

Grand Union Alliance

A community network focused on influencing large-scale development plans in Old Oak and Park Royal

Newsletter November 2016

Consternation over decision-taking on major planning application

The Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) approved its first major planning application - the QPR and Genesis £175m mixed-use development - in July this year. The development will deliver 605 new homes, 40% of which are to be 'affordable'. This is subject to a review mechanism up to 50% if viable.

GUA members raised a number of concerns (some during the formal consultation period and some jointly after the approval) about the development and the decision making processes. These included inadequate consultation by the developers, the insensitivity of developing a high rise block in close proximity to existing communities living in low rise homes, the impact of the development on the character of future developments in the OPDC area, insufficient family homes compared to the high levels of need in this part of London and inadequate provision of public open space, social and community infrastructure.

After the application was approved, the GUA wrote to the OPDC board and its chief executive raising the above concerns and others relating to assumptions of acceptable heights and density of homes in the OPDC area, the structure of the OPDC planning committee and more widely about procedures for involving the community.

This has led to the OPDC agreeing a number of changes to its statement of community involvement, including encouraging developers to deliver better processes for consultation and the OPDC to organise planning forums for major developments and in some cases to extend consultation periods on planning applications from 21 to 28 days. GUA members were also given confirmation that further analysis would be carried out on issues such as building heights and density across the OPDC area.

GUA members were pleased that some positive changes were achieved. However, as a number of their concerns had not been addressed, issues have been raised again with the GLA's Executive Director of Development, Enterprise and Environment, Fiona Fletcher Smith who has been carrying out a review of the OPDC for the London Mayor.

We aim to report further on this in the next edition of the GUA newsletter.

The GUA's letter to the OPDC board and the response from Victoria Hills, OPDC Chief Executive can be found on this link: <http://grandunionalliance.wixsite.com/grandunionalliance/guamaterial>



Oakland as planned

OPDC Review

The report of the OPDC review, launched in June, has now been published. It says that the haste with which the Memorandum of Understanding (between the OPDC and the Secretary of State for Transport) has been entered into regarding Government-owned land is potentially on less favourable terms than other such transfers and the Mayor could be exposed to considerable funding requirements. It recommends further negotiations with the Government and a review of the funding required for infrastructure to support development on this land.

Other recommendations are: investigation into redrawing of the OPDC boundary to exclude Wormwood Scrubs; DCLG, DfT, Network Rail and HS2 current board members to stand down; support provision for community and business board members; an extra Hammersmith and Fulham representative on the OPDC planning committee; and adoption of innovative practice on community engagement in the planning and master-planning processes ensuring that decisions, pre-application discussions and advice are as transparent as possible.

Link to the report and key issues raised by GUA members in a meeting with the review officer - <http://grandunionalliance.wixsite.com/grandunionalliance/updates>

Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum

Sumathi Pathmanaban, Forum Secretary

The Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum is a group of local volunteers working together to make Harlesden a better place to work and live in.

The initial purpose of the Forum is to create a Neighbourhood Plan for Harlesden. This is a document that clearly states what we, as a community, want to see happen in Harlesden. So, for example, do we want more affordable housing in the area? Do we need to improve the mix of businesses on the high street? Do we want to protect our pocket parks from development?

We can have our say on all these things - as long as we set it out in our Neighbourhood Plan for Harlesden. By the beginning of 2017 the Forum will launch our draft Plan and will run a series of engagement activities to ensure we receive as much feedback as possible from the community.

The Forum is made up of more than 60 community members representing residents, businesses, voluntary organisations and faith groups within Harlesden. The Forum is run by a committee of eight elected members who meet regularly to ensure we achieve our aims, including the delivery of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

If you are interested in joining the Forum or would like to learn more about what we do, please contact us at info@harlesdenneighbourhoodforum.com or call Hannah Churchman on 0208 965 2561. You can also visit our website at <http://www.harlesdenneighbourhoodforum.com/>



GUA engaging with local businesses

GUA is keen to involve more small businesses from in and around the OPDC area. GUA workers have had some face to face meetings with small businesses encouraging them to join the GUA mailing list to receive information and notification of its meetings. They have met with the Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum to see how they may carry out some joint work with the small businesses. Development of a small businesses directory is planned. If you are a small business and are interested in participating in this, please let us know.

OPDC Community Infrastructure Levy

The OPDC is currently consulting on its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) 'Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule' and background documents - a CIL Funding Viability Report and the draft Regulation 123 List.

CIL is a levy that planning authorities may charge on new developments in their area. This brings in funds to help pay for the infrastructure needed to support new development.

The types of infrastructure needed are set out in the Regulation 123 list.

The OPDC consultation documents can be found here - www.london.gov.uk/about-us/organisations-we-work/old-oak-and-park-royal-development-corporation-opdc/get-involved-op-8

The deadline for making comments is Friday 25th November.

The OPDC has been organising some consultation events on the CIL.

The GUA meeting, 17th November will include some discussion on the CIL consultation. The meeting will be held at the Pentecostal City Mission Church, 2 Scrubs Lane, College Park, NW10 6RB from 6.30-8.30pm.

Grand Union Alliance

Grand Union Alliance (GUA) brings together resident and community groups to share views about what is planned in the OPDC area. It provides expert and self-help group support on how planning policy works and how best to influence it.

GUA is supported by London Tenants Federation and Just Space, formerly through Trust for London grant funding and currently via Governing the Future City, a two-year international research project being carried out by Jennifer Robinson, UCL, with academics from Johannesburg and Shanghai.

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