

Minutes: Meeting November 13 2017**DRAFT**

Ref MinNov017

1a. Present: Denis Browne, Richard Linnell, David Farmery, Derek Collett, Chris Dakers, Vitas Puig, Stephen Browne, Martin Case, Hugh Mortimer, Andrew Dakers, Mark Kehoe, Michael Connell, Mary Drake, John Burgess, Guy Lambert, Mel Collins

1b. Apologies: Kath Richardson, Marilyn Baker, Chris Richards

2a. Minutes of Last Meeting: Approved as correct record save that in Apologies, names should state John Burgess not Brian Burgess (see MinOct017, attached).

2b. Matters arising (numbering from September minutes):

There were no matters arising not covered in the agenda.

3. Heathrow 2nd Consultation and Air Quality Plan:

Martin Case reported and tabled a full update. The public consultation on the Third Runway at Heathrow had now been reopened until 19th December. There is a need to respond from BCC's perspective.

The Air Quality policy is now at risk and relies largely on Local Authorities but with little additional financial support. Martin Case attended the 'drop-in' session on 8th November and discussed matters with Surinderpal Suri from LBH. Nothing is in place by way of response and no further document has been prepared. Six 'themes' have been identified but no actions have been allocated to each theme. Martin Case has requested a public meeting with a clear presentation of the Air Quality Plan but this would require the participation of other agencies. Martin Case will draft a response for BCC to consider at the December 4th meeting.

DB suggested that St Paul's School could be used as the venue for the meeting, but LBH would need to attend. The Mayor of London will consult next Spring. GL said he would set time aside to work with Martin Case to understand the issues more fully. GL will then take the matters to the Task Group, and confirmed that there is an LBH Scrutiny meeting next week.

HM said that he had attended the AGM of the Stop Heathrow Expansion Group, where strong reasons were put forward against the airport's expansion. HM agreed to be in liaison with Martin Case to set out the details.

4. London Plan Consultation:

DB stated that he had spoken to Peter Eversden of the Forum for Amenity Societies ("London Forum"). He lives in Chiswick so has some local knowledge. DB tabled e-mail correspondence with him. This confirms that the Draft Replacement London Plan will be published on 29th November. London Forum will hold a workshop on 20th January and there will be a full GLA presentation of the Plan on 29th January.

It is likely that the Great West Road ("GWR") area will be included as an "Opportunity Area". LBH's expectation that TfL will give priority to the Local Authority's expenditure for better transport links in the Opportunity Area is thought unlikely to be well founded. In that case, transport infrastructure expenditure, such as rail links, is likely to be dependent upon developers' contributions. This may lead to delay in infrastructure provision to the end of any development project, but may also lead to a situation such as in Battersea and Nine Elms where developers demand higher densities and lower affordable housing contributions to allow for

transport infrastructure contributions. A complicating consideration is that the Mayor of London now has a team to scrutinize developers' viability assessments and to intervene if the 35% affordable housing target is not met.

If TfL is not in a position to provide early funding, there is a risk that transport infrastructure will not be introduced until development schemes are finished with serious traffic problems created in the meantime.

DB stated that by 28th November we will know if GWR is included in the Opportunity Areas, although the Inspector had previously ruled this out.

5. Conservation Areas:

VP stated that there had been few responses from local people with regard to the proposal to extend the St Paul's Conservation Area to the east to Ealing Road. The Victorian Society's case officer, Anna Shelley, had written with the Society's support of the proposal, confirming in their view the similarity of the urban fabric of the area proposed for extension with the existing CA. They made no mention of extending the CA to include the Morrison's site and VP will not include that in BCC's response for which the deadline is 17th November.

Martin Case stated that the extension should go ahead in recognition of the consistency of the area. He had asked John Wright, the head of St Paul's School, to see if the school or its governing body or user groups of the school premises would support the CA extension.

GL stated that he had discussed this with LBH's Conservation Officers whose opinion was that the Brook Road, Mafeking Road and Braemar Road area was 'different' from the existing CA. To extend to cover the Morrisons' site was pointless as the application for its redevelopment had been decided.

VP said that he had spoken to LBH's Sean Doran, who also had said that the character of the extension area was slightly different and was non-committal when challenged on that. VP said that the extension of the CA would protect what was there but LBH may be worried about the redevelopment of the Griffin Park Stadium being unduly constrained. VP said that could be worked around if that was the nub of the concern.

GL said that the discussion had convinced him that the extension area is similar to the current CA area except for New Road. MK spoke of his experience that a CA can enable change for the better and that the current CA had enabled investment in the knowledge that the blight of the threat of possible demolition no longer applied. This led to civic confidence and enabled longer term investment to improve the quality of the urban environment. MK said that he would put forward his own proposals to extend the CA further. GL said that in his view the area to the north of the A4 was different from the St Paul's CA as the A4 flyover formed a marked separation of the areas. If the area to the north was worthy of being a CA, it should be a CA in its own right.

VP said that the CA included early and mid Victorian building types in the CA and these were the same types as in the proposed extension area.

All were in agreement with VP's report and agreed that it should be submitted.

6. Great West Corridor Preferred Option:

DB summarized the history and the current position. LBH had promoted the area as an Opportunity Area although the DoE Inspector did not approve the Local Plan. The 'Planning Approach' is from the same mindset and is proposed as a 'Preferred

Option.' There is a chance now to comment on this. Next summer (2018), LBH will present a 'realistic' Preferred Option to go to an Inquiry prior to adoption by LBH. There remains the question set out above about the possibility that transport improvements to facilitate these large scale developments may not be financed, and therefore not implemented, early enough.

HM said that this proposed process was inconsistent with the process for the Brentford East SPD proposal and expressed concern that precedents would be created by that which could override public policy for the GWC. DB confirmed that the whole of the wider area would go through a formal approval process except Brentford East.

HM commented that the GWC proposal document seems to be designed to avoid judicial review processes applying to any schemes and was not sufficiently clear. DF stated that to be effective the document should also cover Brentford South as the design of a corridor needed to incorporate its hinterland, as shown in Bangkok. DB had prior to the meeting prepared a draft response. DC commented that the draft response covered all the points with appropriate language and was commendable.

GL commented that the published proposal was a genuine attempt to set out what LBH should be doing with GWC and should not be regarded too cynically. It should be understood as a conceptual document.

Martin Case agreed with DF's point that the proposal should also cover Brentford South. What concerns him is the location of housing and commercial space. Effort should be made to enhance the environment where possible, and that it was important to have green spaces in GWC but these have all been lost and the proposal is for continuous development along the GWC.

DB pointed out that the document was supported by consultants, Urban Initiatives. GL stated that he had not wanted Brentford Town Centre to be considered as part of GWC, as it would be confused with it. DB said that it was a crucial policy that the centre of Brentford was reinforced. Increasingly retail had been allocated to GWC, such as supermarkets, car showrooms, computer shops, DIY etc. These are town centre items. Offices and commercial space should be on the A4. Air quality remains a major issue as well as connectivity and on those grounds the conceptual approach shown doesn't work. The overall thrust is that there shouldn't be development on a major radial road, but it was accepted that matters had gone beyond that point.

MK said that there was a need to preserve adaptability of buildings for the long term. Because of air quality matters there should be no residential on GWC. It was built as and industrial area but with flexibility for the future. The future remained unknown as pollution from vehicles is reduced and we don't know what employment patterns will be like, but we are not providing flexibility for the future. RL stated that what seriously inhibits future flexibility is forms of ownership: a commercial building in single ownership can always be replaced in the same or another use, but a residential building with highly fragmented individual ownership can never be used for any other purpose, or redeveloped, and is highly inflexible because of its ownership.

AD stated that the lack of a management company on the Golden Mile as a business district had been significant. The location does not appeal to multi-nationals and the ability of Sky or GSK to redevelop new headquarters would not exist in the future and needs to be planned in. SB commented that GSK's HQ is

largely administrative and Brompton had left the area as they had struggled to find a suitable site for manufacture. MK commented that there was no enabling for small businesses in terms of affordability and available space. AD stated that pressure on space was inevitable as residential densities increased in the area, as was evident in Park Royal.

DB requested any further comments on the draft response to be made to him by e-mail by the end of November so that a final letter can be approved on 4th December.

7. Brentford East Draft DPD

DB stated that the proposal goes directly for approval to LBH after consultation without any review by a DoE Inspector. There are gaps in the scheme of which the Fountains Leisure Centre is the most serious. The separate development of the Citroën site means that there cannot be a temporary replacement and so the only option to renew what is a focal point for the community of East Brentford will be the closure of the Centre for say three years for redevelopment. Another site, such as the B&Q site, would not be acceptable owing to the difficulty of public access across major roads.

DB stated that this is an interim document but must be considered in detail. There are problems with the proposed transport links. The proposed Lionel Road South Station depends on a link going north-east, but is a lower priority for TfL than the Crossrail link going to the north-west.

HM said that he did not approve of cutting off this area and giving it separate planning treatment. DB said that in the area Capital Interchange Way, Chiswick Curve, B&Q/Hudson's Square and Citroen Site are all coming up imminently for consideration so the plan for this area was very significant. HM said that he thought that LBH needs to toughen up on this, as buildings of 40m to 60m in a confined area would blight people's lives in the long term. DB said that LBH had reinforced its planning team recently.

DB said that the basis of the response was in Chris Richards' note. Comments should be sent to him with copies to DB by the end of November. The final note would then be approved on 4th December for submission to LBH.

8. Waterman's Site / Police Building Site:

DB stated that BCC's paper had been sent to the Leader of LBH. BCC's support for the current proposal was lost when a large scheme was proposed on the Waterman's site. Michael Connell asked what re-looking at the scheme now meant. DB commented that the Kew Palace, a Grade I Listed Building in a World Heritage Site had a 'boundary area' that extended to Brentford.

GL stated that he had attended a meeting the previous Friday with the Waterman's Trustees, c. 120 (stated tongue in cheek – GL stated in reality there were about a dozen, though new Trustees kept appearing as the meeting went on), who unanimously wish to move from the current site. They think the current centre is in the wrong place. The development on the Police Building site provides £12m for a new arts centre of the same size as the present centre. This will obviate the need for the current subsidy of £0.25m pa from LBH. Waterman's have appealed for £6m and potentially may receive funding from the GLA and the Arts Council as there is currently no functional dance centre in West London. The LBH planners are in discussion with Kew Palace and Heritage England with regard to visual impact and

the Mayor of London who does not think there is enough Affordable Housing in the scheme. The viability assessment suggests that there is not enough profit for more than 20% Affordable Housing. Waterman's can support the application if the £6m funding comes through and should know about that fairly soon. The current site needs millions to be spent on it anyway even if they were to stay.

Mel Collins said that the £0.25m has to be phased out soon as it was unaffordable by LBH. GL said that some councils such as Newcastle have dropped all arts funding. Mel Collins said that Waterman's has the ability from its funds to develop successfully within the 'red line' on the planning application drawings. MK said that he thought the new site was not viable. HM said that the Waterman's centre now suffered from a much lower variety of offer than in the past. AD commented that the centre had 'gone bust' in the past and all arts centres have ups and downs. Michael Connell said that he thought that the Police Building site would not work. He compared the position with the redeveloped Riverside Studios in Hammersmith, which takes full advantage of a riverside position.

Mel Collins said that the LBH budget is very tight and the approach to this has to be realistic. BCC is disagreeing with the Waterman's trustees. In effect, £12m is being given to Waterman's. DB commented that this level of funding depends on the high rise scheme being developed on the waterfront, and he thought that would not ultimately get consent.

MD commented that this was partly about having a vision for the arts centre. The current site is unique and provides public access to the river. People also need space in that location and the centre currently provides that. There are questions about whether the proposed centre is viable in its new position. Originally the new centre was intended to be a 500-seat theatre and dance centre; now the proposal is for a centre of a similar size to the present centre. 300 seats is the minimum for a theatre to be viable. The current auditorium has 189 seats. The proposed centre will constantly need additional funding.

Mel Collins said he understood and that the red line was so important. The matter goes to Planning Committee in January.

GL said that LBH has had sight of the detailed business plan for the new centre prepared by experts. AD asked if LBH had sought independent advice on the business plan. GL said that the plan was commissioned by LBH. Waterman's are slightly sceptical of the plan. They feel that the centre will be viable in the long term but perhaps not the short term. LBH are very keen to keep an arts centre in Brentford.

MK said that he would like to see Waterman's thrive but feels strongly that it is in the right place now. The people of Brentford and the centre's users should have been consulted and there should have been an architectural competition for the site. GL said that the Police Building site and half the Waterman's are in any case owned by London Green.

DB said that he had drafted a letter which was on the website. As the matter goes to Committee in January, all should look at the draft and send comments to DB so that the letter can be considered for final agreement of the response on 4th December.

10. Christmas party:

Kath Richardson is organizing this for 15th December. All are invited with wives or partners.

11. AoB:

a. Brentford FC. JB commented that the new ground is intended to be occupied in mid-season 2019-20.

b. Sarah Trimmer House. SB commented that the tiles had been taken off the roof and old tiles reused at the front but new tiles at the rear which is visually unacceptable. This was a heritage question for LBH. GL commented that the 'old' tiles in fact only dated from the 1990s. The roof had originally been thatched and replaced with slates in the 1930s. MK commented that the wrong kind of stock bricks had been used although the wall to the High Street had been kept. SB said that the developer had attempted to reinstate the public facing walls as far as possible. DB said that the work should have been supervised by an experienced conservation architect. Permission was for one dwelling but an application for use as two dwellings was likely. SB will continue to take up the matter of the roof tiles with the architect.

d. Brentford Market. AD stated that a new variety of stalls was being introduced and local support would be appreciated. The market was also looking at small business grants.

e. Church on High Street adjacent Sarah Trimmer House. DF commented that the restoration of this had been well done overall.

10. The meeting closed at 9.38 pm

11. Dates of Next Meetings: December 4th (PLEASE NOTE THE FIRST MONDAY NOT THE SECOND MONDAY OF THE MONTH) and January 8th