

Fourth Session: Outer London Commission

Minutes – Bexley

11th February 2015

Attendance:

OLC Members

Will Mckee	Chair	WM
Cllr Teresa O'Neill	Mayoral Advisor on Outer London	T O'N
Sue Willcox	Quod	SW
Peter Eversden	London Forum	PE
Keith Mitchell	Peter Brett	KM
Colin Stanbridge	London Chambers of Commerce	CS
David Quamby	Consultant	DQ

Non – OLC Members

John Lett	GLA	JL
Rachael Rooney	GLA	RR
Peter Heath	GLA	PH
Richard De Cani	TfL	RDC
Josephine Vos	TfL	JV
Cllr Gareth Bacon	Bexley Council	GB
Cllr Val Clark	Bexley Council	VC
Cllr Don Massey	Bexley Council	DM
Will Cutley	Bexley Council	WC
Lindly Bailey	Bexley Council	LB
Lauren Smith	Greenwich Council	LS
Mark Page	Greenwich Council	MP
Patrick Keyes	Havering Council	PK

1. Welcome and Introductions

WM welcomed everyone

2. Process for Fourth round of OLC

WM explained that the fourth round would be split into 2 sessions, one initially focussing on residential parking which would immediately inform a Minor Alteration to the London Plan (MALP), and the second session exploring a range of other issues that JL would go through later in the meeting.

For the first session on parking, following on from the first Commission's meeting which was held in December 2014, there is now a series of meetings being held around London, of which this is the first, to gain the views of wider outer London stakeholders. There will be a

final Commission meeting in mid / late March and report setting out the Commission's recommendations published in May to coincide with consultation on MALP.

3. Specific Discussion Point: Parking Review

TfL presented on the issues arising from the parking review – see attachment for slides.

It was asked whether TfL's reference to accessibility in their presentation should relate to actual accessibility as well as physical accessibility and should be separated out from social inclusion.

One of the Commission members raised the issue of the viability of development – there is a need to understand the tipping point, especially in outer London in marginal locations (costs of provision and the opportunity costs).

Geography is considered very important. The context in outer London is different. The issue of overspill from cars outside London using outer London to commute and park, and then change mode to get further into London was highlighted. The example of Ebbsfleet was given – it was explained that although it is great for people commuting, it has caused other problems of parking nearer the station for commuting.

The question of how effective parking standards actually are on influencing car ownership / use was raised. Are they an effective lever? People will always do what they want to do. The relationship between the standards and the size of units was discussed.

The GLA explained that unit size was a determinant in the London Plan policy of how many parking spaces were allowed.

There was then a discussion of the need to be aware of the statistics sitting behind some assumptions – eg household composition is changing. Sometimes there are two families in one house, therefore much higher parking requirements. This is seen as a consequence of insufficient housing supply.

TfL explained that they are currently undertaking research on these issues. The research shows that if people have a car then they are much more likely to use it. It is thought that the amount of spaces might influence behaviour and choices in the future.

It was highlighted that income isn't always taken into account in understanding parking requirements. For example, a 3 bed house with people on benefits might have one car, whereas a 2 bed house with people on high incomes might have 3 plus cars. Income is an important correlation that needs to be taken into account. The difference between west London and east London was mentioned in relation to wealth.

It was emphasized that car ownership in London has gone down. It was suggested that this could be due to public transport improvements.

TfL research shows this is very different in different parts of London. Many young people choose not to buy a car and fewer young people are getting licenses compared to previous generations.

It was asked whether has TfL have done more research on the spread of car clubs across London as this could indicate people's choices/changes in behaviour. TfL said they would check.

The difference between different outer London boroughs and their commuting patterns was discussed and therefore the importance of understanding how commuting affects car ownership. It was felt that the location of jobs determines mode used to access them.

Again, the importance of the need to understand policy choices and what the effective levers are was highlighted. There are many levers to use – constraining spaces at destinations eg shopping; reallocation of road space; more green time for pedestrians to cross the road; etc all discourage people from using the car. There is therefore a question of whether standards are actually useful or not compared to other measures.

There is also a need to look at factors lead to higher car ownership – it is necessary to understand why it is different in different places.

The impact of the school run was also highlighted as an issue leading to congestion. Whilst it is not strictly within residential parking requirements, it has a massive impact on street parking around schools and general congestion at peak times.

The loss of front gardens for parking was mentioned, this is particularly important in relations to flooding issues.

The design of schemes is very important. Even if schemes are designed so that there are allocated spaces for parking around the scheme but undesignated space for other uses such as amenity, the reality is that people will park everywhere they can, in every available place if there is not enough space for their needs – this can ruin the overall design and amenity of the place. This was dubbed 'intrapill' as it is not necessarily a problem outside of a development, but rather within it.

A borough also suggested that people will not be put off buying a house without a parking space and that they will 'sort it out later'. A Commissioner asked for evidence of overspill or parking stress as a result of a particular development,

Another borough stated that dense town centres required car free development and densification should be focused on these places in order to maintaining the character of less dense areas of the borough. Therefore the policy must be applicable to both types of areas.

Another borough stated that without CPZs overspill would always be a problem and that the onus should be put on developers to know the market, know PTALs and know local policy/approach to design successful developments. For example, Woolwich and Kidbrooke are 'different animals' and developers know this and alter their approach as needed. It was therefore stressed that policies will need to be flexible to take account of different circumstances.

TfL explained that PTALs will be refined in the future. Currently they take a point and assess whether or not there is a bus service or other modes – this is quite blunt. In the future, it is possible that the assessment will look at frequency of the service and whether it takes people where they want to go – this might provide a more sophisticated understanding of understanding of quality of public transport options.

The Chair then moved the discussion along to the potential policy options presented. He suggested that there shouldn't be a reference to offices in any of the policy options – as this is a distraction and is not what the OLC has been asked to look at. It could also slow the process.

Discussion of policy options

Think that the removal of maximum with some clearly defined criteria in policy for PTALs 0-1.

If took out 'commercial' out of option 4 - option 4 is well structured.

Option 3 – gives flexibility because outer London is very different.

There is a clear decision which needs to be taken - should the policy options just look at PTAL1.

A question was raised whether changes to policies should be based on inner / outer London or on PTALs.

There is a need to draft policy that is less likely to be challenged than one than is more likely to be challenged.

PTAL is more defensible. Inner/Outer - where do you draw the line – is a very grey area.

It was suggested that policy should be limited to PTALs 0-1 in outer London, with no reference to maximum and be criteria based.

It is not appropriate for inner/central London or PTAL 2.

There maybe a case for flexibility in PTAL 2 in outer London in certain circumstances. Maybe another set of criteria to vary standards in PTAL 2.

Minimum standards – there may be circumstances where minimum standards could be applied locally.

Policy should include references to overspill, deliverability, and viability.

4. Outline of other issues for discussion in 2015

JL explained that later in 2015 the OLC would meet again to discuss a range of other issues of importance to outer London – the outcome of which would feed into the full review of the London Plan. These are summarised as follows:

Removing Barriers to Housing Delivery

Distinct outer London dimension e.g

- Density
- Viability
- Affordable rent / intermediate housing
- New built forms, existing character

- PTAL
- Local policy constraints

Crossrail and Land Release

Crossrail 1

- What other station related development potential could be realised?
- Ongoing work to be made available to the Commission

Crossrail 2

- What are the alignment options?
- Where could the stations be?
- What is the land use / density patterns around the stations?
- What is the potential for capacity uplift in terms of housing, town centre uses, businesses?
- What are the negative implications for such changes?

Land use priorities: Economy versus Housing

Emerging “Big Issue” – what is the right balance for a post industrial city?

- Offices to Residential / Industrial to Residential /
- Town Centres to Residential
- Eg industrial release C3 times 37 ha per annum benchmark
- New supply research to inform the Commission / Demand side assessment to follow
- What are the implications for this in terms of services for the city, output, productivity, employment?

Release of land for town centre intensification

Building on previous recommendations eg FALP policy 2.15

- Are there “volunteers” for town centre renewal?
- Are these geographically representative?
- How can they be developed as exemplars for wider applications?
- What sort of projects are required for these?

New approaches to regional co-ordination

Major EiP issue for London and wider South East

- Wider South East perspective - regional summit, wider south east Commission?
- Initial thoughts – 2050 Infrastructure Plan
- MDAG – Design responses
- OLC – London perspective - cross border arrangements - eg industrial and retail provision, parking, logistics, waste, migration flows, SMHAs, Duty to Co-operate
- OLC, MDAG, Wider SE Commission all to report by end of 2015 on more effective arrangements for coordinating strategic policy and investment across the wider SE

5. Next steps

There are 3 other sub regional meetings being held in the rest of Feb and early March.

A final Commission meeting would be held at the end of March to discuss the sub regional meetings and prepare recommendations for the final report to the Mayor.

The final report would then be published alongside the consultation of any minor alteration of the London Plan post the general election.

6. Any Other Business

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is on Tuesday 24th February at Waltham Forest Town Hall.