

## London Assembly site visit to Old Oak Common, 12 November 2014 Summary

### Attendees

Assembly Members	Gareth Bacon AM (Regeneration Committee Chairman), Navin Shah AM (Regeneration Committee Deputy Chair), John Biggs AM, Victoria Borwick AM, Tom Copley AM, Roger Evans AM, Nicky Gavron AM, Darren Johnson AM, Stephen Knight AM, Dr Onkar Sahota AM
Assembly staff	Katie Smith, Richard Derecki, Jo Sloman, Adam Wildman, Alex Csicsek, Peter Mason
Proposed MDC	Victoria Hills (Director), Michael Mulhern (Head of Planning)

### Purpose of visit

Assembly Members visited Old Oak Common and Park Royal to learn about the Mayor's plans to establish a Mayoral Development Corporation to drive regeneration, known as the proposed Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC). The visit linked to the Regeneration Committee's work on stadium-led regeneration, in view of QPR's proposal for a new stadium at Old Oak, and it provided an opportunity for Members to view the site ahead of the Assembly's vote on the proposed MDC in December 2014.

### Discussion topics

#### *The site: Old Oak Common and Park Royal*

The core development site is at Old Oak Common (OOC), which will have an HS2 and Crossrail interchange from 2026. The station will process passenger volumes equivalent to Waterloo station. There are approximately 50 hectares of public sector land surrounding the forthcoming HS2 and Crossrail depot; owned by Network Rail and the Department for Transport. First Great Western (FGW) and the Heathrow Express also have depots on the site. Ahead of HS2, both will move to other sites, with a view to FGW eventually locating outside London.

The GLA has been consulting on a regeneration plan to capitalise on new transport links, and in early 2015 it plans to publish a draft Opportunity Area Planning Framework, which will set broad principles for the area. This will be the precursor to a Local Plan containing more detailed proposals. The sequencing of transport and planning at the site provides an opportunity to build in everything the future communities at OOC would like to see from the outset.

The 900 hectare site has three core areas. Park Royal is one of London's largest industrial estates. In the main part of Park Royal, the GLA has recently completed an atlas of businesses comprising 2,000 companies and employing 30,000 people.

Wormwood Scrubs, to the south of the proposed OPDC, is protected metropolitan land. The GLA is talking to English Heritage about retaining heritage buildings, and the GLA will need to be sensitive to an appropriate height of development in certain sensitive locations which could be in the region of five to six storeys. The original proposed MDC boundary included Wormwood Scrubs Prison, a hospital and stadium. However, following consultation, the GLA is proposing to remove these areas from the boundary, as they are recognised locally as belonging

to the White City/ Wood Lane area. The NHS has plans for a research campus development at the hospital site (which will also include part of the stadium).

Similarly, to the north west of the proposed MDC, Northfields was included in the original boundary, but it has since been removed, which is more closely aligned to the council's emerging plans for Alperton.

The GLA will also consider how its plans for regeneration will impact surrounding areas. For example, at Harrow Road, the GLA is in discussions with the borough about how to support Harlesden town centre.

### Rationale for an MDC

The Mayor's view is that an MDC is the most effective way to accelerate development, and that the GLA will be able to add value by extracting funding from central government.

Under the Mayor's plans, the area has capacity for 24,000 new homes and 55,000 new jobs. These figures are derived from masterplanning the GLA carried out after producing its Vision for Old Oak Common. The GLA is now working towards this plan, and talking to landowners on the basis that the plan is only likely to change if better ideas are proposed.

The MDC would take on Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers. It would also have the opportunity to levy the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Whereas the other existing MDC – the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) – determines all planning applications within its boundary, at the Proposed Old Oak Park Royal MDC, 80 per cent of the core Old Oak area would be determined by the MDC, but around 60–70 per cent of the Park Royal area would be determined by the relevant boroughs. For example, significant development is underway at North Acton (in the north west of Park Royal). Imperial College is constructing student accommodation and some teaching facilities. Some GLA funding (via the Outer London Fund) is contributing to improving the public realm at North Acton tube station. Further new residential accommodation will be developed in the area. The MDC would be the planning authority and would prepare the local plan for this area; however, Ealing Council would determine the planning applications in North Acton.

A benefit of the MDC model is the ability to develop a single clear vision for Park Royal, and the GLA is working on this objective with the Park Royal Business Group (which it hopes will be represented on the board). After residential land, industrial land is the next most in demand land use. The GLA told Members that it will need to take a strong line to protect areas such as Park Royal. The GLA will be carrying out an employment land review, examining the supply and demand of industrial land. It also has an interest in ensuring residential land uses do not spill over into industrial areas. Small amounts of housing may be built on non-industrial land at Park Royal.

At this stage, there is no end date for the MDC, and it is planned to operate for as long as it is required (in common with the LLDC). The proposed timescales for the MDC will be the shortest that an organisation has had set up a development corporation.

### Community infrastructure

Developers have already expressed an interest in new tower blocks, and the GLA is considering where they would be located. The GLA is examining the social infrastructure the area will need (for example, schools and health facilities).

Harlesden station requires a bridge to link it with the core development area. The station currently accommodates Overground and Bakerloo lines separately; the MDC would carry out work on improving passenger connections at this interchange.

Many Park Royal roads are one-way. The GLA is conducting a transport study to look at where investment is needed.

### Existing businesses

EMR, a local metal recycling business near Harlesden station, would consider a move away from the site, recognising that its business is not compatible with future residential uses.

Powerday is interested in remaining on the site as part of the solution. It could host a power station and process waste from the construction works. The GLA is also looking at waste removal by barge (possibly using barges employed during the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) construction phases).

Cargiant is a significant employer, currently located in the north east of the proposed MDC. Approximately 70-80 per cent of Cargiant employees live within 3-4 miles of the site, and therefore, any move would need to be sensitive to travel times.

Drinks company Diageo has built its European headquarters at Park Royal. Part of the site is occupied by Guinness and the other part is half full. The company has found there is not enough demand for office space; therefore, some units are being converted to residential space (3-4 units are currently under review).

### MDC Funding

The MDC may need to secure funds for initial infrastructure such as bridges and roads.

Whereas the ODA invested upfront infrastructure costs in Stratford, the Mayor does not envisage a similar model at OOC. CIL receipts will be substantial but they will not be available up front. The GLA is currently developing options to fund initial infrastructure requirements. Options include borrowing (to be repaid by future CIL receipts), and funding from development funding linked to the proposed new Overground stations. The GLA estimates the infrastructure funding requirement to be in the order of several hundred million GBP.

### Consultation

The GLA has carried out initial consultation at OOC and Park Royal. The proposed MDC would have a resident representative on the board. The GLA will resource the representative's input through a community forum, which would feed ideas to the board representative. The GLA also plans to establish a community charter. Boroughs will also be represented on the Planning Committee.

The GLA told Members that it is important for the MDC to engage with local schools, as local children will be working at OOC in 10-15 years' time.

Community impacts

At Wells House Road, residents are concerned about disruption caused by HS2 vehicular movements. Residential properties in the area look onto the depot site, which will carry heavy traffic accessing the HS2/ Crossrail depot construction site for seven years to 2024. HS2 logistics require the widening of Old Oak Lane road and access to the back of some residents' gardens. HS2 and Crossrail are conducting extensive consultation about vehicle access.