

To Cllr, Steve Curran
By email

July 17, 2017
Ref: BCC 806 dmb

Dear Steve,

Development in Brentford

We have been asked to write to you by members of the BCC, The West Chiswick and Gunnersbury Society, Brentford Air Quality and the Friends of St Pauls Rec, who share a deep concern at the way development proposals are being promoted and considered within the area of the Great West Road Local Plan Review.

In 2015 the Council adopted the Local Plan and Cabinet initiated work on the Great West Road Review. We understand that the Review, which has to be examined at a public inquiry, could be adopted in the spring of 2019.

When complete the Review should establish a planning context for the development sites in the area.

When work on the Review started in 2016 we were consulted by the then Policy Team and advised that a key background paper was the Housing Capacity Study which indicated preferred heights and land uses for the potential development sites.

While the Review process was continuing both the Council and landowners have put forward development proposals for individual sites. In our discussions with their design teams they have reported that they do not have a clear idea of how their own schemes might relate to others.

Many of these schemes have not yet been submitted to the Planning Committee so it would now be possible to re-consider what would be appropriate for the future of the Review Area without the constraint of Individual planning consents.

This would be particularly opportune because a number of new issues which could affect future plans have been given greater prominence:

Traffic. On July 6th Mr Grayling, Minister of Transport announced that the government would be putting one billion pounds annually into the road budget to improve mobility where excessive congestion occurred. It was noted the North Circular Road is one of the most congested in London.

Air Quality. The Mayor has adopted policies which will penalise polluting vehicles after October 2017 in Central London. He has consulted on how this policy might be extended. If the boundary of a restricted area was set on the North and South Circular Roads it would probably lead to increased levels of pollution on these roads in Brentford. They would also not reduce pollution on the A4/M4 corridor.

Affordable Housing. Development in Brentford Town Centre, the Brentford Football Stadium and other sites have fallen well below the Mayor's and the council's own targets for affordable housing. The support given to the concept of "enabling development" has given priority to specific projects at the expense of a balanced housing programme to meet the needs of families with different incomes.

To redress the balance, developments of exclusively affordable housing might be needed. However, following the Grenfell Tower disaster there is a real need to promote integrated housing schemes for families of all incomes.

Community Facilities. The cabinet authorised negotiations with adjacent landowners to secure the redevelopment of the Fountain Leisure Centre. We understand that this proposal has failed. If the Leisure Centre was to be re-built on its present site Brentford and Chiswick would be without this facility for about three years while it was demolished and re-built.

This is an important and well-used facility and alternative plans should be considered to relocate the centre as a focal point in the Master Plan proposals which are part of the Local Plan Review.

Heathrow Airport. Our Local Plan states (Policy EC3) calls for a sustainable Heathrow Airport by (a) opposing the future expansion of Heathrow Airport including additional runway and terminal capacity". Heathrow flight paths already harm the environment and contribute to AQ and noise pollution. If the council do not follow through their adopted policy it will increase traffic, pollution and congestion problems and reduce further the quality of life in Brentford.

Opportunity Area Status. Local Plan policy SV1 sets out the economic importance of the Great West Corridor and states its potential as an Opportunity Area. While we would support increased economic activity

and have welcomed key entrepreneurs, like Sky, we note that the London Plan definition of an Opportunity Area with the improved public transport necessary to support it.

We note that the London Plan definition of an Opportunity Area also calls for extensive residential development. In view of the increase in traffic and the consequential increase in pollution much of the Review Area must now be considered unsuitable for new housing, for open air enjoyment or for schools and shops.

We are asking you to advise the Mayor of your support for measures to ensure that new residential accommodation is only provided in areas away from major roads like the A4 and the North Circular Road.

Also to ask him to confirm his designation of the Great West Corridor Area as a Strategic Outer London Development Centre promoting employment.

And to ask him to remove the Great West Corridor Area from his list of potential Opportunity Areas.

In view of the need to consider a range of options for re-providing the Fountains Leisure Centre before 2020 we would ask you set up regular meetings with local stakeholders so that their views can contribute those fed into the on-going work on the Local Plan Review.

Yours sincerely

Denis Browne
BCC

Nicola Erdresser
AQ Brentford

Marie Rabouhans
West Chiswick &
Gunnersbury Soc

Martin Case
Friends of St
Paul's Rec.