 2 (which referred to the need to ensure effective transport and pedestrian access to and within the centre), greater emphasis should be placed on the car parking needs of all town centre users, and not just shoppers.
- It was commented that, in the section of the strategy which dealt with objective 5 (which referred to the need to make the centre feel more alive with people) greater emphasis should be placed on the need to balance this objective with consideration for the amenity of nearby residents.
- It was suggested that, in the section of the strategy which dealt with objective 6 (which referred to the need to promote more community and civic activity in the centre), the importance of the Back History Month should also be highlighted and that greater reference be made to the Cultural Strategy.
- It was agreed that the questions for public consultation, as set out at Appendix 4 to the draft strategy, should be 'open-ended' and phrased in such a way as to encourage those consulted to provide detailed answers.
- It was pointed out that there was a minor factual error in Appendix 3 to the draft strategy – the change to Harrow's retail position should have read '-16' rather than '16'.
- Some concern was expressed regarding the relationship of the strategy to the deposit replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the fact that the UDP

- had yet to be finalised after receipt of the Inspector's report..
- Further concern was expressed that, when the strategy was sent out for consultation, the covering document emphasise the status of the strategy and be very clear that the proposals were by no mean concrete.

Arising out of the above discussion it was also requested that the forthcoming detailed traffic management study be presented to the Panel at its next meeting, prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

Following further discussion it was

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

To Cabinet:

That (1) the above comments regarding the draft Town Centre Development Strategy be forwarded to Cabinet.

[REASON: To progress the Town Centre Development Strategy in accordance with the Council's objectives for the environment and the economy]

and

To the Portfolio Holder:

(2) the forthcoming detailed traffic management study be presented to the Panel at its next meeting, prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

[REASON: To allow the Panel to input into the study].

RECOMMENDATION 2: 201-209 Northolt Road Development Brief

The Panel, at its meeting held on 3 February 2003, had previously considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer which had set out a draft development brief to guide future development on the above site (identified as Proposal Site 27 in the revised deposit Unitary Development Plan). The Panel had agreed the draft brief as a basis for consultation with interested parties. That consultation had now taken place and the Panel received a further report of the Chief Planning Officer which outlined the responses received and accordingly recommended a minor amendment to the brief to indicate that use of the site for affordable housing, either social rent or key worker accommodation, would be encouraged.

Following discussion it was agreed that the wording of paragraph 4.1 of the brief needed to be revised in order to remove any ambiguity.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (To Cabinet)

That the draft development brief be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to guide the future development of the above site, as attached to the officer report, subject to the amendment to paragraph 4.1 of the brief set out in the officer report and further consideration of its wording as set out above.

(Note: Councillors Marilyn Ashton, Mrs Bath and Mrs Kinnear wished to be recorded as having voted against the adoption of the above draft development brief due to concerns regarding the building height and density which were indicated to be acceptable in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of the brief).

[REASON: To assist in the implementation of proposals for the development of Proposal Site 27 in the emerging revised Harrow Unitary Development Plan].

PART II - MINUTES

38. **Appointment of Chair:**

RESOLVED: That the appointment of Councillor Burchell as the Chair of the Unitary Development Plan Advisory Panel for the 2003/2004 Municipal Year, as agreed at the Cabinet meeting of 20 May 2003, be noted.

39. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Harriss	Councillor Mrs Kinnear

40. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note the following declaration of interest:

Agenda Item 12 – Draft Town Centre Development Strategy
Councillor Mrs Kinnear declared a personal interest arising from the fact that she lived very near the town centre, and accordingly she remained and took part in the discussion and voting on this item.

41. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) the following late item be admitted to the agenda by reason of the special circumstances/reasons for urgency indicated;

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
Item 12 – Draft Town Centre Development Strategy	This report is based on financial information which has only recently become available. Decisions are required now so that the activities outlined in the report can commence without unnecessary delay.

and

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present with the exception of the following item, for the reasons set out below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Schedules A and B to Item 12 – Draft Town Centre Development Strategy	Schedules A & B are listed under Part II of the Agenda by virtue of the fact that they contain exempt information, as defined under Paragraph 8 of Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that they refer to the amount of any expenditure proposed to be incurred by the authority under any particular contract for the acquisition of property or the supply of goods or services.

42. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

43. **Appointment of Vice-Chair:**

Councillors Marilyn Ashton and Anne Whitehead were both nominated and duly seconded for the position of Vice-Chair, and following a vote it was

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Anne Whitehead as Vice-Chair of the Unitary Development Plan Advisory Panel for the 2003/2004 Municipal Year.

44. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

45. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4B of the Constitution).

46. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

47. **Mayor's London Plan:**

The Panel gave consideration to a report of the Chief Planning Officer regarding the Mayor's London Plan. The Panel had previously agreed two responses to the draft Plan at its meeting held on 24 September 2002 - one on behalf of Harrow, which had highlighted areas of particular concern to Harrow, and, additionally, a West London Borough's response which had addressed the sub-regional dimension of some of the issues. The Panel was now advised that, as a result, Harrow and the West London Alliance (WLA) had been invited to participate at the Examination in Public (EIP) which had been held during March and April. The EIP process and some of the topics discussed were outlined.

It was reported that it had been apparent that there were a number of key issues on which Boroughs and the Greater London Authority (GLA) differed and these had been discussed at length. The EIP Panel were to produce a report which was expected to become available in mid July and which would discuss these issues and accordingly make recommendations. The Mayor would consider the recommendations and it was expected that he would then move quickly towards adoption of the Plan. It was noted that there was no formal role for the Boroughs in this final stage, and during the discussion which followed, several Members expressed concern. It was noted, however, that, in the event that significant concerns remained unresolved, the Borough, the WLA and/or ALG could make representations to the GLA and/or the Government Office for London.

The report also advised that there had been a considerable amount of debate and concern both within and outside the EIP regarding the status, content and process for the preparation and agreement of Sub-Regional Development Frameworks. These Frameworks would provide planning guidance on issues which affected more than one Borough but which did not have a pan-London aspect and would help deliver the Mayor's London Plan. Elements of these concerns were outlined.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report and the timescale for the adoption of the Mayor's London Plan be noted.

[REASON: To update the Panel on the London Plan and its implications for Harrow].

48. **The Changing Approach to Planning:**

The Panel received a report of the Chief Planning Officer which explained that, following an in-depth review of the planning system, and, in particular, the development plan system, the Government had recently published proposals for its reform under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill. The report outlined the expected impact of the new system.

Under the new system local planning authorities would be required to draw up a Local Development Scheme, a three year project plan, which would set out:

- What Local Development Documents the Council proposed to prepare and what they would cover
- Which of these the Council proposed would be subject to statutory procedures and which would not
- In the transitional period, which sections of the UDP these documents would replace
- Whether any of these documents would be prepared on a joint basis with another planning authority
- The planned timetable for preparing these document.

Unitary Development Plans (UDP) would be replaced with Local Development Frameworks (LDF), which would consist of a core strategy, a proposals section with a proposals map, and area action plans for key areas of change or conservation.

The LDF, it was advised, was intended to be more concise and less repetitive than the UDP. The adoption process would also be less convoluted, standards of consultation would be explicitly set out and Inspectors' reports would be binding. The system as a whole aimed to be more efficient, provide greater local focus on policies and further

engage the community in developing policies.

The new system had originally been expected to come into force in Spring 2004, but advice recently received indicated that there might be a delay of some months. In response to a Member query it was explained that, assuming Harrow adopted its replacement UDP in February, the UDP would probably have a life of around three years before the Borough would be required to replace it with a LDF. It was noted that, as with consecutive UDPs, some of the content of the UDP would be 'adaptable' to the LDF.

Officers advised that the Authority had already begun planning for the transition to the new system. It was noted that demonstrating how the Authority intended to move towards implementing the new system would be a factor which would influence the level of Planning Delivery Grant the Council received in future years.

Officers emphasised that further reports spelling out the detail of the scope of the new regime would be forthcoming in due course. It was requested that future reports address the issue of any changes to the democratic processes in Harrow which might be required to facilitate the implementation of the new system, and the cost implications of the transition.

RESOLVED: That (1) the proposals for the reform of the current planning system, as outlined in the officer report, be noted; and

(2) officers be requested to prepare a further report on the approach to, and timetable for, the production of a Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Harrow, taking into account the requests above.

[REASON: To start preparations for the new system of local development frameworks].

49. **Draft Town Centre Development Strategy:**

Arising out of the discussion outlined at Recommendation 1, above, it was

RESOLVED: That details of the composition and status of the Council Steering Group referred to in the officer report be circulated to all Members of the Panel and Councillor Mrs Kinnear.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.20 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH BURCHELL
Chair