

Local Plan Independent Examination

OPDC Response to Hearing Actions (Matter 6 - Willesden Junction)

OPDC to provide information in greater detail of proposal for bridge link to Willesden Junction.

Introduction

- 1.1. At the hearing session on Matter 6 (Willesden Junction) the Inspector requested that the provision of information in greater detail for the proposal of the bridge link from Harlesden Place in Old Oak North to Willesden Junction Station. OPDC planning officers agreed to take this away and identify any available additional information.
- 1.2. OPDC planning officers have subsequently sought to identify additional information relating to the link identified as Harlesden Bridge within the Old Oak North Development Framework Principles. This has involved discussions with OPDC colleagues within the delivery arm of the organisation and stakeholders. However, the ability to provide a greater level of detail at this point in time is very limited (see paragraph 1.8). For the purposes of plan making, officers consider that the current evidence is proportionate and demonstrates that the delivery of the bridge is effective while recognising the need for further design work to define the exact location of the bridge.
- 1.3. This response note summarises the current evidence base and sets out the next steps to define the greater detail to inform future planning guidance policy.

Background and evidence base

- 1.4. The proposal for a link to Willesden Junction from Old Oak North is long established, having first being proposed within the Old Oak and Park Royal Opportunity Area Planning Framework. Through the development of OPDC's Local Plan evidence base, proposals have evolved reflecting updated information and input from stakeholders, namely TfL, Network Rail, London Borough of Brent and the Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum.
- 1.5. The relevant evidence base documents relating to the link are:
 - a) **Willemden Junction Station Feasibility Study (2017)**. This sets out three options for station improvements and high level recommendations for development of sites adjacent to the station. All three include a bridge from Willesden Junction Station to Old Oak North. These options for these links comprise:
 - i. Central option – a walking and cycling link to Station Approach and Harrow Road;

- ii. Dual option – a walking, cycling and vehicular link to Harrow Road and walking and cycling link to Station Approach; and
- iii. Offset option - a walking, cycling and vehicular link to Harrow Road and walking and cycling link to Station Approach.
- b) **Public Realm and Walking and Cycling Strategy (2017)**. This recommends that a walking, cycling and vehicular link to Harrow Road and walking and cycling link to Station Approach are delivered; and
- c) **Old Oak North Development Framework Principles (OONDFP) (2018)**. This work shows that it will be very challenging to technically and viably deliver a vehicular link to Willesden Junction Station, Harrow Road and Station Approach as a vehicular connection. Therefore, the priority will be to deliver it as a high quality walking and cycling route.

Additional work to be undertaken

1.6. The OONDFP represents the most up to date information for the location and form of Harlesden Bridge. OONDFP figure 10 identifies the bridge as a required connection with the exact alignment to be confirmed. This reflects the need to carry out additional work to determine the location of the bridge.

1.7. In terms of the format of the bridge, this will also be informed by the OONDFP. The relevant information in the OONDFP is:

- a) PR3(d) and figure 9 identify that the bridge will be a walking and cycling route.
- b) PR3(b) identifies that the bridge, as part of the wider route network, will need to deliver street widths that take account of forecast demand, relevant TfL guidance, high levels of pedestrian comfort and daylight and sunlight requirements for the public realm.
- c) PR3(c) also identifies that any cycle route should be segregated, shared with pedestrians, or on-carriageway, as appropriate for the level of demand.
- d) PR3(j) requires that walking and cycling routes are delivered at the topographical levels depicted in Principle 1 or alternative appropriate levels to be agreed by OPDC that will deliver a 1:20 gradient or better.

1.8. This additional work will be carried out by Network Rail, through a GRIP2 study led by Network Rail. The GRIP2 study has yet to be commissioned but the scope will be informed by attendees of the Willesden Junction Steering Group. This includes the London boroughs of Brent and Hammersmith and Fulham, TfL, Network Rail and OPDC. OPDC are convening the next meeting of the Willesden Junction Steering Group in early June 2019 to discuss the scope. Initial outputs of the GRIP study are expected within the summer.

1.9. Outputs of this additional work will be used to inform the forthcoming Old Oak North and Scrubs Lane Supplementary Planning Document and future reviews of the Local Plan.

1.10. OPDC is committed to delivering Harlesden Bridge with its partners and has identified that it will be delivered between 2023 and 2027 and in accordance with policy DI1. It will be delivered in coordination with development in the north of Old Oak North to ensure development benefits from public transport access. For information, this development generally refers to the EMR and Triangle Business Centre sites which collectively are identified to deliver 200 units by 2023 within OPDC's Development Capacity Study. Proposed modification MINOR/PS/OPDCM3c(2) provides further detail of the delivery of the bridge to paragraph WJ.8.