

Building a Better Harrow Residents Regeneration Panel Meeting 23, 11 February 2020 at Harrow Civic Centre

Attendance

Officers: Leanne Cooper, Sudheesh Bhasi and David Sklair

Councillor Keith Ferry

Panel members: Raj Kumar (facilitator / chair), Kiran Chotalia, Mihir Benison, Louise Baxter, Tanvi Vyas, Magali Peyrefitte, Consolata Ndungu and Manjul Shah.

Guests: Isobel Vernon-Avery (Arup), Hannah Griffiths (Arup), Jack Stevens (Arup) and Gareth Jones (Origin Housing)

Panel apologies: Nafeesa Chalisa and Vishaal Shah.

Items

JV and Other News

- Strategic Development Partner process continuing, now in final dialogue stage. Council anticipate preferred bidder stage in April with a Cabinet report in June.
- Haslam House and Waxwell Lane developments are now on site.
- Wealdstone Town Centre Improvement Scheme consultation has been ongoing with events in the library and online. Open until 21 February.
- Wealdstone Square handover anticipated end of February and to be open to the public in March.
- Harrow Arts Centre first phase (renovation of existing buildings) on site. Public meeting on 24 February to provide an update on next stages.
- Greenhill Place on site.
- LBH (Councillor Ferry and Paul Walker) will be attending MIPIM next month.
- LBH recently attended Sitematch and met 12 companies – lots of interest in Harrow from developers.

Questions/Panel Feedback

- Excitement at Wealdstone Town Centre Improvement Scheme consultation around changes in Wealdstone, but some concerns around parking and permits.

Action: LBH Regeneration Team to attend RRP meeting following selection of Strategic Development Partner preferred bidder.

Action: RRP to provide any response to Wealdstone Town Centre Improvement scheme consultation online by 21 February - <https://consult.harrow.gov.uk/consult.ti/Wealstonetcimprov/consultationHome>.

Wealdstone Update – Sudheesh Bhasi, LBH Community Cohesion Policy Officer

- Wealdstone Action Group (WAG) started after the summer of 2018 following concerns from community and demand for more action/better communication. Initial focus on street drinking, drug dealing and antisocial behaviour. Way for the police and Council to work together with the community.
- Council and Police have put a lot of resource into the area and feedback has indicated that street drinking has improved.
- More recent concerns over flytipping – as a result pilot area in Wealdstone to tackle this since December 2019.
- In future, envisaged that the group will become more of a consultative body.
- Next WAG meeting 6.30pm on 12 February at Holy Trinity Church, Wealdstone.
- Council would like to roll out action groups to other areas with community groups seen as key to providing improvements, but depends on resources.
- Community Action South Harrow (CASH) group has helped to raise awareness of Grange Farm and regeneration, and important in helping to find new ways of working and delivering change in the context of reduced resources.

Questions/Panel Feedback

- Concern that improvements seen in street drinking will not be sustained when the weather gets hotter again. *This was also a concern in the summer of 2019, but police reported that there was an improvement over previous years. Longer term, the solution involves multiple partners working together to tackle causes of street drinking rather than action which may just displace the issue to other locations. Council are investigating potential sources of funding to assist with this.*

Wealdstone Future High Streets Fund Bid – Mihir Benison, Isobel Vernon-Avery, Hannah Griffiths and Jack Stevens (all Arup)

- The Arup team are looking for feedback to improve the bid and there is also a requirement to demonstrate how the community have been involved in developing the proposal.
- It is intended that the Future High Street Fund bid will be able to bring together other schemes which are ongoing in the area (Strategic Development Partner, Liveable Neighbourhoods and TfL street improvements).
- Wealdstone is one of 101 areas to make it through Phase 1 to the next stage. Potentially £25M funding available, but more realistically likely to be around £5-10M.

- One of the priorities for the bid, in the context of a perceived focus on more northern areas is to demonstrate the real challenges that exist in Wealdstone, and to illustrate the good opportunities available to address these.
- TfL improvement works fits in well with the bid; both links north/south along the High Street and also east/west links to address severance by the railway line.
- Potential for a new railway crossing to connect the new development at Kodak with the High Street. A number of options for the detail of this with varying costs, although the initial feasibility work has already been done with regards to the location.
- Bid looking at community uses that it is either important to retain within the town centre or which would be beneficial to bring to the area.
- Smart City is an important element being looked at. Currently researching literature and relevant policies and speaking to key people
- The vision for Wealdstone is to be ‘London’s first digital high street – a thriving place where technology supports a safer, cleaner and more vibrant environment.’
- Considering key challenges for the area within themes of ‘live’, ‘work’ and ‘play’, and how digital/technology can help to address these.
- Examples of schemes considered include Glasgow dynamic lighting, Lille ‘tree lungs’, Green Wave Copenhagen, LB Greenwich Smart Bins and Disability Access Support London and Reading.
- Draft case to be submitted March 2020, final case June 2020 and announcement of results in Autumn 2020.

Questions/Panel Feedback

- Existing bridge between Carmelite Way and Courtenay Avenue is unlit and magnet for graffiti and antisocial behaviour deterring use. Suitable lighting of any new bridge must be a priority.
- If the new bridge is to have a lift, then maintenance of this and ensuring it is available at all times needs to be considered to ensure there is equality of access.
- Providing a wide bridge could create a place, rather than just a connection.
- Uncovered bridge considered to be preferable (see e.g. the bridge from Embankment station to South Bank) for safety/security purposes, but needs to be enclosed to the sides to protect railway line.
- Vital that a library is retained in Wealdstone. Performance and meeting space facility is missing though – this could also help to create footfall/energy on the High Street into the evening. An example of such a space is the Curve, Slough.
- Youth Centre should be retained, but consultation and engagement should include all young people and not just the existing Youth Centre users.

- Has the relocation of the Civic Centre been considered? *Yes, other schemes in the area and opportunities arising from these are being considered.*
- If there is to be 'Smart City' technology, need to make sure that this is available to all and so consideration for assistive technology and integration is important.
- Any technology must be maintained for success in the longer term. Potential for advertising to provide revenue/funding towards this.
- Benefits of the improvements to the community should be made clear.
- Proposals should be ground-breaking/innovative to attract funding and interest. Could help to create an identity for Wealdstone.
- Will there be super-fast broadband? *TfL are rolling out fibre along their network and may be some potential to extend this out to Council buildings.*
- Important to prioritise and focus on few big outcomes. *Aim is to come up with a shortlist of three proposals to focus on within the bid.*

Action: Any further comments/feedback welcome via Sudheesh/Mihir.

Origin Housing Regeneration Update – Gareth Jones, Origin Housing

- Origin Housing operates exclusively in North London and Hertfordshire. Their key value is that “homes alone are not enough”.
- Three large schemes in Harrow currently. Target at least 40% affordable housing in any scheme. Working closely with LBH and looking to introduce community benefits alongside homes.
- Northolt Road, South Harrow: completed. Tenure-blind scheme with generous floorspace and balconies/terraces. Energy efficient and sprinkler system.
- Station Road, Harrow: On site, and similar attributes to Northolt Road scheme.
- Palmerston Road, Wealdstone: Due to start March 2020. 100% affordable (105 London Affordable Rent and 81 shared ownership). Will be access through the site to connect to station, although details of how this will operate to be considered further.
- Commercial units at ground floor level, and flexible office space.
- Considering different uses for the public realm under the flyover. Note that the success of the area will depend on having a meaningful use (that can be adaptable to changing need) and good footfall. Essential that good quality low maintenance lighting is provided for increased security.

Questions/Panel Feedback

- Providing wifi/electricity to public realm at Palmerston Road will assist with use of space.

- How will shared ownership be allocated? *Nominations schedule gives first option to LBH.*
- LBH Economic Development team are currently progressing ideas for public art in Wealdstone and would be beneficial to consider this alongside Palmerston Road space.
- Management of blocks important. *Origin Housing also considering sensitive lettings plan. There will be a caretaker on site, and thought given to pest control and waste disposal.*
- Will there be access to the Palmerston Road site from the flyover? *No, for highways maintenance reasons unable to provide connection to the road.*

Action: RK to email Gareth Jones list of ideas for uses of space.

Action: Affordable housing to be the subject of a future RRP meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

- **21 April and 16 June.**

AOB

- 24 February – Harrow Arts Centre Phase 2 consultation meeting.
- 25 February – Roxeth Christchurch, tackling knife crime summit.
- 25 February – Harrow Town Centre pancake race.
- 26 February – Arc House launch event with Nomad.