

# **REPORT FOR: MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PANEL**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2011
<b>Subject:</b>	Heart of Harrow Area Action Plan – Preferred Option
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Andrew Trehern Corporate Director Place Shaping
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Bill Stephenson. Leader of the Council, and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	No
<b>Enclosures:</b>	None

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report provides an update on the preparation of the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan and the steps that are being taken to secure Cabinet approval of a Preferred Option for public consultation.

### **Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Panel note:

1. Progress on the preparation of a Preferred Option for the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan; and
2. that a report will be presented to Cabinet at its December meeting seeking approval of the Preferred Option for the purposes of public consultation.

### **Reason: (For recommendation)**

To update the Panel on the next stage of the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan as part of its oversight role.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 At its last meeting the Panel considered a series of documents that would form the key components of a Preferred Option for the Heart of Harrow. The documents included a summary of the role and spatial objectives for seven separate character areas and more than 20 development sites that comprise the Intensification Area, and a draft infrastructure schedule setting out the planning policy, delivery, funding and phasing assumptions that would apply to each identified requirement.
- 1.2 The Panel also considered a comprehensive presentation from the Director of Planning on the issues that had influenced the Area Action Plan (AAP), and details of emerging proposals for each of the different character areas and development sites.
- 1.3 At that time it had been intended that a Preferred Option report would then be taken to the Local Development Framework (LDF) Panel and Overview and Scrutiny Committee, before being presented to Cabinet in October seeking approval for public consultation. However, following comments by the Planning Inspector at the LDF Core Strategy Examination in Public on the need for robust evidence to substantiate planning policies and proposals, officers considered it prudent to commission a Views Assessment of the borough to ensure that proper account could be given to one of the key issues that had been identified in earlier public consultation. An important element of the study was to review existing and potential new views of St Mary's Church, and to recommend appropriate policies for inclusion in the AAP to protect and manage these views and vistas.
- 1.4 As a result of this additional work a revised timetable has had to be adopted that will involve Cabinet considering the Preferred Option at its December meeting, to enable the 6 week public consultation period to commence in January 2012.
- 1.5 This report updates the Panel on the next stage in the AAP process, the proposed form, content and purpose of the Preferred Option and the scope of the consultation exercise. The key points will be highlighted in an officer presentation at the Panel meeting.

### **2. The Preferred Option Document**

- 2.1 The Preferred Option document will set out the Council's vision for the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area - the "Heart of Harrow" - for the next 15 years, building on the results of the Issues and Options consultation earlier this year. Option 4 - *High Roads and Centres*, which received the highest level of support, has been used as the basis for the detailed development of the Preferred Option. However, weight has also been given to the aims and objectives of Option 3 - *Two Centres* which also received a significant level of support, especially in relation to the role of Station Road and the proposed type and scale of development in this sub area.

- 2.2 As well as setting out a spatial strategy for the whole of the Intensification Area, the Preferred Option document will outline the Development Management policies that the Council proposes to put in place to achieve the strategy, the role and objectives for the different character areas that make up the Heart of Harrow, and the preferred option for the use and development of key sites together with their contribution to sub area objectives. Design and development parameters for each site will be provided, including the amount of development, significant constraints and opportunities, height and density requirements, the impact on view corridors, phasing and funding conditions to meet infrastructure needs and any other site specific guidance that is important to the local context. An indicative layout, showing how each site could be developed to meet these requirements, will also be included. The final part of the document will set out the approach that the Council will take to deliver and implement the AAP.
- 2.3 The Preferred Option consultation will be undertaken under Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning Local Development Regulations 2008, the same as the Issues and Options consultation. This is an additional round of consultation than had been originally planned and responds to the concerns that Members expressed at the Panel meeting in May about the limited further opportunities that the community would have to comment on key site specific details. The Regulation 25 stage is designed to ensure that the community is properly engaged in the preparation of the AAP, and to provide robust, evidenced information to support the Council's plans for the area. The purpose of the consultation is to invite the whole community - residents, businesses, landowners, developers, local interest groups and other stakeholders – to comment on the Preferred Option and to give consultees the opportunity to either confirm their support, or to put forward alternatives, provide further information or suggest new policies or proposal sites. The results will then be considered by the Council in developing the Plan further.
- 2.4 An updated Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Impact Assessment will be published alongside the Preferred Option consultation document to assist consultees in making an informed decision.

### **3 Next Steps**

- 3.1 Formal consideration of the Preferred Option rests with the LDF Advisory Panel and Cabinet. The Preferred Option consultation document will therefore be considered at the LDF Panel meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December and Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> December. Subject to Cabinet approval a 6 week public consultation will commence in early January 2012.
- 3.2 The results of consultation will be used to prepare the final Area Action Plan for submission to the Secretary of State. Before submission, however, a further public consultation will be undertaken to test the soundness of the Plan. Representations made at that stage will then be taken into account by the Council in considering whether to revisit the Plan further, or to continue to formal submission.

## 4 Financial Implications

4.1 The consultancy costs for stage 2 of the AAP process are fully contained within the Planning Department's budget allocation for 2011/12.

## 5 Risk Management Implications

5.1 The risks associated with the preparation of the AAP are covered in a specific risk register.

## 6 Equalities implications

6.1 An updated Equalities Impact Assessment will be prepared and published alongside the Preferred Option consultation document

## 7 Corporate Priorities

7.1 The Area Action Plan will inform and assist with the delivery of the following Corporate Priorities

- Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe – by improving the quality and safety of public spaces throughout the Intensification Area
- United and involved communities: a Council that listens and leads – through the Engagement Forums that have been established to shape the AAP
- Supporting our town centre, our local shopping centres and businesses – through the AAP that will guide the future development of Harrow town centre and Wealdstone and form one of the key building blocks for an inward investment strategy promoting business opportunities in the borough.

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jennifer Hydari	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2011		
Name: Matthew Adams	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2011		

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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

**Background Papers:** None