

ENGAGEMENT ON THE DRAFT UXBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE VISION

Committee name	Residents' Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Mathieu Rogers
Papers with report	Appendix 1 - Draft Uxbridge town centre vision – Report to Cabinet Appendix 2 – Draft Uxbridge Vision Document Appendix 3 – Summary Consultation Document
Ward	Uxbridge, Hillingdon West

HEADLINES

The draft Uxbridge Town Centre Vision has been developed following a period of initial evidence gathering and engagement with over 800 local stakeholders in the summer of 2023. The draft Vision document seeks to establish a direction for future development and activity within Uxbridge town centre. Public engagement on the draft Vision document will provide the opportunity to test the emerging proposals with local stakeholders before the Vision is adopted.

Cabinet will consider the feedback from the public engagement in early 2025, before its final approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Residents' Services Select Committee notes the draft Uxbridge Town Centre Vision and submits any comments as part of the public engagement and for submission to Cabinet.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Background

In response to the 'Thriving Economy' commitment in the Council Strategy 2022-2026 and as part of setting out a new spatial vision for the Borough in the emerging Local Plan, the Council is seeking to create a new blueprint for Uxbridge town centre. Uxbridge is the largest town centre in Hillingdon and is intended to serve a wider metropolitan catchment area. It plays a crucial role in the Borough's overall economy with a mixture of offices, retail and restaurants well connected by public transportation.

However, Uxbridge town centre, like many urban centres, faces several economic challenges. These include increasing retail vacancy rates, competition from larger retail hubs, changes in office space demand and the need for diversification beyond traditional retail. Addressing these economic challenges requires a coordinated response. To this end, Hillingdon Council has commissioned a vision for Uxbridge town centre, led by Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners,

supported by Avison Young, Urban Flow, Brunel University, and JA Projects. The Vision aims to provide a strategic framework for the future of Uxbridge, addressing movement, development, public realm strategies, and short-term revitalisation actions. Community engagement has been a crucial aspect, with feedback shaping the proposals. This project has been partially funded by the Mayor of London High Streets for All programme through the award of a grant.

2. The Emerging Vision

The proposed vision for Uxbridge town centre is to transform it into a vibrant, inclusive space where people can live, work, visit, play, and socialise. The town will focus on sustainability, healthy living, excellent walking and cycling routes, and high-quality public transport. It aims to blend its historical legacy with contemporary needs, fostering a sense of community and inclusivity.

3. Key Issues and Themes

- I. **Economic Resilience:** While not declining, the town centre's economy is vulnerable with high vacancy rates. The vision emphasises diversifying the economic offer, repurposing spaces to meet changing demands, and better serving residents' needs.
 - **Principles:** Diversify the offer, repurpose to meet demands, better serve residents.
 - **Strategic Moves:** Create a leisure and culture focus, support the office market, establish the Civic Centre as a community hub, improve public transport, and introduce residential spaces.
- II. **Serving Local Communities:** The town centre needs to better cater to its local population, addressing the demand for leisure and cultural activities.
 - **Principles:** Enhance community engagement, provide diverse activities.
 - **Strategic Moves:** Engage local educational institutions, support community-oriented spaces and services.
- III. **Enhancing the Environment:** The town's public realm and built environment have potential but are currently underutilised. Improvements in transport infrastructure, green spaces, and overall town character are essential.
 - **Principles:** Restore connections, enhance public spaces.
 - **Strategic Moves:** Improve cycling and bus connections, introduce green spaces, and revitalise key areas like the High Street and Windsor Street.

4. Frameworks

The draft vision includes detailed frameworks for movement, land use, and sustainability:

- **Movement Framework:** Focuses on improving transport connectivity, safety, and accessibility.
- **Land Use Framework:** Proposes mixed-use development to foster economic and social vitality.
- **Sustainability Framework:** Emphasises green infrastructure, energy efficiency, and climate resilience.

5. Delivery

The Vision is also supported by a delivery strategy that outlines short-term and long-term actions to realise the vision. Short-term actions include physical and non-physical interventions to attract

more people and create a stronger identity for the town centre. Continuous community engagement and coordinated efforts across various domains will be crucial for successful implementation.

6. Proposed Engagement

Subject to approval by the Council's Cabinet, it is proposed to undertake public engagement on the emerging Vision which will be led by the Council's Strategic Planning and Regeneration Service. The engagement will seek to gain feedback on the proposed approach, add additional comments and build support for the ongoing delivery of the vision. An executive summary of the vision will be produced to ensure the draft vision is accessible to wide range of stakeholders. The engagement will primarily be carried out online via survey and workshops, including activities within Uxbridge town centre. The engagement on the draft Vision will be promoted using Hillingdon People, the council's website and social media. It will also be promoted using a network of community and cultural organisations including the Uxbridge BID.

PERFORMANCE DATA

Following the engagement, the responses received will be summarised in an Engagement report and any proposed updates will be presented to Cabinet to consider as part of a subsequent adoption report.

RESIDENT BENEFIT

The proposed Vision for Uxbridge town centre will promote coordinated investment which will have important economic and environmental benefits as well as providing opportunities for the provision of new homes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations to this report. The proposed work will be undertaken by existing resources within the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Service.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Approval of the vision is a Cabinet function. The vision will not form part of the Council's development plan but would be a material consideration in the Council's decision-making as the Local Planning Authority.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Uxbridge Baseline Report](#)

APPENDICES

Draft Uxbridge town centre vision