

Surprise, Surprise!

HARROW

Positive change in Harrow

The London Borough of Harrow is most famous for one of its schools but over the next few years it could become just as well known as a place where the developer community can do business. The Borough has a new political administration, which welcomes opportunities for successful regeneration and has ideas that run well beyond the next couple of years.

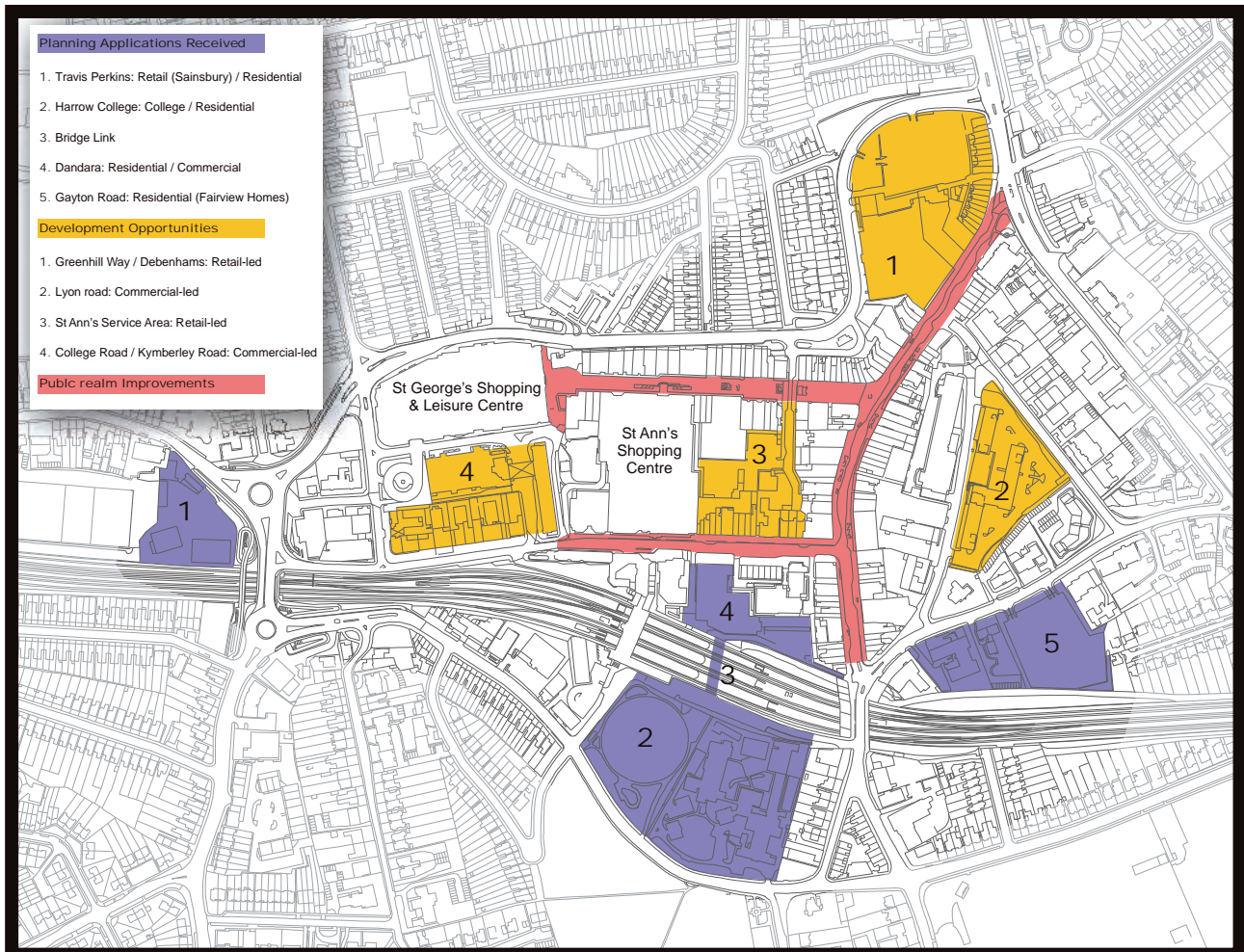
limited retail focus for many years, but with the arrival of Westfield at Shepherds Bush and, just a few miles away, new development at Brent Cross, Wembley and elsewhere in London, the town centre needs to up its game.

Innovation at the Hub

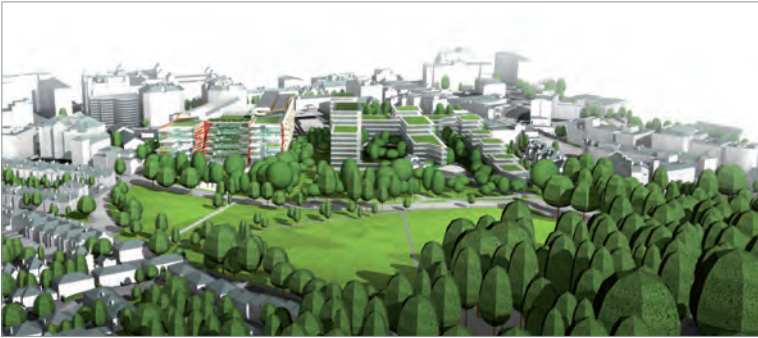
At the heart of the Council's plans are ambitious proposals for a revamped transport

Harrow town centre showing existing applications and opportunities

Harrow town centre has had a successful but



First stage proposal for Harrow College redevelopment by MacCormac Jamieson Prichard Architects



Lyon Road, an opportunity in waiting



hub, at Harrow-on-the-Hill station, which the borough aims to remodel to allow a more seamless interchange between rail and bus, and to connect over the rail tracks between the town centre to the north, and Harrow College and the green slopes of Harrow on the Hill to the immediate south.



"One of the trends we have noticed over recent years is the migration of major corporate occupiers from Central to West London, undoubtedly attracted by the availability of top quality office space at competitive rents with an unrivalled supporting infrastructure."

Jon Mowbray, Head of Commercial Landlord and Tenant, IBB Solicitors.

This development, currently awaiting approval, is remarkable for its complexity – residential developer, Dandara, Harrow College and Transport for London are all involved in a programme led by the borough – one complex enough to put off the less adventurous.

2000 sqm of retail is backed by a 800 unit residential development, while a new £100 million College, designed by Macormac Jamieson Pritchard, is, at 30,000m², the largest tertiary college development in the UK.

All this is surrounded by around £7 million of spend on improvements in the public realm - £3.6 million is earmarked for St. Ann's Road – designed by Urban Initiatives with

work starting in Spring 2008. This dramatic upgrade of the local landscape, coupled with development of an intensity, scale and height not formerly seen in the Borough, will enhance property values in the town centre and surroundings, and revolutionise the regeneration opportunities.

That Harrow Council is steering this project through planning is testament to their new attitude, and determination to drive the Borough's economic development through physical regeneration. It's a clear sign that the new administration is not prepared to accept 'more of the same' when it comes to planning Harrow's future.

The Opportunity Continues

Another retail development of interest is an old-style Debenhams store at the eastern end of the retail area. This backs on to a council owned car park – Greenhill Way – which the Borough is prepared to put into the pot to create a rare 2 hectare retail-led development opportunity, including a new or re-styled Debenhams. This new flexibility again shows the Borough's determination to rebuild its town centres.

It's not all retail – there's commercial development opportunity in College Road, right next to the station, where outdated '70's office blocks such as Queen's House are crying out for redevelopment, and, similarly, Lyon Road, home to the Land Registry and to a range of tired office accommodation ripe for renewal. The chance to build a new thriving commercial quarter and perhaps a hotel within easy reach of central London and five minutes from Wembley is one many developers may relish.



*One of
the largest
chunks of
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land
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A Castle Reborn

Towards Wealdstone, the Borough has further plans for wide ranging regeneration, which may well include significant changes to the 3.2 hectare Civic Centre site just next to Harrow and Wealdstone station.

A rationalisation of office space requirements and car parking will produce a significant amount of space available for redevelopment on the site presently occupied by the uniquely castellated seventies Civic Centre accommodation. While the Borough wants to retain some of the site for civic use, and are in early discussions with a potential occupier for some of the remainder, they plan to offer up the rest for mixed use residential and retail development.

This would just about complete the 'Harrow central growth corridor' as a commercial/retail connection between the two main centres in the Borough, and the two main rail connections, stretching the commercial and retail offer from Harrow-on-the-Hill to Wealdstone and beyond.

It also connects Harrow-on-the-Hill more clearly with the employment land to the North, such as the Kodak works. Around 4 hectares of this 15 hectare industrial site has recently been acquired by Land Securities, which represents one of the largest chunks of

employment land development opportunity in London outside Heathrow or Park Royal.

The fact that Kodak have retained the remainder of the land, and are now actively working to rationalise and improve their site, sustains their presence as an important employment provider in the Borough, and potential customer for new occupiers on the Land Sec site.

Open to approach

Further opportunities exist in the rest of the borough, where connectivity to the M1, M25, M40, Heathrow and even to Luton Airport, is enviable. The Borough has a vision for development and is keen to share this with developers and investors.

So, surprise surprise, Harrow is a borough of much opportunity, and refreshing flexibility and openness from a new administration.

The 3.2 ha Civic Centre site may provide significant development opportunity



Harrow – Key Facts:

- Population 214,600
- 11 underground stations
- Three mainline railway stations
- Easy connection to the M1, M25, M4 and A40 and Heathrow and Luton Airports
- Famous for the quality and quantity of Greenbelt which covers much of the north of the borough
- Highly skilled population
- Excellent schools
- 50.1% of residents are from ethnic minority communities
- 12 minutes from central London