

Meeting:	Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel
Date:	Mon 24 th Jan 2005
Subject:	Wealdstone Town centre Regeneration
Responsible Officer:	Anna Robinson
Contact Officer:	Anna Robinson
Portfolio Holder:	Planning, Development and Housing
Key decision:	No
Status:	Public

Decision Required

To note the contents of this report.

Reason for report

The last meeting identified the need to improve the attractiveness of Wealdstone to shoppers. This report lists the action taken to date and the likely timescales for implementing further recommendations.

Action already taken

1. Peel House Multi Storey ~ lighting part inoperable. The defective bulbs have been replaced and the council has put in place a programme of inspection so as to determine that the lights remain in working order.
2. Introducing new traders to the High Street ~ the retail surveyors retained have approached target retailers. The next step is to arrange an on site inspection. Initially, "local" foodstores are prime targets.
3. The "cauldron" style planters in the High Street will be replaced in 2005/06 with a different design. Architects have been briefed to design a more user-friendly replacement.
4. Drawings are prepared for the introduction of at least two disabled parking bays at the rear of Premier house.

Short Term deliverables + likely timescales

1. Remove galvanised sections of pedestrian pavement edge barriers that corral and contain rather than allow freedom of pedestrian movement ~ ongoing planned removal starting late 2005 after full consultation with advisory groups and having due regard for public safety.
2. Repair damaged surface of footpath between McDonalds and Masons Avenue ~ April/May 2005
3. Repair and upgrade Gents toilet in Peel House Multi Storey. Combined wash and dry wall unit inoperable. Toilet pan damaged. Scheme prepared for upgrade, budget holder has allocated funds in 2005/06 ~ likely implementation timescale, 3rd quarter 2005.
4. Improve vision and safety in Peel Road pedestrian link from High Street to Peel House Multi Storey along the side of Premier house. Currently, the split-level nature, the medium height wall and vegetation create a fear of crime and discourage, in particular, women shoppers from using the link and the car park. Architects are instructed to prepare a more "open" arrangement and to provide better high-level lighting. This upgrade will accommodate plans that the Healthy Living Centre in Premier House has for external pavement tables in this link area in the warmer months. ~ Likely start to works to be May 2005.
5. De-clutter signage. At both entrances to the bus only section of the High street there is a proliferation of confusing and some redundant signage. Some signage is a legal requirement. Inner London Boroughs are eliminating signs so as to simplify communication to road users. We intend to establish what our legal minimum is and then consolidate or remove signs, signposts, lighting stands and other support columns e.g. electricity feed boxes. Action ~ identify external consultant experienced in this specialist area and brief by March 2005 for on the ground action completed by Autumn 2005.
6. Introduce Shopper's car Park sign onto northbound carriageway on George Gange Way. Scheme to be prepared and implemented by Autumn 2005.
7. Alter access/egress to 27 space surface car park at Gladstone Way so that all shoppers' cars use the same route from Canning Road from George Gange Way past the Multi Storey. This could improve use of the multi storey and stop traffic infringement where drivers turn the wrong way up a one way street to access the Multi Storey if the surface park is full.

Longer Term initiatives

1. Improve the road traffic junction at Ellen Web Drive/Headstone drive to improve access for shoppers from the west area of the conurbation wishing to visit the post office and shopping parade adjacent, by the introduction of a straight ahead return route when exiting Headstone Drive. A capital budget request to do the work has been submitted for 2005/06. Likely implementation ~ end financial year.
2. The introduction of a right turn in both directions for traffic on both Masons

Avenue and Ellen Webb Drive at the junction of these roads with The Bridge. This lack of a right turn was pointed out at the time of the removal of the roundabout arrangement that preceded the present arrangement of sequenced lights. We intend to examine the traffic flow and establish whether the flow can accommodate this right turn provision whilst avoiding lengthy tailbacks. Action ~ the highway team to undertake the study by Summer 2005 and report to the next meeting.

3. The introduction of a right turn at the top end of the Bridge onto George Gange Way. Currently only buses can make this turn. See above item 2; the same comment applies to this traffic study.

Financial Implications

None

Legal Implications

None

Conclusion

The above items constitute a list of practical steps that are within the council's control to implement. They form part of an overall strategy for regenerating Wealdstone Shopping environment. They will be complimented by the following actions that take a more strategic overview of the needs of the centre and the shopping customers.

Starting early 2005, we plan to:

- Conclude the summary brief for the vitality study. This study will identify what is missing in the retail line up of traders and how the council may assist with the attraction of target retailers to Wealdstone. A vibrant local centre such as Wealdstone needs to serve the local customers on its doorstep. How well does it carry out this function and prevent "leakage" of potential shoppers, particularly seeking convenience or perishable foods to competing centres, such as Harrow. In particular we will examine
 - What shops exist
 - What are needed to fill the gap in local provision
 - What do shoppers want to see in Wealdstone
 - How accessible and convenient is Wealdstone
 - Is there a resistance to the trip i.e. parking provision and charging

Equalities Impact

This report is for information only