

24 January 2017

Planning and Licensing Committee

Brentwood Monitoring Report: Employment and Retail

Report of: *Phil Drane – Planning Policy Team Leader*

Wards Affected: *All Wards*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Council regularly monitors how planning policies are being implemented in regards to the decision-taking process, as well as progress on the plan-making process for preparation of documents set out in the Local Development Scheme.
- 1.2. As agreed at Planning and Licensing Committee on 1 December 2015, as soon as monitoring data becomes available the information is collated for publication into a series of monitoring updates, each reporting on different monitoring issues, which together form the Council's Authority Monitoring Reports (AMR). For clarity these have been branded "Brentwood Monitoring Reports" to be consistent with the emerging Brentwood Local Development Plan (LDP) and other supporting documents.
- 1.3. An AMR on employment and retail, for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 has been prepared for publication.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To approve publication of the Brentwood Monitoring Report Employment and Retail 2015/16, as set out in Appendix A.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Localism Act 2011 and 2012 Regulations set out changes to the Council's monitoring responsibilities, giving local planning authorities more

flexibility as to how and when they prepare their monitoring reports. As agreed at Planning and Licensing Committee on the 1 December 2015 and in accordance with the Council's commitment to sharing public data, available monitoring data on specific themes will be published as soon as possible.

- 3.2 This report provides an overview of the monitoring update on Employment and Retail for financial year 2015/16.
- 3.3 The indicators used to monitor the Replacement Local Plan (2005) are in the process of being updated as the Council prepares a new Local Development Plan for the Borough. Once adopted the new Plan will establish targets and indicators that will be used to monitor the effectiveness of its policies over time.
- 3.4 Prior to the adoption of the new Plan, this Employment and Retail report provides an update of key non-residential indicators and detailed information on employment and retail floorspace completions in the Borough.

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The full monitoring report for Employment and Retail 2015/16 is set out in Appendix A. Key findings include:
 - a) Future availability of employment floorspace: In 2015/16 the Borough saw a net increase of 2,461 sqm of floorspace completed for employment uses. Planning applications that are permitted yet unfinished or unimplemented at 31 March 2016 will provide a further 8,364 sqm (net) of employment floorspace available for future development. However, there will be a net loss of overall employment floorspace when all permissions are implemented, resulting in a total net loss of 7,185 sqm of floorspace. This is in part due to the national change in development rights for employment and retail floorspace to residential.
 - b) Retail and leisure survey: A survey of existing provision in the Borough's main centres reveals that the proportion of vacant shop units is lower than the national average.
 - c) Retail and leisure completions: There was a total net increase of 1,928 sqm of combined retail and leisure completions for the monitoring year 2015/16. A decrease in retail shops and offices in

favour of food and drink venues and financial services, such as estate agents, is observed.

- d) Retail, financial and leisure outstanding permissions: There is a potential for future gains in retail floorspace in Brentwood High Street through the completion of mixed use developments at 35 High Street (14/01261/FUL) and 73 High Street (15/01284/FUL). Elsewhere across the Borough, a potential net loss in retail and leisure is likely to take place and will continue to be monitored.

4.2 The Government has instructed local authorities to take a proactive stance to publishing information, making sure that it is easy to find and understand. Guidance states that data must be published without restriction. Public data should be released in an "open format" that is reusable, available to everyone to be exploited for social and/or commercial purposes.

4.3 To this end the Council has committed to the DataShare service, available to view on our website under "Open Data". This service makes it easier for everyone to access and inspect data, and simpler for those who need to use data in their applications, websites and widgets.

4.4 Planning and related data published as part of the AMR is included for viewing on DataShare. This supports the Council's commitment to transparency, involvement and innovation, making public data (that is not sensitive or personal) freely available to view and download in a variety of formats. The Council's DataShare site can be accessed at opendata.brentwood.gov.uk

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 It is important that the Council publishes monitoring information in order to share performance and achievements with the local community as information becomes available. It also meets the monitoring requirements set out in the NPPF and Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012, as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

5.2 In addition to publishing monitoring information in usual formats, such as a PDF document on the Planning pages of the Council's website, use of the DataShare site will help meet the Council's commitment to being open and transparent. AMR data will be freely available to view and download in a variety of formats.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 AMRs are not subject to public consultation; they report factual data published for the purposes of openness and transparency. Documents that the reports monitor will be available for public consultation (i.e. Local Development Plan, Community Infrastructure Levy, and Neighbourhood Plans), as well as planning applications that have statutory consultation periods applied.

7. References to Vision for Brentwood 2016-19

- 7.1 AMRs monitor the performance of planning policies, including those in the existing development plan and emerging Brentwood LDP, preparation of which is an identified priority in the Council's Corporate Plan (2015) Vision for Brentwood 2016-19 (Planning & Licensing).

8. Implications

Financial Implications

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- 8.1 The cost of monitoring data, both as part of preparing a new Local Development Plan for the Borough and the statutory requirements of regularly publishing information, has been accounted for within the Planning Policy budget.

Legal Implications

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- 8.2 The requirement to regularly publish monitoring data related to Local Development Plan progress and policy implementation is set out in the Localism Act 2011 (Section 113) and Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012 (Regulation 34).

9. Background Papers

None

10. Appendices to this report

Appendix A: Brentwood Monitoring Report, Employment and Retail 2015/16

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