

## **Building a Better Harrow Residents Panel: Meeting 15, 24 July 2018**

### **Attendance**

*Officers:* Paul Nichols, Mark Billington, Shehzad Ahmed, David Hughes, Beverley Kuchar, Sandra Perez, Daniel Lester, Leanne Cooper

*Panel members:* Raj Kumar (facilitator / chair), Joanna Bowyer, Mihir Benodekar, Vishaal Shah, Louise Baxter, Manjul Shah

*Apologies:* Consolata Ndungu, Kiran Chotalia, Graham Kaunders, Magali Peyrefitte

### **Presentations**

Welcome & Introductions - Raj Kumar

Latest News – Paul Nichols

Harrow Town Centre

- Harrow Square – Will start to be occupied. Council working on proposals for fit out of library.
- Gayton Road – phased scheme and we're getting handover of some of the blocks of affordable housing. We have the keys for the first block.
- Cumberland Hotel – it is onsite now.
- Lyon Road – units are now being sold.
- Harrow-on-the-Hill Station – Redrow onboard with TfL and developing proposals.

Wealdstone

- Kodak – Barratt/Hyde are moving forward in developing their proposals. The old factory on the site has been sold to Dandi Living for dedicated future employment use. They are looking to get a central London employer out to the site.
- Premier House – Has been bought by a Swedish company and they will proceed to convert, refurbish and extend the building.
- 9-11 Palmerston Road – Origin Housing have sold the scheme to an American group who will deliver the scheme with Origin retaining the 40% affordable housing offer on the site.
- 55 Palmerston Road - New scheme in planning by developer The Collective for 220 co-living accommodation units, with offices and café.
- Sam Maguire Pub – Site hoarded and under development.
- Depot site – Been through planning and contractor being appointed.

- Civic Centre – Received planning permission. Enabling works and further consultation later this year.

#### Borough Wide

- Grange Farm – Scheme has the permissions but will now have to go through an estate regeneration ballot process.

#### Questions:

- For the Council housing what sort of rents will be charged? Will it be traditional affordable or social rents? *A: Sure will vary scheme to scheme but to qualify for the funding likely to be social rent.*
- Can you remind us what the Depot proposals are about. *A: We're rebuilding our tatty and inefficient office buildings. The offices will be rebuilt along with other workspaces and parking. There will be a commercial opportunity to let some workspace to interested businesses.*

#### London Plan – David Hughes

- Reviewed the Draft London Plan, the implications for Harrow and the timescales. [View the presentation.](#)

#### Key Issues: Housing

- Draft London Plan has a strong emphasis on Housing.
- Harrow's ten year housing target (2019/20-2028/29) is 13,920 homes or 1,392 homes per year.
- This is relatively modest compared to other boroughs but a 135% increase on the current target (5,930 homes over ten years, or 593 homes per year).
- The Mayor is expecting that most of the increase will come from small sites throughout the borough.
- Strategic target of 50% Affordable Housing, but with a threshold approach:
- Minimum of 35% on new developments.
- 50% for public sector land.
- 50% for strategic industrial locations.
- 50% overall strategic target.
- Applications that meet the above thresholds are able to be fast tracked (no requirement for Financial Viability Assessments at application stage).

- 'Late stage' review mechanisms to be utilised to seek additional affordable housing once development is almost complete (and actual sales / construction values known).
- Proposed Housing target and make up (965 of 1,392 homes per year coming from small sites).
- Current Harrow Local Plan is generally very permissive in terms of bringing forward new housing, in terms of new-builds and conversions of existing stock.
- Difficult to achieve proposed numbers (currently average 80-90 homes per year from small sites / conversions).
- Acknowledge that there is potentially a conflict with the Garden Land SPD (2013) and bringing forward some small sites.
- Punitive measures for failing to deliver on housing target.

#### Key Issues: Economy:

- Central London remains focus for new office development (agglomeration).
- 142,200 office jobs in Outer London (2016-2041), representing 23% of London total.
- Office development in Harrow limited to small-scale office space serving SMEs.
- Harrow MC – mixed-use office potential.
- Wealdstone / Stanmore / Burnt Oak (part) – protect small office capacity.
- Significant shift in industrial land release – Harrow (like most of London) is now included in the 'retain' category i.e. no net loss of industrial floor space.
- Plan promotes intensification of industrial areas sought, with mixed-use development (including residential) – reverse sensitivity.

#### Key Issues: Natural Environment

- Very strong protection of Green Belt / Metropolitan Open Land.
- Implications for infrastructure – schools etc.
- Strategic aim to have 50% of London green by 2050.
- Introduces Urban Greening Factor that will apply to residential and commercial development – implications for Council developments.

#### Key Issues: Transport

- Mayor seeks to increase the modal shift from 65% of all trips to be by foot, cycle or public transport to 80% by 2041.

### Key Issues: Design

- Seeks to ensure good design and good planning is intrinsically linked, with design of developments are appropriately scrutinised (Design Review Panels).
- Has removed Density Matrix (i.e. dwellings per hectare) – likely to see an increase in density of development.
- Increased emphasis on tall buildings, but this should be Plan-led, so local policy will need to identify suitable locations.

### LBH Actions and Key Dates

- Draft Plan reviewed by officers and Councilors (Planning Policy Working Group), in conjunction with relevant internal stakeholders.
- Representations provided to the Mayor: 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018.
- Provide further, more detailed responses as appropriate through participation at the Examination in Public (EiP) (Autumn 2018).
- Joint-work with West London boroughs:
- Housing need – realistic numbers
- Housing supply – small sites study – realistic capacity
- Employment land review – opportunities to retain floorspace
- Published Final London Plan (Autumn 2019)

### Questions:

- The greening target is new to me. How much of Harrow is green? Do we have an individualised target? *A: The 50% is a long-term strategic target for London. We don't have the exact figure at the moment of where we are though Harrow is quite green as a borough.*
- Are gardens and front spaces part of the greening? *A: We don't have controls over the conversion of gardens to drives.*
- Does the 35%affordable housing threshold apply to referable schemes only as the local policy says 40%? *A: It applies to all schemes regardless whether or not it is referable to the Mayor. We've adopted the 35% threshold and we are seeing schemes offering 35% so it is proving effective.*
- Comment: A lot of the small sites in Harrow are industrial or employment land. Will residential take priority over those existing uses or will you keep some employment within that? *A: We have a hierarchy of industrial uses so we do have some local designated industrial/employment uses which we would be seeking to protect. The Mayor has shifted to retaining or reproviding employment floorspace so we could look at options to have both on the same site but it can be difficult to achieve that*

*from a practical point of view, particularly on smaller sites where it's hard to achieve the separations you need.*

- Is there a plan or timetable to review the Local Plan? *A: We are looking to implement a review and general consultation towards the end of the year/start of 2019. We will see how the Draft London Plan is proceeding.*
- Can we look at the Draft London Plan in an ambitious way to raise the profile of Harrow and set out the types of businesses we want to attract and the types of Housing we want? *A: Think we can certainly be more ambitious through the Local Plan. We are in trying to create one of London's first three Creative Enterprise Zones in Wealdstone which shows our intent.*
- Concerned about yearly housing targets of near 1,400 units meaning a load of micro, studio and one-bed flats coming forward which the borough might not want. *A: We need to make sure we are protected by Harrow's polices so the housing is what we need in types of sizes and tenures.*

#### Wealdstone Project: Public Realm & Accessibility – Sandra Perez

- Received planning permission from Harrow Council Planning Committee in March and full planning consent in mid-June.
- Current focus is around the enabling works for the site and land assembly.
- Some works on the site will take place around early Autumn with the move of the sub-station from Canning Road to near the new cycle store.
- Expect the rest of the works from Spring 2019 with the building opening in mid-2021.
- [View the presentation](#) for an update on the public realm and accessibility.

#### Key points:

- Development of the public realm is guided by four main principles:
  1. An accessible town centre
  2. A safe town centre
  3. An active town centre
  4. A thriving town centre
- The Civic Centre has been designed to be an accessible environment to meet the needs of all potential users.
- The site will incorporate:
  - Reconfigured public realm design

- Suitable access for all people
  - Sufficiently wide routes & access
  - Easily accessible parking
  - Identifiable & accessible entrances
  - Easy access to all relevant facilities
- 3 points of entry for the building. A North entrance for accessing democratic services and the staff entrance. On the South there is a customer service entrance. Both these entrances will be connected through the ground floor. The third entrance is a servicing entrance and access for the car park.
  - A number of other improvements are coming forward. One to look at public realm improvements on the High Street. The other is the Bus Priority Scheme which is looking at the patterns of transport in Wealdstone and how things can be made more reliable to relieve congestion. There could be a new bus stop on Canning Road serving the Civic Centre to relieve congestion on the High Street.
  - Public realm & entrance proposals have responded to guidance and inputs from:
    - Accessibility Consultants
    - Designing out Crime Officers
    - Counter Terrorism advice
    - Pedestrian routes & safety have been prioritised across the site
    - Continuous footways along Gladstone Way
    - Feedback received during consultation events

Questions:

- Are you stopping buses from going down the High Street? *A: No, we are looking at rerouting a couple of buses to relieve the congestion on the High Street and at the bus stop by the Wealdstone Centre.*
- Has the cycle route been considered and what are the public cycle provisions? *A: We are looking at improving the width of the cycle lane. The cycle parking will be sheltered and co-located near the secure staff cycle parking.*
- You've spoken to the Design Out Crime Officers and had Counterterrorism advice, but what has been their broader messages in terms of the approach to public realm and landscaping? *A: The biggest confliction in the advice has been around the generous size or gradient of the ramp so as to avoid access by car. The Design Out Crime team want to avoid clutter to improve sight lines to avoid too many barriers and have low planting, the opposite view is held by Counterterrorism who are thinking about access into the site and the need for some form of protection/barriers.*

*There has been a careful mediation between the two to ensure people can easily access the building and we can tell people that this is going to be an area which is safe.*

- *How can the general public give their feedback on the public realm? A: We're planning on having consultation events later this year on the uses of the building, including the terrace space, the public realm and how people can interact with the building and its surroundings. All of the work is up on the [Wealdstone Project website](#).*
- *How are the Youth Offending Team involved and the Youth Centre? A: We have put aside a bit of funding to do something with the ground floor of Premier House. We'd like to modernise the library and have engaged YOT about the entrance and links in that area.*

#### GLA Funded Town Centre Projects – Shehzad Ahmed

- Recap on historic, current and future projects.
- [View the Presentation](#)

Questions:

Is the Wealdstone Square project coordinated with the Civic Centre project thinking about materials and public realm? A: Yes, *the same architects 'We Made That' are working across both projects.*

#### Good Growth Fund - #IBackHAC – Mark Billington

- [View the presentation](#)
- AOB
- **Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 11 September**