



HARLOW
TOWN
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NORTH

HARLOW TOWN CENTRE NORTH PROJECT UPDATE



Proposed view north to Velizy Place from Crown Walk

Welcome to the latest newsletter for Harlow Town Centre North, the major regeneration project for Harlow's town centre.

Harlow Town Centre North (HTCN) is about delivering a comprehensive transformation of the town centre north area – bringing new shops, offices, leisure facilities and public space alongside improved accessibility and new homes. As the scheme is taken forward, there have been some important changes to the HTCN partnership that will affect the timetable and the way we deliver the project including Stockland's decision to withdraw from the UK as a result of the global economic downturn. This edition explains more and provides an update on the changes and the way ahead.

Scheme progress

During the winter, the Project Team focused on developing the proposals outlined during 2009's Public Exhibition and consultation events. More than 2,000 people attended these events, with over 90 per cent of people supporting the principle of regeneration. Comments submitted during the consultation have been reviewed and analysed, and where possible the scheme has been adapted to incorporate these views.

Looking at every aspect of the scheme – from maximising the quality and suitability of public space to identifying the best potential arrangements for shops, offices and the physical layout of buildings – the draft designs have been rigorously tested and assessed.

In parallel, further work has also been completed on areas including transport and access, sustainability and integrating the scheme with existing buildings and businesses.

Importantly, considerable interest has been secured from major retailers who are keen to be part of a revitalised town centre. We are talking to a number of major High Street brands about how they can be involved – and positive discussions are ongoing.

Overall, a significant amount of work has been completed. Moving forward, there are further studies and decisions required before an Outline Planning Application (OPA) is prepared and submitted.



HARLOW - see something different



Changes within the Partnership

Originally, a partnership including Harlow Council, Harlow Renaissance and Stockland was formed to develop and deliver the vision for HTCN.

Moving forward, Stockland will no longer have a role. The Australian-based development company is, in line with challenges created by the global economic downturn, undertaking a withdrawal from the UK. Stockland has now confirmed that it will also be withdrawing from the Town Centre North project.

The HTCN scheme will now be taken forward by Harlow Council and Harlow Renaissance – working in partnership and with a wider network of organisations including Essex County Council, the East of England Development Agency and the Homes & Communities Agency. The team will also be seeking a new development partner.



Proposed view along Grand Walk

The way ahead

The development of a new and vibrant heart for Harlow is a priority for Harlow Council and there is strong cross-party support for the project.

Since the proposals were unveiled in summer 2009, a significant amount of progress has been made. This includes:

- Securing commercial interest from major retailers: positive discussions are ongoing with big name brands that want to be part of HTCN and can see the benefits of the scheme. These include a leading department store and major cinema operator.
- The vision for a new library: plans for a new and even better library have been developed and agreed in principle with Essex County Council.
- Proposal for a new theatre: plans for a centre of excellence for performing arts and musical events are progressing following discussions with local and regional stakeholders.

Further Information

Harlow Council and Harlow Renaissance will continue to work closely with landowners, stakeholders, businesses and everyone with an interest in the scheme. A comprehensive set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) is also being added to the website to provide more details.

- ◆ Visit the website at: www.harlowtowncentrenorth.co.uk
- ◆ Call the consultation helpline on: 020 7323 3544
- ◆ Email us on: contact@harlowtowncentrenorth.co.uk
- ◆ Write to us at: Harlow Town Centre North, c/o Camargue, 7 Bayley Street, London, WC1B 3HB

A revised timetable

In line with the changes in property market conditions and within the HTCN partnership, a revised timetable is now being developed. It is scheduled that, subject to planning consent, HTCN will open in 2016.



Proposed view of Velizy Place at night

With all partners committed to seeing the scheme delivered, the focus is now on taking forward the excellent preparatory work which has already been completed.

An important part of this will be selecting a new development partner at the right time and in a way which supports the longer term delivery of the scheme.

At the same time, because schemes of this nature are extremely complex and due to the uncertainty in the wider economy, it would be wrong to give any fixed guarantees on the estimated project timetable.

Moving forward, the main areas of focus will be on:

- Securing tenants and new retailers: signing up major brands and businesses who are interested in coming to Harlow and being part of the scheme.
- Strategic site acquisitions: securing further pieces of land/property for the scheme, where opportunities arise.
- Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): completing this over-arching planning policy framework which will enable the co-ordinated and complementary development of both Town Centre North and the Harvey Centre.
- Attracting further support and investment: continuing the team's discussions with potential funders and supporters, including the Government and the Homes & Communities Agency.
- Achieving best value: ensuring that the outline proposals would deliver a high-value scheme at an appropriate development cost.
- Integrating with existing development and buildings: taking forward discussions with businesses and landowners about achieving the best fit between the potential new development and existing development.

More details on the revised timeline will be known in the coming weeks and will be explained on the project website.

