

## LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

<b>Meeting:</b>	Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel
<b>Date:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2004
<b>Subject:</b>	Wealdstone Market
<b>Key decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	Director of Area Services, Urban Living
<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder:</b>	Planning, Development, Housing and Best Value
<b>Status:</b>	Part 1
<b>Ward:</b>	Marlborough, Wealdstone
<b>Enclosures:</b>	None

### 1. **Summary/ Reason for urgency (if applicable)**

- 1.1 This report summarises the current position in terms of available sites and potential operators of markets in Wealdstone, as requested by the Panel at its meetings of 21<sup>st</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2003.

### 2. **Recommendations (by the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel)**

- 2.1 **The Panel is requested to consider whether officers should take any further action in the matter whilst the current position remains unchanged.**

**REASON: To clarify the Panels direction to officers in the light of the current position as indicated in the report.**

### 3. **Consultation with Ward Councillors**

- 3.1 N/A

### 4. **Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)**

- 4.1 N/A

## 5. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 Given the right location and trading conditions, a market or 'one off' market event has the potential to contribute to developing a prosperous and sustainable economy in Harrow.

## 6. Background Information and options considered

- 6.1 Regular markets, or 'one off' specialist market events, can improve the vitality and viability of an area, **provided that** they are complimentary to the local trading conditions and a suitable site can be found within the area.

- 6.2 This report considers 3 types of market with a summary of market operators requirements, including availability of suitable sites, and whether they can be met in the Wealdstone central shopping area.

### 6.3 Types of market:

- 1. Weekly general market:** Generally operated by a specialist market operator responsible for attracting stallholders, promoting the market, setting up stalls, collecting rents and policing the market, etc. An example is the weekly market currently operating every Thursday on approx. 0.23 hectares of the 0.8 hectare Greenhill Way car park site. Goods and prices are generally at the 'value' end of the retail offer, and would therefore act in direct competition with many Wealdstone traders. Experience demonstrates that a potential operator is likely to require a minimum of one year's security of tenancy.
- 2. Weekly farmers' market:** In London, almost exclusively operated by one specialist operator responsible for attracting stallholders, vetting their production methods and produce, and organising the market on the day etc. An example was the weekly farmers' market held every Sunday on the Hillingdon Civic Centre forecourt, Uxbridge. Space for 20 to 40 stalls, including chiller vans, was required. Goods and prices are generally at the higher end of the retail offer, being aimed at the discerning shopper who is seeking organic or foods of known origin and quality direct from the supplier. Experience in Hillingdon was that despite its prime position on the High Street, and peppercorn rent, the market closed after 2 years through lack of support. It was given this history, and the demographics of the immediate Wealdstone area, that prompted the specialist operator to advise officers in December 2002 that he did not consider Wealdstone as a viable location for a Farmers' market.
- 3. French market event:** Several Continental/British operators specialise in organising 'one off' visits by stall holders selling their continental produce in British towns, often to coincide with Christmas, Easter or local festivals. A typical French market comprises 25 to 30 stalls, including chiller vans, setting up for 2/3 days. Since stalls are typically between 4m. and 16m long, the market requires a ribbon style site of 200m. long minimum. An etiquette of invitation often surrounds such events, with reciprocal arrangements being made through town twinning organisations. Accordingly, electricity, parking for accompanying vehicles and overnight security is provided at a Local Authority's expense, and no fee is charged for the site. The sale of wine and cider requires the advance organisation of temporary alcohol licences. Goods and prices are generally at the higher end of the retail offer, although the

unique nature of the goods, eg. Smoked garlic, French table clothes, does not allow for comparison.

#### 6.4 **Sites:**

1. **Headstone Drive j/w High Street:** This small pedestrianised area in front of Holy Trinity Church, whilst ideal in terms of location, measures only 35m by 12m (0.04 hectares), and is therefore too small to accommodate any of the above activities. The possibility of extending the site to the east of the High Street into Canning Road was explored with London Farmers Markets, but the resulting truncated site was deemed unsuitable by them. The alternative possibility of extending the site to the service road in front of the Post Office in Headstone Drive was discussed with shopkeepers in that parade, but ruled out on grounds of loss of parking. Currently, the access requirements of building works in that area make use of the service road for a market impractical.
2. **16-28 Masons Avenue:** This 0.12 hectare site below the flyover in Masons Avenue is some 150m east of the junction of Masons Avenue with the High Street. It's remoteness from the town centre lowers its' potential for stimulating footfall, and hence it's impact on the the vitality and viability of the Wealdstone shopping centre. Officers are currently instructed to market the site as a sole user. Any temporary or weekly use of the site for a market would jeopardise this marketing activity, and should the site be used, the Council would lose potential income.
3. **Civic Centre car park:** The site is too far from Wealdstone Shopping Centre to be of any benefit to Wealdstone trade. Indeed, holding a market here is likely to act in competition with Wealdstone shops and the Harrow weekly market, drawing trade from both.
4. **Palmerston Road car park:** Comprising only 0.06 hectares, this site is too small to accommodate any of the above market uses. Although close to the central Wealdstone shopping area, it's visibility from major transport routes is too poor to attract passing trade.

#### 7. **Consultation**

- 7.1 As appears in the body of the report.

#### 8. **Finance Observations**

- 8.1 Relevant costs and any potential income would need to be determined if any of the options are to be examined in greater detail.

#### 9. **Legal Observations**

- 9.1 In the event that it was decided to proceed with a market, research would be undertaken to ensure that it was lawful to hold such an event on an identified site.

#### 10. **Conclusion**

- 10.1 Regular markets, or 'one off' specialist market events, can improve the vitality and viability of an area, **provided that** they are complimentary to the local trading conditions and a suitable site can be found within the area.

- 10.2 There are currently no sites of suitable size or location for either a regular market, or a 'one off' specialist market in Wealdstone.
- 10.3 Furthermore, it is questioned whether any of the proposed market uses are complimentary to the local trading conditions in Wealdstone, and would therefore be of use in stimulating the vitality and viability of the area.

11. **Background Papers**

11.1 None

12. **Author**

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