



OLD OAK NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

NOTES OF A JOINT MEETING WITH THE GRAND UNION ALLIANCE held on November 5th 2019 at the Collective, Old Oak Lane

Present: attendance list held by Ewa as Secretary

Apologies; Mark Walker, Amanda Souter (Henry Peterson chaired the meeting)

1. Update on OPDC Draft Local Plan

1.1. The Chair reported back on what was said by Tom Cardis (OPDC Interim Director of Planning) at the OPDC Community Conversation on November 1st. OPDC planning officers are packaging together their original proposed modifications to the Local Plan along with those required by the Inspector in his September interim report. These will then be published for a fourth round of public consultation (possibly starting in December).

1.2. Possible adoption date for the Local Plan now seen as April, May or perhaps June. The Chair suggested that the major extent of revisions, the General Election, a delayed outcome to the HS2 review and the impact of this on the Inspector's report made a later date more likely.

1.3. The removal by the Inspector of the Cargiant land had wide implications for the Plan as a whole. Much of the social and community infrastructure needed for high density housing (schools, health etc) had been planned to be located within Old Oak North. This would now not be happening in the first 5-10 years of the plan period. Hence questions over whether new housing would have adequate surrounding social and community infrastructure as well as adequate public transport (with no Overground station at Hythe Road)..

2. HS2 Review –what do we know?

2.1. The meeting discussed the limited information available from the press and media on the current position on the Oakervee review of the HS2 project. Noted that the review's vice-chair Lord Berkeley had complained about lack of opportunity to influence the final recommendations of the report to Government. Grant Shapps had announced that the review would not be published until after the December 12th General Election.

2.2. The Chair advised that the OPDC, GLA and OPDC had submitted representations to the Oakervee review, in the form of a letter from the Mayor of London, but that this had not been made public and OPDC would not supply a copy. It was assumed that OPDC would have supported the project proceeding as planned, given that use of Old Oak Common Station as a London terminus in the long-term would require complete redesign of the station and a further 2 year delay. Use as a short-term terminus is only possible with a significant reduction on HS2 train frequencies, which undermines the whole point of the project.

2.3. Agreed that brief submission should be submitted to the review, flagging up that OPDC aspirations for a new Overground station at Hythe Road were now unrealistic. This reduced the potential connectivity of Old Oak Common station to the London rail network.

3. OPDC bid for £250m Housing Infrastructure Fund and Cargiant's position

3.1. The Chair reported that London Assembly members had questioned Liz Peace and David Lunts on the content of the HIF bid and what the expenditure would cover, at sessions in June and July. It had become clear that a series of conditions had been imposed by Government to the release of the £250m of funding. One of these conditions is known to be the adoption of the OPDC Local Plan. The other conditions have not been made public and OPDC/GLA had refused FoI/EIR requests from OONF and from the StQW Neighbourhood Forum.

3.2. Noted that Cargiant had written to the Secretary of State (Communities and Local Government), the Mayor of London, and Planning Inspector Paul Clark flagging up Cargiant's firm belief that the existing 'Phase 1' of OPDC's Local Plan is undeliverable and unviable.

4. London Assembly scrutiny of OPDC

4.1. It was noted that the Assembly's Budget and Performance Committee had formally 'summonsed' the HIF documents from Liz Peace and David Lunts, and that copies have now been passed to the Committee. Not yet known whether this will lead to the publication of this material. HP will continue to follow up. Assembly members Gareth Bacon, Navin Shah, Onkar Sahota, Caroline Pidgeon and Sian Berry are all taking an interest in greater scrutiny of OPDC.

5. Willesden Junction station

5.1. John Cox and Colin George reported back on a recent meeting with Network Rail to discuss potential improvement works to Willesden Junction station, and possible related developments. These ranged from fairly minor works to the station buildings and forecourt (bus stop area) though to much more fundamental reconfiguration of the platforms and options for step-free access to Harrow Road. High levels of investment would need to be achieved by related development (possible two residential towers) or a new input of Government funds.

5.2. The meeting welcomed the fact that Network Rail had been willing to meet with Harlesden NF and OONF representatives for a fairly open discussion on future options for the station. Noted that Network Rail would be circulating their slides and were also due to make a presentation to the next OPDC Board on 21st November. OPDC are now showing greater interest in plans for Willesden Junction, given the much reduced scope for development at Old Oak North and the demise of a potential Overground at Hythe Road.

6. Other OPDC 'activation' projects – latest position

6.1. The meeting discussed the position on the four 'activation' project which OPDC have been working on. These are funded from the Mayor's Good Growth Fund, with match funding required from OPDC or other sources. The projects had been presented again at the recent Community Conversation session.

- Landscaping and improvements at Willesden station. Public response at the Community Conversation as 'window-dressing' and a waste of public funds. This view was echoed by the Forum. Installation of benches and some landscaping along the narrow pedestrian alleyway from the Harrow Road to the station would add little and would not

overcome the fundamental problem of steep stairways and a route that is non-accessible for many people.

- Canalside improvements to the footpath opposite the Collective and provision of buildings for a canoe club opposite the Grand Junction Arms. These proposals were supported at the Community Conversation and also at the Forum's meetings.
- Cerebos Gardens – no details as yet of what exactly is to be proposed. Plans for a meeting with residents have been postponed.
- Wormwood Scrubs improvements to Scrubs Lane entrance. A recent public meeting had been held with Friends of Wormwood Scrubs (FOWWS) and other local residents. This had also discussed proposals for use of £3m funding from HS2 to LBHF for bio-diversity improvements on the Scrubs. Many FOWWS members wish to maintain the 'wild' quality of the Scrubs rather than see it 'parkified' and would prefer mew signage to be on the Scrubs rather than at its entrance of Scrubs Lane.

7. First draft of an Old Oak Neighbourhood Plan

7.1. The Chair reminded the meeting of the background to designation by OPDCof a 22 hectare neighbourhood running north south from the Wesley Estate to Wells House. The Forum had been concentrating in the last couple of years in responding to OPDC consultations. Given the long delays on the Local Plan, Crossrail and HS2 there was now a growing case for progressing a neighbourhood plan with perhaps an eight year time horizon. This could introduce policies and site allocations on what may become a period of planning blight for the existing residential communities within the designated neighbourhood area.

7.2. The meeting discussed the potential for policies that could cover the whole 22 hectare area, and those specific to the five suggested sub-areas within a Draft Plan (Wesley Estate, TITRA/Railway cottages, Atlas Junction, Midland Terrace/Shafesbury Gardens, Wells House Road. The stages needed for finalisation of a neighbourhood plan, including pre-submission consultation, OPDC consultation, independent examination, and a referendum were discussed.

7.3 Noted that most of London's neighbourhood plans has taken at least two years to bring to completion, but that a plan for a relatively small area with a population under 3,000 (including residents at the Collective) is a more manageable task. Consultation activity would require volunteer input and Jane Dreaper from TITRA offered to help with this. HP willing to continue with work on drafting of the document.

7.4. Noted that many residents would have suggestions on how life in their area could be made better, which fell outside the scope of a neighbourhood plan (this being a spatial plan dealing with the development and use of land and buildings. These could be included as 'actions' or 'projects' linked to the Plan but would not gain the statutory force of the Plan's policies and site allocations.

7.5 Agreed that HP would circulate the first draft of the Plan, for residents groups and individuals in each of the sub areas to add ideas and suggestions.

8. Any other business

8.1. The meeting noted the proposals from Womens Pioneer Housing/HUB for a 28 storey residential tower on the corner of Wood Lane and DuCane Road, opposite the Imperial tower. A planning application is expected in December.

8.2. The S73 application to vary the planning permission or the Mitre Yard scheme (increase in housing units from 200 to 241) due at OPDC Planning Committee on November 12th. HP will attend for the 5 minute slot available to objectors, representing the StQW Neighbourhood Forum/St Helens Residents Association.

The meeting ended at 8.20pm