



OLD OAK NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Notes of a joint meeting with the Grand Union Alliance held on 5th March 2019 at the Collective, Old Oak Lane

(Attendance list held separately for GDPR reasons. Approx 30 members and associate members of the Forum and the Grand Union Alliance attended).

1. Apologies for absence

1.1. Apologies given for Mark Walker, away looking after his parents. Henry Peterson chaired the meeting,

2. Latest position on Cargiant land at Old Oak North

2.1. Jonny Popper from London Communications and Geoff Springer from London & Regional Property explained the position that Cargiant now found itself in. Article in the Estates Gazette (see at March 2019 post on OONF website) gives the current situation as seen by Cargiant and by OPDC).

- Discussions with OPDC over several years under a Planning Performance Agreement have broken down
- Geoff Warren, owner of Cargiant and its 46 acre landholding at Hythe Road is no longer progressing plans for 'Old Oak North'.
- Cargiant was told in late 2018 to stop work on its masterplan on the basis that it was 'not viable'. In the meantime OPDC's AECOM team have pursued their own masterplan with lower overall floorspace proposals. This raises questions.
- Cargiant have been denied access to the OPDC viability assessment and the content of the £250m HIF bid to Government
- Cargiant was a 'reluctant developer' back in 2015 but progressed its masterplan in good faith and spent £8.3m in doing so.
- Because of delays by OPDC the site assembly that was being progressed by Cargiant for relocation is no longer possible (lease issues).
- Cargiant now intend to stay at their present location and to expand their existing successful business (770 employees). Despite promises to the contrary, OPDC are pursuing early stages of compulsory purchase of Cargiant land.

2.2. Geoff Springer explained the content of a slide showing their view of the realistic site availability for housing and jobs at Old Oak North and South. This took account of the major changes since the 2015 OPDC OAPF (no overdecking possible for HS2 station, new Crossrail depot and sidings remaining in place). On Cargiant's analysis, only 3,419 new homes possible. The 10,000 figure assumed to be delivered via the HIF bid is therefore very wide of the mark. Cargiant has lodged an objection to the HIF bid with MHCLG. OONF could follow suit if it wished.

2.3 On **transport infrastructure** the recent focus by OPDC had been on Park Road, running east/west from the Oaklands development to Scrubs Lane. Cargiant still supported this being built, to improve access to Old Oak North, and has proposed an alternative alignment which reduced the take of Cargiant land and left the business as viable (second slide shown).

2.4 Construction of this road would use up only a part of the £250m HIF bid. Cargiant is therefore proposing to OPDC that the original bid should be withdrawn and replaced with a reduced version of around £100k. Present bid did not provide VFM in terms of housing numbers delivered, and this probably explained the long delay in a decision (originally envisaged for November 2018).

2.5 A lengthy Q&A session followed:

- Noted that OONF meetings had seen some (non-confidential) information on the content of the HIF bid, as passed on by Andy Slaughter MP. Agreed that OONF could now ask for further detail, given that this bid is critical to plans for Old Oak North and the first phase of OPDC housing delivery.
- Cargiant confirmed their understanding that the potential Overground stations at Hythe Road and Old Oak Common Lane remained unfunded.
- Noted that none of the developments approved by OPDC in Scrubs Lane had yet started on site. Revised application being submitted for 2 Scrubs Lane.
- In terms of Cargiant's business, their future operation was taking full account of changes in the market (demand for electric vehicles) and on legislation on e.g. air quality.
- Cargiant had always been clear the redevelopment of Old Oak Park had to achieve a return that would pay for relocation of the present business, plus essential infrastructure. Had made the case for a viaduct option for the West London land. OPDC requirements for 35% affordable housing, and a changing relationship between industrial and housing land values meant that the figures did not stack up on Old Oak Park. Same position looked likely for any developer.
- Cargiant considered that OPDC had not been open and transparent in its negotiations, and that the end result was much public money wasted (Costs of OPDC since 2015 estimated at £30m including significant spend on consultants).

All the above had major implications for the EIP hearings on the OPDC Draft Local Plan, at which Cargiant would be attending (via DP9 their planning consultants).

3. Scoping exercise for Old Oak neighbourhood plan

3.1 HP explained that OPDC had proposed some support to the Forum, in a form that we had neither asked for or thought useful. In place of this OPDC had agreed to provide £10,000 of funding for a consultancy to put together an evidence base for the 22 ha neighbourhood area and to scope out potential policies and site allocations.

3.2 OONF had provided a list of 3 suitable consultancies, two of which had tendered. Evaluation and selection of the preferred firm was being finalised.

4. Examination in Public of the OPDC Draft Local Plan.

4.1 HP briefly explained the process for public hearings. These formed the latter stage of the Planning Inspector's 'examination' of the Draft Local Plan. Many issues had already been addressed via correspondence between the Inspector and OPDC.

4.2 The public hearings started on April 2nd and ran for 3 weeks. Venue is at the offices of London Councils in Southwark Street. Convenient for OPDC but remote from Old Oak and Park Royal residents. JC had complained to the EIP Programme Officer and was waiting for a reply.

4.3 The Grand Union Alliance has agreed with the Programme Officer that it will have a 'hotseat' at the sessions, to enable RB and other community organisations to swap around and give evidence on individual 'matters'. Any OONF member interested should contact RB.

4.4 HP would be giving evidence from the StQW Neighbourhood Forum as well as from OONF, as previous representations on the Reg 18, 19.1 and 19.2 Draft Plans expressed a shared view on most issues.

4.5 Written Statements for the Inspector had been submitted by HP on Matter 1 (neighbourhood plans) Matter 4 (Density, Intensity, heights and targets) and Matter 5 (tall buildings). See at EIP Library at <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/organisations-we-work/old-oak-and-park-royal-development-corporation-opdc/get-involved-opdc/opdc-local-plan/submission-and-examination/examination-documents> for copies (or at March 2019 post on OONF website).

4.6 Matter 4 was likely to be the most important discussion at the hearings as this will address what are considered by OONF and others as extreme densities at Old Oak North (average 600 housing units per hectare).

4.7 The meeting looked at slides showing how the OPDC Local Plan had changed since the 'Boris vision' of 2015. Despite large areas becoming unavailable within the 2018-38 timescale, OPDC had made limited adjustments and continued to publicise its 25,000 new homes figure.

4.8 HS2 was similarly causing great confusion for the public. Recent images used for consultation on the new station showed a green field next the station entrance/drop off point. HS2 marketing literature for this 'adjacent site' gave a brief for 146,000 sq m of commercial floorspace including a 31 storey tower.

5. Any other business

5.1. There was no further business and the meeting ended at 8pm.