

REPORT FOR: MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PANEL

Date of Meeting:	29 September 2010
Subject:	Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan – Consultants Introduction
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Trehern, Corporate Director Place Shaping
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Bill Stephenson, Leader of the Council, and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No
Enclosures:	Consultants Brief for the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report updates the Panel on the appointment of masterplanning consultants for the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area and sets the scene for an initial presentation by East, the selected lead consultant

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Note the appointment of East to undertake a masterplanning study of the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area; and

2. In the light of this report, and the East presentation, to comment on any issues that the Panel consider should be taken into account in progressing the study.

Reason: (For recommendation)

To update the Panel on the masterplanning study for the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area as part of its oversight role.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

- 1 The Proposal to procure consultants to carry out a masterplanning study of the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area was outlined to the Panel at its last meeting. The study will inform and assist the Council and the GLA to prepare a joint Area Action Plan for the Intensification Area – one of the Council's Flagship Actions, and a key part of the Local Development Framework.
- 2 On 20th August 2010, a selection panel, chaired by the Council's Director of Planning, and including Councillors Keith Ferry and Susan Hall, and senior officers from the GLA and Design for London, interviewed three consultancy teams and agreed the appointment of East Architects as lead consultants for the study, supported by GVA Grimley and Alan Baxter Associates. The consultant team will provide architectural, regeneration, housing, infrastructure delivery, transport and heritage expertise. The study commenced on 2nd September, and a draft masterplan is due to be completed by the end of December.

Options considered

- 3 Following the designation of the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area in the draft replacement London Plan, the Council and the GLA agreed to bring forward a joint Area Action Plan to provide the plan-led framework needed to manage future development in the area. Preparation of a draft AAP was subsequently included as a Flagship Action in the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 4 Although the Council is in a position to prepare the formal stages of the AAP process, it does not have the capacity to undertake the specialist masterplanning on which development options for the area can be identified and assessed. Use of external consultants was considered to

be the only realistic way to carry out the work within agreed Corporate Plan timescales.

- 5 The LDA Architecture, Landscape and Urban Design Framework Agreement was used to ensure that suitable consultants could be engaged quickly, at a cost that had already been subject to competitive tender.

Current situation

- 6 The masterplanning study commenced on 2nd September. Since then the East led team has carried out an initial assessment of the different character areas, focal points and key sites that make up the Intensification Area and has begun to explore options that could meet housing, employment and other growth requirements. A high level review of the indicative IA boundary has also been carried out and potential amendments to the boundary identified. East will present these initial findings, and a commentary on strategic issues, to the Panel meeting.
- 7 Officers have also begun to contact those groups and organisations that will make up a number of consultation forums representing developers, businesses, community groups, young people and delivery partners. The forums will have a scrutiny role in the masterplanning process and will provide a sounding board to explore and test development options as they come forward. Consultation meetings are expected to commence in early October.

Managing the Project

- 8 To oversee the project, a Project Board has been established which is chaired by the Divisional Director of Planning. The Project Board includes officers from the GLA, DfL and TfL and meets monthly. A project team, comprising officers from the Council, led by senior staff from Place Shaping, meets every two weeks and is responsible for the day to day activities associated with delivering the project. The draft masterplan is expected to be presented to both the MDP and LDF panels, prior to formal consultation in accordance with the appropriate requirements.
- 9 To ensure there is clear communication around community engagement over the preparation of the masterplan and the AAP, Council officers are preparing a communications and consultation strategy. This will ensure effective consultation, whether this is being undertaken by the Council or by other parties such as Land Securities regarding their development interests in the Kodak site. Its purpose is to minimise consultation fatigue within the community, remedy the potential for confusion that could arise through parallel consultation exercises, and to ensure the community knows how and when they can get involved in this project.

Financial Implications

- 10 The initial £80,000 consultancy costs for the masterplanning exercise will be met from allocated funds within the Place Shaping Directorate existing budgets. Support from the GLA comprises staff time only at present although officers are seeking contributions towards the costs of the second stage consultancy requirements from the GLA. With one of the smallest Policy teams in West London the AAP is a significant commitment and this will be reflected in the lack of capacity for other significant new works.

Risk Management Implications

- 11 Failure to meet Flagship Actions or to deliver the Local Development Scheme to agreed timelines are included on the Directorate Risk Register. A more detailed Risk Register will be prepared for the masterplanning study.

Equalities implications

- 12 The Area Action Plan for the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area will be subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment.

Corporate Priorities

- 13 The masterplanning study for the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area will inform and assist with the delivery of Flagship Action 3.3, to:

“Prepare an Area Action Plan to deliver future prosperity for the heart of Harrow to help the Council, the community and developers understand and provide new development that improves environmental quality, vitality and economic prosperity”

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanta Hirani

on behalf of the
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 17 September 2010

Name: Matthew Adams

on behalf of the
Monitoring Officer

Date: 20 September 2010

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Phil Greenwood, Head of Major Development Projects. Tel 0208 424 1166. Internal ext 2166.

Background Papers: Consultants Brief for the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area