

## **Lionel Road Liaison Group Meeting (LRLG) Minutes**

18 November 20120, 6:00pm – 7:45pm

Venue: Online meeting held through Zoom

Chair: Robert Gordon Clark, London Communications Agency

### **Project Team:**

- **Brentford Football Club:** Alan Walsh (AW), Sally Stephens (SS)
- **EcoWorld London:** Robin Goodlet (RG)
- **London Irish:** Kelly Adey (KA)
- **London Communications Agency:** Robert Gordon Clark (RGC), Jack Baker-Merry (JBM)
- **EST:** Grant Woollaston (GW)

### **Attendees:**

- Ruth Cadbury MP – Member of Parliament for Brentford and Isleworth
- Cllr Gabriella Giles – Chiswick Riverside, LB Hounslow
- Cllr Guy Lambert – Brentford, LB Hounslow
- Cllr Michael Denniss – Chiswick Riverside, LB Hounslow
- Cllr Ranjit Gill – Turnham Green, LB Hounslow
- Cllr Ron Mushiso – Turnham Green, LB Hounslow
- Cllr Sam Hearn – Chiswick Riverside, LB Hounslow
- Alan McBride – Local resident
- Andrew Park – Local resident
- Andy Murray – The Grove Park Group
- Brian Burgess – Brentford FC Community Sports Trust
- Catherine Murphy – Local resident
- Charlotte Aldridge – Local resident
- Derek Collett – Brentford Community Council
- Dorothy Boland – Strand-on-the-Green Association
- John Ricketts – Kew Society
- Marie Rabouhans – West Chiswick & Gunnersbury Society
- Michael Green – Strand-on-the-Green resident
- Michael Robinson – Stile Hall Gardens resident
- Rex Leyland – Local resident
- Richard Griffiths – Local resident
- Russell Wallis – Local resident
- Sally Smith, Hounslow Chamber of Commerce
- Tony Glanville – Local resident

**Summary note:** The format of the evening saw introductions from the group's chair, Robert Gordon Clark, and individual members of the project team. This was followed by an update on the stadium completion by Alan Walsh, Operations Director from Brentford Football Club (BFC). A brief construction update was also given by Robin Goodlet, Managing Director at EcoWorld London, during the Q&A. Informal discussion was welcomed and questions were asked at various points. For the purpose of these minutes and for ease of reading, questions and answers have been grouped and where requested during the evening, additional information has been added. A list of actions following the meeting for the project team has also been outlined.



On the issue of Strand-on-the-Green School specifically, given that the decision has been made not to use this for parking, these Minutes are edited down.

### **A. Welcome and introductions**

**Robert Gordon Clark (RGC)**, chair of the meeting welcomed everyone to the meeting, asking everybody to say hello. He outlined how the meeting would be run, including use of the hand symbol and chat box to ask questions and to request to speak. A warning that the meeting would be recorded was given before the recording was started, noting that it was for internal note taking purposes only.

### **B. Construction programme update**

- **Alan Walsh (AW)** provided an update on the stadium progress and completion. He apologised that the March 2020 meeting was postponed due to the pandemic and that there had not been a meeting since then but trusted that everyone understood why.

#### **Stadium completion**

- AW started by explaining that the Club were due to get the keys to the stadium at the end of February, and then the end of March, before Covid kicked in, which delayed progress. Construction was scaled back to comply with social distancing, before the keys were received at the beginning of August. PA system tests were taking place up to this point, and he apologised for any disturbances that may have been caused.
- AW continued by explaining that the test event programme did not go ahead as planned, due to Covid. Discussions took place with London Borough of Hounslow (LBH), the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA) and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to allow for sport to take place behind closed doors at the new stadium. He confirmed that there are on average 100-120 people in the stadium on a matchday under current restrictions.
- AW confirmed that London Irish Rugby Club will be playing their first game at the stadium on 29 November.

#### **Return of supporters**

- AW explained that the Club are working with the SGSA about how having supporters in attendance will work. He confirmed that discussions were taking place about the return of supporters after the end of the current lockdown on 2 December and that BFC are planning and will be ready for this, but it will be a phased approach. He expects that the first games will be with a crowd of around 1,000, which will increase after this up to 30% of capacity, which is around 5,000. He explained that post-Covid restrictions, BFC will look to scale up to the full capacity of 17,250.

*Postscript note – 4,000 supporters will be allowed in Tier 1 and 2,000 supporters will be allowed in Tier 2 from 2 December 2020. London has been placed in Tier 2, so up to 2,000 supporters will be allowed at the Brentford Community Stadium from 2 December, subject to approval from the relevant authorities.*



- RGC confirmed that a fixture list had been circulated to the group and AW explained that it is subject to change in terms of broadcast rescheduling and cup fixtures. He explained that London Irish's fixtures were also subject to change.
- AW explained that Lionel Road South has been closed for safety and access reasons on matchdays. He explained that the Club has been working with EcoWorld in terms of public spaces around the stadium, and hoardings have been left up due to building works and also to stop people from coming into the stadium for Covid reasons, but these would be removed post-Covid.

### **Questions and actions**

#### **1. Does the Club have a safety certificate, and are test events still needed to acquire it?**

*Yes, the Club has a full certificate, but with conditions attached saying that there will be a phased approach to the return of supporters, which will be monitored closely and used to demonstrate that the stadium works safely, along with access and egress to the transport networks.*

#### **2. When the stadium is in use, will construction around the stadium stop?**

*Yes. On matchdays the construction site will be closed, in line with EcoWorld's agreement with BFC, and access to the stadium through the site is opened up. This will be the case when crowds return, so supporters can access the stadium.*

*This process has happened on several occasions for home fixtures already, including two or three midweek games, and it has been a smooth process, with no issues so far.*

#### **3. Residents need prior knowledge of when events with crowds will be. Will you be sure of when this will be?**

*The Club will be transparent on fixtures in question. The return of sport in May was a quick process, and the Club has been receiving quick, daily guidance from EFL. The Club were briefed of a return in October, but this did not happen due to rising Covid levels.*

*There is currently a push from government to get stadia opened up again from 2 December. BFC have a home game on 5 December, and it is possible that supporters could be in attendance at this fixture. The Club expects 10-14 days' notice ahead of any change in restrictions but are pessimistic that a return will happen this soon.*

*Furlough has been extended until March, and it may be the case that it will not be until March until supporters return. The Club do not expect a full stadium until next season.*

*Postscript note – As a result of a change in government restrictions, and London being placed into Tier 2, from 2 December 2020, 2,000 supporters will be able to attend fixtures at the Brentford Community Stadium.*

***ACTION: Provide the group with information regarding fixtures with supporters in attendance in advance of the event.***



**4. There is local opposition to parking at, and a restrictive covenant on the use of, the Strand-on-the-Green School, plus LBH policy to reduce car movements on residential roads. Will BFC be instructing EST to drop plans to use the school for parking?**

*This was discussed in detail in the meeting but as members of the LRLG now know, BFC and LI have decided not to pursue a parking proposal for the Strand-on-the-Green School. All parties have been informed.*

**5. A member of the Strand-on-the-Green Association said that the Association would be 'violently opposed to any parking in the Strand-on-the-Green School'. They noted that it was said by LBH that BFC would find parking spaces that were not in residential areas.**

*The Club has undertaken comprehensive efforts to try to find parking spaces along the A4 with local businesses, but so far those local businesses have not been willing to provide spaces, so the Club has had to look more widely for different options and schools were identified as an option for parking in the original Transport Assessment (submitted back in May 2013).*

**6. People more likely to drive to avoid Covid, what is the council doing with regards parking? Will BFC be communicating with supporters with regards to travel?**

*BFC have been carrying out research as to how to decide which supporters will be able to attend when crowds are allowed. This has given the Club information about exactly who will be attending, when they will arrive at and leave the stadium, and are communicating with supporters.*

*A survey is to be sent out to supporters asking if they would be comfortable attending, and if so, how they would be travelling to the stadium. The Club will be encouraging walking and cycling and will be encouraging those who use public transport to arrive earlier.*

**7. Will BFC continue to use Brentford School for Girls and Brentford Health Centre for parking?**

*Yes, this is planned to continue. Brentford School for Girls provides parking for Club staff as well as some supporters.*

**8. What are the Club doing about air quality considerations? People will try to park in Turnham Green and other areas – what is being done to deal with this? Where are we with the upgrade of Gunnersbury Station and how will this be made accessible?**

*This was a specific question sent to Cllr Mushiso by a constituent.*

*The Club are actively encouraging people not to drive and try to park close to stadium due to the impact this will have. Initial transport assessments did not show any major air quality impacts as a result of matchdays.*



The Club understands that the majority of supporters have said they will park in the same spot as they did for Griffin Park, but will just allow more time to walk to the stadium. The true impact of air quality as a result of matchday traffic will only really be known post-Covid.

**ACTION: BFC to provide a written response to Cllr Mushiso's constituent.**

**9. There was a petition for an extension to Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) last year and Officers have come up with a report, but this has not been shared yet.**

The proposed changes for Strand-on-the-Green and Stilehall Gardens will change from the current Monday – Friday, 10 – 12 to Monday to Friday 10 – 12 and 6 – 8, plus 2 – 4 on weekends. There will be a statutory consultation on these CPZs in the New Year with a view to them being implemented in the spring.

The West Chiswick CPZ did not receive sufficient support to be taken forward at this time but can be reviewed after the stadium is back to full capacity and the full impact is known by local residents.

**ACTION: BFC, Cllrs and the group to share information on agreed CPZs and when further consultation will be concluded on other CPZs.**

**10. Why are 750 parking spaces to be provided at Chiswick Park, given that reports said that spaces needed to be to the west of the stadium?**

The 750-space figure at Chiswick Park is not accurate and no agreement is yet in place relating to the parking numbers at this site. However, advanced discussions are underway and any use of this site is likely to be for smaller numbers at the outset so that any impact can be carefully assessed.

**11. A resident noted that areas to the east of Chiswick roundabout should be taken off the prospective parking list. An iron cast commitment to not disturb these areas was given as part of the planning application for the stadium and represents a major U-turn from BFC.**

This question was not fully addressed in the meeting. However, the original Transport Assessment back in May 2013 for the stadium stated the following: "750 spaces are being sought along the A4/M4 and to the west of the site, such that this traffic would not impact upon the local road network in the immediate vicinity of the stadium. The remaining off-street spaces are to be sought immediately to the east of the site on the Great West Road and to the east of Chiswick Roundabout."

**12. There is concern that high prices for parking will drive people into side streets, and the publicised figure of £15 is too high.**

Parking charges have not yet been set, and the pricing of these is entirely at the discretion of both BFC and LI and will vary depending on where they are.

Discussions over prices were halted due to Covid, but the intention is to engage with BFC, LI and supporters to determine appropriate levels. EST are conscious to ensure that it is affordable to park in a suitable space. Inevitably in a new stadium people will look for new spaces – the EST system will



mean that all spaces will have to be pre-booked to reduce the number of cars driving around the area searching for spaces. Messaging will be provided to tell supporters exactly where parking spaces are.

**ACTION: Parking location and cost to be shared with the group when available**

**13. Why did local businesses not offer parking spaces for matchdays?**

BFC approached local businesses before EST were involved. There were a number of reasons for local businesses not wanting to offer spaces including security, lack of space, lack of desire for the additional revenue and existing lease agreements being in place that demise car parking spaces to individual tenants.

BFC are looking at interim spaces at building sites near to the stadium, and it is likely that sites will be varied between matchdays according to demand and as further supply is achieved.

**14. How much cycle parking will be provided?**

There are around 350 cycle parking spaces on public sites, that the public will also be able to use.

Cycle parking will be on a first-come-first served basis, but BFC will look at trends to see if demand dictates that there needs to be a booking system.

**15. Can BFC consider using the river for transport? Where will away fans be on matchdays and what pubs will they be allowed in?**

The river is used less the further upstream you go and there aren't many piers near to the stadium. This is something that the Club will investigate however.

There will be stewarding on matchdays, and the immediate area will be monitored on matchdays.

**16. What will be put in place to prevent supporters gaining illegal access to local attractions such as London Museum of Water and Steam?**

The gates at London Museum of Water and Steam will be closed on matchdays.

**17. How will surrounding stations be run with social distancing? There are scheduled to be 10 games on weekday evenings, with the Newcastle fixture at 17.30pm.**

BFC will be monitoring and marshalling fans at the key local stations as fans start to return.

During Covid, broadcasters have put more games on TV and at different hours to normal. The Newcastle game would not be on at this time usually, but because of Covid the broadcasters are saturating the schedules. It's likely however, that we will still be operating at very small numbers for this game.

**18. What progress has been made at Kew Bridge station and how will it be funded?**



As reported funding has been secured through access for all. South Western Railway are currently working on design options.

**ACTION:** Share update on Kew Bridge Station upgrade ahead of next meeting.

#### **19. How will access to Kew Bridge station be managed on matchdays?**

BFC are planning that supporters would access the station through the underpass, where queues would be split into eastbound and westbound platforms. 250 – 300 supporters can be held in this space. (The underpass won't be open for the first few reduced capacity games however).

Discussions are taking place with South Western Railway about how residents could be able to enter the station at the top of the stairs. South Western Railway and BFC will closely monitor this as fans start to attend matches and will seek to address any issues that come up.

BFC will manage the site up to the station and South Western Railway will manage the station.

#### **20. What progress has been made on development at the residential sites?**

There was a slight delay to construction due to Covid, but construction activity has been gradually built back up again.

Phase 1 of the development, nearest to the stadium, is due for completion around April/May 2021.

There has been less of a delay to Phase 2, which is due for completion towards the end of 2021/the start of 2022.

There will be another newsletter distributed early in the new year.

Postscript note – EcoWorld can confirm that work will cease between 24 December and 4 January.

#### **21. There are two other very large developments on Capital Interchange Way have planning permission – how will they be managing construction on matchdays?**

EcoWorld do not control these sites, but the Club and LBH would be able to flag any issues, for example if the sites are obstructing a public highway.

### **C. Next steps**

- RGC suggested that the next meeting should be in February.
- AW explained that there may only be a 2 week or 10-day notice about when supporters can return, but the Club will communicate with the group.

END