



## OLD OAK NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

### NOTES OF A JOINT MEETING WITH THE GRAND UNION ALLIANCE HELD ON DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> 2020 ON ZOOM.

Attendance: Henry Peterson (adviser), Mark Walker (Chair), Theresa Magee, Robin Hayes (GUA), John Cox, Andrew Slaughter MP, Colin Winger and a further 15 members and associate members of the Forum and GUA. Emma Williamson OPDC and Tom Cardis OPDC joined the session. Thanks to Amanda Souter for hosting the Zoom session and noted that a recording would be made.

#### 1. A 'Plan B' for Channel Gate – presentation to OPDC

1.1. The main agenda item for the evening was a slide presentation on the scope and potential for a 'Plan B' for the two major sites at Channel Gate/Atlas Road. OPDC's proposed modifications view this site as the location for a major new town centre' alongside 3,100 new housing units (1,200 in years 1-10 on Local Plan).

1.2 The two sites are currently in use by HS2 as construction compounds. Timing of release from this use is not clear. Both abut onto the boundary of the designated Old Oak neighbourhood area.

1.3. OONF has reservations about the potential of this location for a major new town centre and high density housing area. The location is 1km from the planned HS2/Crossrail platforms. What would bring rail passengers to this location when Crossrail offers quick access to central London? The location has relatively poor public transport access, as compared with previous plans for 'Old Oak Park' to be built round a new Overground station at Hythe Road.

1.4 Hence OONF wish to suggest a 'Plan B' for these sites, to put into effect by OPDC decision at a future date in the event of a change of circumstances (HS2 project put on hold/cancelled, modified OPDC Local Plan failing at examination in 2021). Noted that the HoC Transport Select Committee was embarking on a review on national transport strategy in the light of the impact of Covid, including HS2.

1.5 This 'Plan B' would treat the Atlas Road/Channel Gate location as suitable for a more modest 'neighbourhood centre' serving the surrounding residential areas within the OONF boundary, along with new housing at a 'suburban' density level as envisaged in the Ealing 2012/3 Core Strategy.

1.6 OONF questioned the merit of fixing the future of the location as very high density housing (OPDC foresee 520 units/hectare) many years before Old Oak Common Station will be operational in 2030. Passenger numbers and impact on the surrounding area will not be known until 2030's. Meanwhile this location could provide a location for a major London example of self-build/custom-build housing, allowed to evolve at a pace that follows demand – at a time when the future of London's housing market is highly uncertain.

1.7 Extending the existing boundary of the neighbourhood area would require a fresh designation application to OPDC, and a further round of statutory consultation undertaken by OPDC. Emma

Wilkinson and Tom Cardis agreed to respond to these ideas following discussion with their OPDC colleagues.

## **2 Latest on the HS2 station eastern access**

2.1 The meeting noted that As a result of OPDC abandoning its plans for the Cargiant site, there are now no plans for vehicle access to the eastern end of the station.

2.2 This means that there will be no means of anyone from RBKC, Westminster and central London reaching the station by bus, car or taxi without a major detour. OPDC Planning Committee had raised this issue as a serious concern at the OPDC Board meeting in October.

2.3. OPDC officers were looking at pedestrian/cycle access to the station via the canalside towpath, but this involves external stairs and concerns over public safety on the towpath.

2.4 John Cox explained the detail of the previously proposed 'Old Oak bridge' for vehicle traffic, running across the canal to the Cargiant land. HS2 had agreed to 'safeguard' their end of such a bridge, but were otherwise proceeding on the basis that the western entrance/exit to the station will be the only one, on Old Oak Common Lane. Noted that this must have implications for traffic congestion at this location.

## **3. OPDC Local Plan – feedback from consultation sessions on proposed 'modifications**

3.1. Two sessions held online by OPDC on 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November. Points raised by local residents and community organisations included

- Why does OPDC continue to show on plans an 'aspirational' connection between the new HS2 station and Wormwood Scrubs?
- With no new Overground station at Hythe Road or Old Oak Common Lane, how will HS2 deal with dispersal of passengers? Or is now assumed that nearly all will switch to Crossrail?
- With no car, bus or taxi access to the station from the east how will passengers from central London arrive and depart?

3.2. Comments and questions arising from the consultation can be fed back to OPDC. OPDC officers confirmed that formal statutory consultation on proposed modification would take place in early 2021.

## **4. Latest on HS2 works on Wormwood Scrubs, WHR retaining wall and other sites.**

4.1. LBHF had agreed to prepare and submit a planning application which would allow for HS2 to relocate its works entrance away from Braybrook Street to an alternative entrance from Old Oak Common Lane. Such an access had been provided for in the Undertakings and Assurances in the HS2 Act but had not been triggered by LBHF prior to the Braybrook Street plans now being implemented by HS2 contractors.

4.2 Members of FOWWS on the Old Oak Estate had been tracking this issue closely. No sign as yet of a LBHF planning application being submitted, with HS2 deadlines for starting work imminent after New Year.

## **5. Notes of November 4<sup>th</sup> meeting**

5.1 No matters arising, and no other business