

# MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS PANEL MINUTES

## 1 DECEMBER 2011

**Chairman:** \* Councillor Bill Stephenson

**Councillors:** \* Tony Ferrari \* Barry Macleod-Cullinane  
\* Keith Ferry \* Joyce Nickolay (1)  
\* Thaya Idaikkadar \* Varsha Parmar (3)

\* Denotes Member present  
(1) and (3) Denote category of Reserve Members

### 71. Attendance by Reserve Members

**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Susan Hall  
Councillor Phil O'Dell

Reserve Member

Councillor Joyce Nickolay  
Councillor Varsha Parmar

### 72. Declarations of Interest

**RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members.

### 73. Minutes

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2011, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

## **74. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions, petitions or deputations were received at this meeting under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rules 51, 49 and 50 (Part 4D of the Constitution).

## **RESOLVED ITEMS**

### **75. Heart of Harrow Area Action Plan - Preferred Option**

Members received a report of the Corporate Director of Place Shaping which provided an update on the preparation of the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan and the steps that were being taken to secure Cabinet approval of a Preferred Option for public consultation.

A Member expressed concern at the quality of the print in the Heart of Harrow document provided to Members the previous day and the lateness it was received. He added that it would be helpful if the document had shown tracked changes. The Chair responded that it had been thought that it would be helpful to have early sight of the document, which was to be considered by the Local Development Framework Panel (LDF) and Cabinet later that month. He reminded Members that they had seen the key elements of the document before and that the printing issue would be addressed.

The Corporate Director of Place Shaping reported that since the last meeting of the Panel, detailed work had been done and that in the run up to the meeting of the LDF Panel a series of briefings would be organised for Members if the Panel felt that it would be helpful. The report detailed the next stage in the Area Action Plan (AAP) process, the proposed form, content and purpose of the Preferred Option and the scope of the consultation exercise.

The Divisional Director of Planning gave a detailed presentation, 'Harrow: A borough at the edge of London', a copy of which can be viewed on the Council's website. He advised that the aspiration was to increase the richness and diversity of the town centre. The AAP was effectively about encouraging and managing development and Harrow was fortunate in that it had over 30 development sites and was well placed to explore the opportunities for growth.

The Divisional Director then went on to describe each of the seven sub areas that made up the AAP area and the current position and responded to Members questions as follows:

#### **Wealdstone West**

In terms of Colart, the Divisional Director advised that this was a relatively low density development and therefore car parking would be relatively modest. He was, however, aware of the concerns regarding parking levels but this would be a matter for the planning application. In response to a Member's concern in relation to the existing Colart building and whether it would survive,

the Divisional Director advised that the owners had indicated that they wished to work with the Council on the AAP but that the position would be monitored.

A Member sought clarification as to the entrance and exit from the Colart site and was advised that it would be necessary to introduce measures to 'frustrate' rat running through the site via the route shown in the masterplan. In terms of a bridge link over the railway between Kodak and the Teachers' Centre and the funding available, the Divisional Director advised that there was not a dedicated fund and in order to make a route through, some private property would need to be secured. The proposed site layout at Kodak would, however, facilitate a link should it be brought forward at a future date.

The Divisional Director advised that it was proposed to have a six form entry high school on the Teachers' Centre site and whilst the site area for such a development could extend up to 9 hectares, this site was 2.3 hectares. This would therefore not be easy but it was under serious consideration. He acknowledged the Member's point about likely demand in that location but advised that, at this time, this was the only site under consideration.

### **Wealdstone Central**

The Divisional Director advised that this sub-area was comprised of a number of relatively smaller sites and that the aim was to reinforce its position as a local town centre. The vision was to cement better connections to Harrow and Wealdstone station and to recognise Wealdstone is at a "crossroads". Commenting on the route shown in the masterplan for the town centre, it was not envisaged that there would be a vehicular route across the High Street from Headstone Drive; it should be walkable in order to open up the area.

The Divisional Director, in responding to a Member's comment that the railway line severely restricted access in the area and that opening up a pedestrian access through Harrow and Wealdstone station was preferable to going over the bridge, stated that there were challenges in terms of revenue security. He did envisage revisions to the existing arrangements on the Harrow side of the station.

### **Wealdstone East**

The Divisional Director reported that whilst investment was required in the Leisure Centre, it was a good asset. The West London Waste Plan would address issues in terms of the Depot site.

### **Station Road**

The Divisional Director advised that this sub-area was comprised of a series of opportunity sites and that he hoped that land owners would consider the possibilities. The Civic Centre site was a project in its own right. The key to this sub-area was to create a more definitive corridor to the town centre. The maximum height of buildings in this area would be 7-8 storeys and progressively reducing in height moving outwards.

The Divisional Director advised that there was a current application from Tesco for an extension to the existing store. The Greenhill Way site was challenging and there was a need for a comprehensive approach.

In response to Member's queries, officers advised that in terms of location for the new Civic Centre, there was scope for sufficient floor space in the Station Road corridor but that the discussion about Council property was on-going. Options currently being considered included office buildings in Harrow town centre, Greenhill Way car park and remaining on the current site, either in a new build or the existing building. This was, however, a long term issue. A clear direction of travel was required and would be developed as part of the commercial masterplan. A report setting out clear recommendations would be submitted to Cabinet in early 2012.

The Corporate Director advised that he did not envisage the Civic Centre site being taken up for development in a single block, although he acknowledged the Member's point that it may be possible to sell the site, as one block, for a greater amount. He reassured Members that money would not be wasted on the development of the existing Civic Centre, where the Council was likely to continue to operate from for at least another 9 years.

Responding to a Member's question as to whether the road in front of Tesco adjoining Hindes Road could be widened, taking account of the fact that the Tesco site and the Civic Centre were already set back, the Divisional Director stated that a significant amount of development would be required to fund such a project and that other constraints, such as the elevated section of George Gange Way and displacement of small businesses, would severely limit feasibility.

### **Harrow Western Gateway**

The Divisional Director reported that Neptune Point and Bradstowe House were in varying states and it was hoped to that the approach to the sites could be improved. The frontage along College Road required improvement and was likely to include an 8 storey building. This was quite a high amenity location and there was a need to manage down the quantum of floor space.

A Member stated that it would be necessary to ensure access to Havelock Place past Queens House and on to the St George's Centre. It was necessary to improve access routes to the Centre.

In responding to a Member's concerns in terms of the increasing amount of graffiti at Bradstowe House, the Divisional Director advised that the building was in the hands of the Receiver and there were ongoing discussions with a consortium about a possible takeover. Officers had met with the prospective developer.

### **Harrow Town Centre**

The Divisional Director reported that further work was required on the emerging framework that it was proposed to connect College and St Ann's

Roads through Havelock Place. Work was starting on improving the walking routes in the town centre.

### **Harrow Town Centre East**

The Divisional Director reported that the proposals looked to exploit connections through the High Street. Permissions were in place for a higher building in Gayton Road offering good views of the Hill, progressively reducing in scale towards the east of the site. There were, however, issues in relation to car parking. Referring to Lyon Road, he advised that the potential views, public space opportunities, amenities and the fact that it was south facing was a potential asset. There were, however, sensitivities around the ground floor space.

A Member commented that car parking had to be considered as the reason Hatch End, for example, was so vibrant was because users of the night time economy there could drive and park. Responding in general to Members concerns about parking, the Divisional Director advised that the challenge was to have better rather than more parking and there was also a need to manage people out of their cars in order to reduce congestion whilst not reducing the quality of the offer or the attractiveness of the town centre.

Following a Member's comments that the Council should improve the night time economy in the town centre, with up market bars and restaurants along Lyon Road, the Chair advised that as there was a current planning application, this could not be discussed so as not to compromise Members of the Planning Committee who were also Members of the Panel.

The Divisional Director advised that there would be refinement of the preferred options through informal feedback. He indicated that officers were happy to hold briefings for Members and would do their best to communicate the current position with Members despite the compressed new timetable. The Preferred Option would be considered by the Local Development Framework Panel on 8 December and Cabinet on 15 December 2011.

#### **RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the progress on the preparation a Preferred Option for the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan be noted;
- (2) to note that a report would be presented to Cabinet on 15 December 2011 seeking approval of the Preferred Option for the purposes of public consultation.

**Reason for Decision:** To keep updated on the next stage of the Harrow and Wealdstone AAP as part of its oversight role.

## **76. Strategic Development Sites Update**

The Panel received a report and appended schedule from the Divisional Director of Planning which provided an overview of current progress with the development of strategic sites across the borough and drew Members'

attention to two specific proposals for development in Lyon Road and on the Kodak/Zoom Leisure sites. He gave a presentation, prepared by Land Securities, on the Kodak site, and which may be viewed on the Council's website. Stephen Neal of Land Securities was also in attendance.

The presentation highlighted both the good and bad perceptions of Harrow from local community and business organisations. Land Securities viewed the Kodak site as a real opportunity and the feedback from the latest consultation exercise was broadly supportive of the masterplan. The Divisional Director detailed the benefits of the proposals, which included provision of a new primary school, affordable housing, new play space and public realm and commercial leisure.

In terms of the outstanding issues detailed in the presentation, the Divisional Director voiced his concerns as to whether an out of centre supermarket of the scale proposed was required but that Land Securities were building a case for this. It was expected that Land Securities would be submitting a planning application on 9 December and, subject to the conclusion of the outstanding issues, a special Planning Committee would be convened in Spring 2012.

Members asked a series of questions which were responded to as follows:

- The Divisional Director advised that the Kodak chimney would be retained with a café at its base. Mr Neal added that its maintenance would be part of the wider discussion on how the public realm was maintained over its life. Those that lived and worked on the site would be asked to contribute.
- There had been discussions with Sport England about the playing fields at the Zoom Leisure site and how they would be replaced. The existing pitches were not available for general public use. There would be investment in current facilities at Headstone Manor Recreation Ground and the Roger Bannister playing fields. In responding to a request from a Member that a more detailed report be prepared for the next Panel meeting, the Divisional Director advised that, by that time, a planning application would have been submitted and the information that had been requested would be a material planning consideration which the Panel would be unable to discuss. The Chair reminded the Panel that the Open Spaces Strategy had recently been approved by Cabinet.
- Mr Neal advised that there was a drive to move students away from the centre of London and to encourage them to use public transport. A Member stated that 90% of the students attending the Harrow Campus lived at home so he remained to be convinced on this point.
- There had been discussions on the access to Headstone Manor via the new development but Land Securities had indicated that they did not propose to provide additional access. There were issues in terms of the existing flood plain.

- The proposed "Energy Centre" would support London Plan policy to increase the use of renewable and low carbon generating technologies in all new major development.
- The Elderly Care Centre had been promoted by Land Securities.

The Divisional Director of Planning, for the purposes of information only, then gave a brief presentation on the planning application received for Lyon House, which had been the subject of a newspaper article that day. He advised that any comments on the application, which was currently out for consultation, should be forwarded to officers.

At a Member's request, an update was provided on the former Government Offices at Honeypot Lane and Stanmore Car Park sites. The planning application for the former had been received and the Corporate Director advised that in terms of Anmer Lodge, a briefing for ward councillors had been held that week and a notice placed in the local press advertising 3 public consultation sessions. A report would be submitted to Cabinet in order to seek agreement on the preferred bidder. He added that the way forward had been agreed with the Portfolio Holder and that all ward councillors had been consulted.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **77. Future Topics and Presentations**

Members considered which items they would like to receive at their next meeting. The Corporate Director advised that work was ongoing with the Youth Parliament for a future submission to the Panel on youth aspirations for the Borough. He added that Transport for London had been invited to attend a future meeting to discuss its broad approach to managing traffic flows. In addition, the Corporate Director advised that the product of the commercial master planning exercise would be reported to the Panel.

## **78. Termination of Meeting**

In accordance with the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 48.2 (Part 4D of the Constitution) it was

**RESOLVED:** At 9.55 pm to continue until 10.10 pm.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.58 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR BILL STEPHENSON  
Chairman