

Meeting:	Town Centre and Major Projects Panel
Date:	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2007
Subject:	Public Realm and Access Strategy
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Graham Jones. Director of Planning, Development and Enterprise
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Marilyn Ashton. Planning, Development & Enterprise
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1. Summary of consultation results Appendix 2. Draft Public Realm and Access Strategy - to be circulated separately to Members of the Panel

## SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report summarises initial results of consultation on the Public Realm and Access Strategy for Harrow Town Centre and outlines the next stages in taking the project forward to outline design. A presentation by Urban Initiatives will accompany the report at the Panel meeting.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Panel

1. Consider the initial results of public consultation on the draft Public Realm and Access Strategy for Harrow Town Centre;
2. Endorse the draft strategy for further consultation with key stakeholders; and
3. Agree to progress to outline design for the concept schemes for St Ann's Road and Greenhill Way, as set out in the delivery strategy described in the report.

### **Reason**

To advise the Panel of the response to public consultation and consider the next stages in the preparation of the Public Realm and Access Strategy for Harrow Town Centre.

## **SECTION 2 – REPORT**

### **Background**

The Panel received a presentation from Urban Initiatives at its last meeting, which described arrangements for public consultation on concept designs for seven key schemes that had been identified in the emerging Public Realm and Access Strategy. The focus of the consultation was to be a 2 week exhibition in the St Ann's Centre, setting out the proposals for each scheme, together with an associated palette of street furniture and paving materials. This would be supplemented by direct consultation with key stakeholders. It was agreed that the consultation material and an on line survey would also be included on the Council's web site.

### **Initial consultation results**

The exhibition in the St Anns Centre took place as scheduled from 25<sup>th</sup> June to 7<sup>th</sup> July and was manned by staff from Urban Initiatives and the Council on 29/30th June. Some 500 questionnaires were distributed during the event itself, and by Radio London, who were presenting programmes from the town centre that week.

Over 200 questionnaires were returned and a further 18 responses were received from the on line survey. A summary of the results is included as Appendix1.

The overall response was generally positive, with a large measure of support for all the issues raised in the questionnaire. Views on provision of places to congregate or sit down in St Anns Road, Station Road, and College Road were more evenly balanced but, even here, only 20% either disagreed or disagreed strongly.

That part of the questionnaire where views were more mixed related to the suggested design palette. Apart from the provision of additional tree planting which attracted over 70% support, there was no clear measure of agreement for any of the suggested paving materials or other street furniture. Having said that, some 20% of respondents did not answer this set of questions at all, and there were only relatively small minorities who either disagreed or disagreed strongly to the various suggestions. It is likely that the mixed response was affected by the fact that examples of the design palette were illustrated with photographs, and other small scale images, and that specific samples were not available. This can be considered further during the next phase of consultation with stakeholders, and reviewed again at the detailed design stage before specific proposals are presented for public comment.

In addition to the exhibition and survey, a stakeholder meeting was held at the Civic Centre on 27<sup>th</sup> July. 7 people attended representing local residents' associations, the Harrow Heritage Trust, Greener Harrow, TfL and HAD.

### **TfL Funding**

As indicated at the last meeting, funding bids for the design and implementation of some of the concept designs set out in the consultation material have been prepared, and were submitted to TfL in July as part of the annual Local Implementation Plan submission.

Although essentially part of the same overall strategy, bids have been submitted under three different funding streams. Each involves a 2 stage process, which would provide design fees in the first year and works funding in subsequent years, as follows

	<b>Stage 1 (2008/9)</b>	<b>Stage 2 (2009/10)</b>
<b>1. Area based bid</b> (to provide for two way bus operation in Station Road and complementary works in College Road)	£200,000	£2.1m
<b>2. Bus Priority</b> (to facilitate a new right turn into the central part of Station Road)	£60,000	£600,000
<b>3. Parallel Initiatives</b> (to improve approach roads to the town centre)	£150,000	£1.5m

The results of the funding bid are expected to be announced in November.

### **Next Stages**

A draft of the full Public Realm and Access Strategy is now complete and will be circulated separately. It pulls together all the material considered at the last Panel meeting, and comprises three main parts

- an Urban Design Framework, which sets the context for the longer term development of the town centre
- an Access study, including details of a transport and movement appraisal of the town centre and key approach corridors; and
- a Public Realm Strategy which defines a hierarchy of streets and spaces within the town centre, a design “palette” for paving materials, street furniture, lighting etc, and concept designs for seven specific schemes.

The strategy also includes a recommended Management Plan, to raise the profile of the public realm, and a maintenance protocol.

Subject to any Members comments, it is intended to consult further with key stakeholders, such as TfL utility companies and HAD, before bringing the strategy back to the Panel for consideration, prior to seeking its approval by Cabinet.

Adoption of the strategy by the Council will establish a core set of design principles and an agreed range of materials and street furniture for different street types that will inform the anticipated programme of short term environmental improvements and help guide the long term development of the town centre. However, in order to ensure that schemes are developed to level of detail that will allow for implementation to commence in 2008/09, in accordance with the Capital Programme, it important to progress to an outline design stage, and establish firm costs, as soon as possible. Urban Initiatives have therefore prepared an indicative 3 year delivery strategy, taking account the potential for some of the design work to be funded by TfL.

The delivery strategy envisages that outline design will commence with the St Ann’s Road and Greenhill Way schemes, neither of which is dependent on TfL funding. This phase of work would be completed by the end of the year, which would allow for further public consultation and detailed design in the early part of 2008, and implementation from the beginning of April. The scope for a possible “demonstration project” that could

be implemented earlier could also be investigated as part of the initial outline design work.

Implementation of the rest of the programme will depend on the outcome of the TfL bidding process, the results of which should be made known by November. If the Council bids are approved as submitted, outline design for all the outstanding schemes would begin in April 2008, as design fees are released. The potential for an earlier start, forward funded through the existing Capital Programme, could also be investigated at this stage. This would ensure that full Stage 2 bids would be submitted in mid 2008 as required by TfL, to confirm funding for schemes to start on site in 2009/10. If, on the other hand, bids are rejected or not accepted in full, then the delivery strategy will need to be reviewed by the Panel to determine spending priorities, given that the Council would have to rely on its own Capital Programme to fund scheme design and implementation.

### **Financial Implications**

All the costs associated with the finalisation of the strategy and initial outline design can be contained within the existing Capital Programme provision.

### **Performance Implications**

The creation of a high quality and distinctive public realm will help to implement the Council's corporate priority to regenerate Harrow Town Centre and be recognised as the Premier Town Centre in North-West London, as reflected in the LAA.

## **SECTION 3 – STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE**

Name: Adekunle Amisu Date: 05 09 2007	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Name: Carol Maduka Date: 05 09 2007	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of the Monitoring Officer

## **SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **Contact:**

Phil Greenwood. Senior {Professional Strategic Planning  
Tel: 0208 424 1166

### **Background Papers:**

Appendix 1. Summary of consultation results  
Appendix 2. Draft Public Realm and Access Strategy

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES

Appendix 1

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Did not answer
The street furniture in Harrow Town Centre is out of date and in poor condition and would benefit from being modernised.	36%	32%	13%	10%	5%	4%
The strategy to improve city streets, city spaces & city greens would make the town centre a better place to live, work & visit and help to create a unique and memorable identity.	42%	33%	11%	2%	6%	6%
2 way bus links in Station Rd & College Rd would improve public transport accessibility & create a better balance between user needs	32%	30%	17%	11%	6%	4
Limited day time access, greater enforcement and better management of servicing and other parking would make Station Rd a better place to work and shop	31%	37%	9%	11%	6%	6%
There are not enough places to congregate sit down or relax in St Anns Rd, College Rd & Station Rd	26%	27%	17%	13%	7%	8%
Improving pedestrian connections between St Anns Rd & College Rd would make it easier to walk around the town centre and increase the feeling of safety, especially after dark	37%	32%	15%	6%	4%	6%
Greenhill Way would benefit from greening & tree planting & improved crossing facilities for pedestrians & cyclists	32%	40%	11%	5%	4%	8%
Greater pedestrian priority & improved crossing facilities should be introduced in the area between Greenhill Way & Tesco	29%	36%	18%	4%	6%	7%

The one way system in Kimberoly Rd and the western end of College Rd should be changed to 2 way working to improve the access & exit to & from the St Anns & St Georges car parks	23%	27%	23%	13%	7%	7%
The following materials would provide a cost effective yet distinctive feel in Station Road and College Road						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buff coloured concrete paving with granite kerbing &amp; some York stone setts</li> <li>• Dark grey street furniture</li> <li>• Dark blue tactile paving</li> <li>• Special curved lighting column</li> <li>• Contemporary seating</li> <li>• Additional tree planting</li> </ul>	20%	23%	25%	6%	8%	18%
	9%	20%	26%	14%	10%	21%
	12%	18%	24%	16%	18%	20%
	20%	26%	18%	8%	6%	22%
	24%	21%	19%	9%	7%	20%
	50%	20%	7%	0%	5%	18%
Better quality materials such as York stone paving should be introduced in key spaces like St Anns Rd & the area around St Johns Church	27%	27%	19%	5%	8%	14%