



## West London Economic Prosperity Board

21 March 2017

<b>Title</b>	<b>Orbital Rail in West London</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Amar Dave (LB Brent)
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Enclosures</b>	Appendix 1: Specification for a feasibility study into Orbital Rail around West London
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### Summary

Leaders have previously identified orbital transport infrastructure as an area of shared interest subject to more detailed analysis to identify which schemes would have the greatest economic benefit to West London boroughs, with a view to incorporating into Local Planning frameworks and the forthcoming Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) and London Plan. Growth Directors have as a result commissioned consultants to undertake some technical modelling to identify the demand for improved orbital transport options (both road and rail) as well as the specific schemes would most effectively boost growth and reduce the economic cost of congestion in the future.

One scheme that has emerged from this analysis is the Dudding Hill Rail Line, a freight line connecting Barnet to Hounslow via Wembley and the Old Oak Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) area. This scheme appears to be viable according to initial analysis undertaken by TfL and would also align closely with the emerging priorities in the London Plan and Mayor's Transport Strategy, namely that it would:

- connect areas of high jobs and housing growth;
- improve orbital journey times;
- reduce congestion on the road network; and
- improve environmental quality.

The next stage is to undertake a more detailed initial feasibility study in to the workings of the Dudding Hill Line and to agree that, subject to the findings of that study, the line is identified as a shared priority for West London boroughs. The feasibility study will need to be completed by June 2017 in order to inform the content of the MTS and London Plan.

## **Recommendations**

**The Board is requested to:**

- 1. Agree that the Dudding Hill rail line is identified as a shared priority for boroughs represented on the West London Economic Prosperity Board based on the information collated to date by officers and TfL, and the advice of West London Growth Directors. This would be open to review at a future date as further data becomes available.**
- 2. Agree for officers to commission the next stage feasibility study, to be completed by June 2017, in order to inform the content of the forthcoming Mayor's Transport Strategy and London Plan, as well as borough local plans.**
- 3. Agree to/engage with the Deputy Mayor for Transport and the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Regeneration, in order to incorporate Dudding Hill into the MTS and London Plan.**
- 4. Instruct officers to develop a longer-term road map and project plan that will set out how the Line will be taken to completion by the mid-2020s.**

### **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 Leaders have previously identified orbital transport infrastructure as an area of shared interest subject to more detailed analysis to identify which schemes would have the greatest economic benefit to West London boroughs.
- 1.2 One scheme that has emerged from this analysis is the Dudding Hill Rail Line, a freight line connecting Barnet to Hounslow via Wembley and the OPDC area. Modelling by TfL shows a strong level of passenger demand for this line.
- 1.3. The next stage of this work is to undertake a more detailed feasibility study in to the workings of the Dudding Hill Line and to agree that, subject to the findings of that study, it is identified as a shared priority for West London boroughs. The feasibility study will need to be completed by June 2017 in order to inform the content of the Mayor's Transport Strategy and London Plan.

### **2. STRATEGIC NARRATIVE FOR IMPROVED ORBITAL TRANSPORT**

- 2.1 The West London Vision for Growth contains a focus on transport infrastructure, with an emphasis on orbital connectivity. The historical focus on radial connections (e.g. transport into and out of central London) is becoming increasingly difficult to justify as Londoners increasingly will live and work in outer-London in the future, and as congestion becomes a more significant constraint on economic growth.
- 2.2 The West London Vision for Growth paints a cross-cutting narrative for economic growth that includes jobs, skills and employment, housing, inward investment and the tax system, as well as infrastructure - both transport and digital. The idea is that everything local government does at the sub-regional level supports economic growth, removes barriers to growth, and supports

individual businesses and residents from all backgrounds to succeed and thrive.

2.3 Each of these themes makes an important contribution to our overall story for growth. Each theme supports, and is supported by, the others.

2.4 Orbital transport schemes such as the Dudding Hill Line should therefore be understood as critical pieces of sub-regional and London-wide infrastructure that:

- **Connect regeneration areas and “growth zones”** across outer-London including Brent Cross, Wembley, the OPDC area and the Golden Mile in Hounslow. It also makes growth areas in Central London and Heathrow Airport more accessible to the growing number of West Londoners who do not have access to a car and rely on high quality, well connected public transport.
- **Improve journey times around West London**, for instance allowing travellers to get from Barnet to the OPDC area in only 15 minutes and to Brentford in Hounslow in only 25 minutes. It would also be expected to have a positive impact on journey times by car as it would reduce congestion on the roads.
- **Improve air and environmental quality** by reducing the number of cars on the road. This would likely be the case even if Diesel rolling stock were used but would need to be confirmed through more detailed feasibility work.
- **Reduce pressure on public transport and road infrastructure in central and inner London** by supporting more distributed growth in London, including outer London.

### 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 This report relates specifically to the rail component of orbital connectivity in West London, in particular the “Dudding Hill” freight rail line that has been identified by Regeneris. This Line has been identified as being of particular interest because:

- It connects all the main growth areas in West London – Brent Cross, Wembley, the OPDC area, and into the Hounslow schemes. It also provides much greater rail accessibility to Heathrow and central London via the forthcoming Old Oak Common HS2/ Crossrail and Great West Mainline interchange station that will be built at Old Oak.
- It is twin track along its whole length
- Modelling by TfL shows significant passenger demand, enough to make the scheme viable.
- It has historically been a passenger Line, although is now used largely for freight (12 trains per day plus very occasional charter trains)

3.2 Stations are being considered at:

- Brent Cross OR Cricklewood
- Neasden (possibly with a spur to Wembley)
- Harlsden

- Old Oak area (connecting to HS2)
- Acton Central
- Down to Hounslow (connecting to the separate Brentford-Southall line).

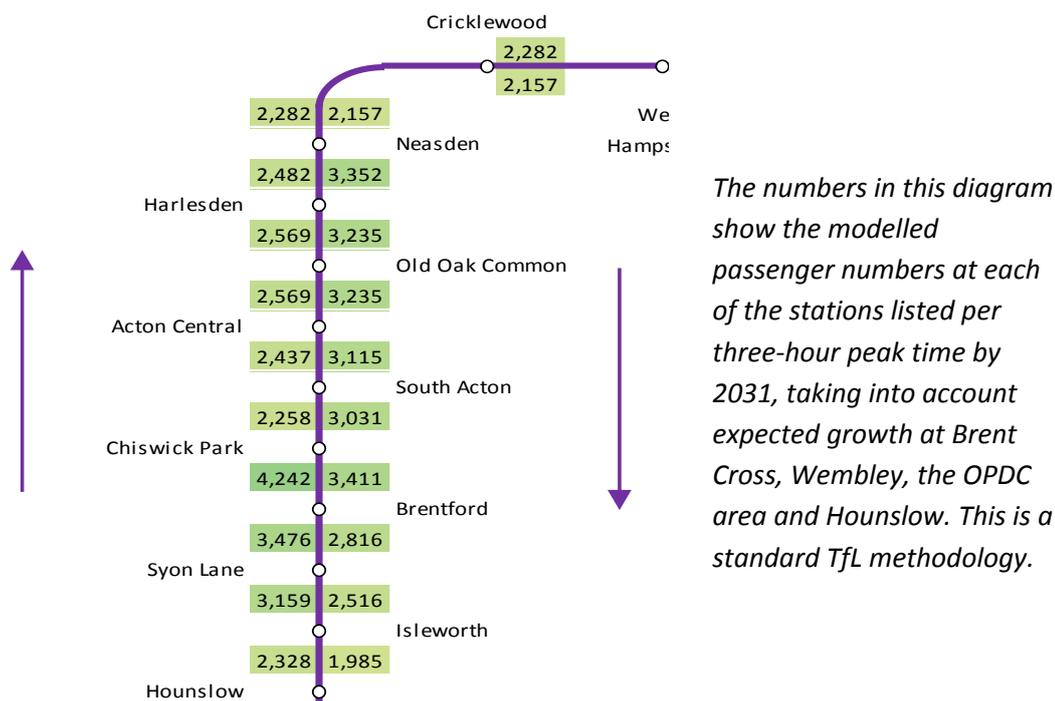
3.3 Previous modelling by TfL of passenger demand along the Dudding Hill Line shows c.2,000-3,000+ passengers each way by 2031 during peak hours, which would enable a 4 TPH service each way (one train every 15 minutes)

3.4 A Dudding Hill passenger service would also have a high degree of strategic fit with the emerging priorities that are expected to be contained within the forthcoming MTS e.g. connecting growth areas and town centres, removing cars from the road, and reducing travel times.

**Fig 1. Dudding Hill Line route (Source: TfL)**



**Fig2. Passenger demand modelling on the Dudding Hill Line 2031 (Source: TfL)**



3.5 The Dudding Hill line was referenced in the previous Mayor’s Infrastructure Plan 2050 as a “longer term aspiration” (by 2041). Given this, the work undertaken to date, and the current timing relating to the draft MTS, **a key objective for this work is to bring this timetable forward by 15-20 years and to integrate it into the wider story of regeneration and growth in West London** that includes the OPDC area, Brent Cross, The Golden Mile and Wembley, as well as Heathrow.

#### 4. CURRENT POSITIONS OF BOROUGHES

4.1 Transport officers from the four affected boroughs, OPDC and TfL met on 1 February and 28 February 2017 to understand the scheme and to develop a sensible, evidence-based set of recommendations for Leaders and Directors. **It was agreed by the group, based on the best information and data currently available, that further work to assess the feasibility of the scheme in more detail was appropriate. The group also endorsed the recommendations set out in this report.**

4.2 It is important to note that, alongside the overall story for West London associated with the Dudding Hill Line, individual boroughs and OPDC also have local requirements and objectives which can all be addressed through the next stage of analysis. These are set out below (in alphabetical order).

- **BARNET:** would like to take a view about whether the line should have a station at either the new Brent Cross Thameslink Station (and on to Hendon and national rail services) or at Cricklewood (and then into the London Overground via West Hampstead).

- **BRENT:** would like the option of a spur between Neasden Junction and Wembley Stadium to be considered, as this is a priority for the borough. Also need to understand where any depot would be located for the Dudding Hill rolling stock.
- **EALING:** Supportive in principle but no official position yet. The Borough has asked for the viability of a station at Harlsden to be incorporated into the scheme concept as well as an investigation to the impact of the level crossings at Acton Central and South Acton.
- **HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM:** Supportive in principle but wants to understand how work on orbital connectivity can benefit residents and businesses in Hammersmith and Fulham.
- **HARROW:** Supportive in principle but also keen to understand how work on orbital connectivity can benefit Harrow businesses and residents.
- **HOUNSLOW:** Noted the need to ensure that any focus on Dudding Hill north of OPDC did not damage the viability of established work on rail priorities on the Hounslow side. Also wants to ensure that any work on the wider Dudding Hill line makes use of existing detailed studies commissioned in Hounslow previously.
- **OPDC:** OPDC is interested in the ability of this scheme to enhance rail accessibility to Old Oak and Park Royal. OPDC would like to better understand the detail of the proposal and how it can be achieved within the constraints of the changes already planned for the Old Oak and Park Royal area, including the delivery of homes and jobs, and the impact it would have on other potential future rail enhancements to Old Oak and Park Royal.
- **TfL:** Have been supportive of this work to date and offered in-kind support in the form of advice, guidance, and technical input as reasonably required by the WLA.
- LBs Harrow, H&F and Hillingdon are not directly affected by the Dudding Hill Line's route but have been invited to engage should they wish to do so.

4.3 Boroughs have also highlighted a number of **shared issues and questions** that can be addressed through the next phase of feasibility work, should leaders chose to proceed:

- The impact of a passenger service on Dudding Hill on **freight** movement on the line and displacement to the road network.
- The net **environmental impact** of running a 4 TPH Diesel service on the line, offset by the reduction in car usage.
- Timing and phasing of the service in relation to the wider network, particularly at **Acton Wells**.

## 5. OBJECTIVE OF THIS WORK

5.1 The objective of work on the Dudding Hill line in the short-medium term is to:

- Bring it forward from being an “aspirational long-term scheme” as set out in the GLA's 2050 Infrastructure Plan to one that is delivered on the ground in the 2020s as part of a wider narrative relating to connecting strategic growth areas, Heathrow, and the wider country.

- Agree at the West London Level that Dudding Hill is (or isn't) a scheme of shared priority based on the information currently available and subject to future review.
- Deliver the more detailed feasibility study that is described in Appendix One of this report, in collaboration with TfL, by June 2017 before the end of the expected MTS consultation
- Secure agreement from the GLA and TfL via Deputy Mayors to incorporate Dudding Hill into the London Plan and MTS.

## **6. IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS**

- 6.1 Should the WLEPB approve the recommendations set out within this paper then officers will proceed to commission the feasibility study set out in Appendix One, as well as engage with officers in the LGA and TfL, as well as DfT and DCLG to lobby to have the scheme included within the forthcoming Mayor's Transport Strategy and London Plan.
- 6.2 Officers within West London boroughs will also begin the process of embedding the scheme into local planning frameworks, including Local Plans.

## **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Long term projections of the London population and economy show that transport infrastructure is likely to become an increasing constraint on growth. We also know that with a falling rate of car ownership in outer London that the role of high quality transport infrastructure that connects the places that people live and work is crucial. The recommendations set out in this report address these issues and will put West London in a good position to grow well into the future

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 8.1 It is understood that orbital rail schemes will always operate alongside road (bus and car) and other rail (Tube, national rail etc) transport options as part of a holistic and multi-faceted approach to supporting west Londoners to get around the sub-region. Leaders previously requested that a package of road schemes be developed to improve orbital connectivity. These road schemes are being developed alongside the Dudding Hill rail option and will be brought back to the WLEPB at a future date

## **9. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 9.1 Should this item be agreed by the WLEPB then Growth Directors, with support from West London transport planners, will commission the delivery of a more detailed feasibility study on the Dudding Hill Rail Line. The line will also be incorporated into the local planning frameworks of the boroughs affected by the line.
- 9.2 In addition, TfL and the GLA will be engaged with to secure the inclusion of the Dudding Hill rail line in to the forthcoming Mayor's Transport Strategy and the London Plan.
- 9.3 Furthermore, officers will develop a longer-term "road map" that will set out how the Dudding Hill line will be brought to reality by the 2020s. This road map will be incorporated into the medium and longer-term planning activity of individual West London Boroughs and of the WLA.

## **10 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **10.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 10.1.1 The West London Vision for Growth highlights improved orbital transport infrastructure as a priority for the sub-region.

### **10.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 10.2.1 This review has the potential for economic benefit to the whole WLA area. Recommendations b and d have a cost, the funding of which is below delegated limits and will be agreed by Growth Directors subject to members agreeing these recommendations.

### **10.3 Social Value**

- 10.3.1 The proposal set out here support improved health and wellbeing outcomes for people and businesses in West London by enabling them to move around more quickly and cheaply than is often the case, and be improving the quality of the environment.

### **10.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 10.4.1 This work falls within the following sections of the WLEPB's Functions and Procedure Rules:
- Representing the participating local authorities in discussions and negotiations with regional bodies, national bodies and central government on matters relating to economic prosperity for the benefit of the local government areas of the participating authorities.
  - Representing the participating authorities in connection with the Greater London Authority, London Councils and the London Enterprise Panel, for the benefit of the local government areas of the participating authorities, in matters relating to the economic prosperity agenda

- Representing the participating local authorities in discussions and negotiations in relation to pan-London matters relating to economic prosperity.

10.4.2 The Joint Committee's role and purpose on behalf of the Participating Boroughs relates to ensuring appropriate, effective and formal governance is in place for the purposes of delivering the West London Vision for Growth and advancing Participating Boroughs' aspirations for greater economic prosperity in West London, including promoting "the Economic Prosperity Agenda", in partnership with employers, representatives from regional and central government, and education and skills providers.

10.4.3 The purpose of the Joint Committee will be collaboration and mutual co-operation and the fact that some functions will be discharged jointly by way of the Joint Committee does not prohibit any of the Participating Boroughs from promoting economic wellbeing in their own areas independently from the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee is not a self-standing legal entity but is part of its constituent authorities. Any legal commitment entered into pursuant of a decision of the Joint Committee must be made by all of the Participating Boroughs.

## **10.5 Risk Management**

10.5.1 The risk of not taking early action to improve joined up, high quality across West London is that growth across West London boroughs is lower than might otherwise have been the case, resulting in few jobs, a smaller tax base, and lower levels of investment than would otherwise be the case.

## **10.6 Equalities and Diversity**

10.6.1 This work currently has no equality or diversity implications. If brought to fruition however the Dudding Hill Line would connect many of the sub-region's most deprived communities with employment opportunities and growth areas across London, and allow them to access jobs and employment opportunities in these areas at a lower cost and more quickly than would often be possible by other forms of public transport or private car. A full EIA would be undertaken should this work progress to the stage of development that would require this.

## **10.7 Consultation and Engagement**

10.7.1 This work does not currently affect the public. All West London boroughs, plus the GLA, TfL and the Old Oak Command and Park Royal Development Corporation, as well as the business community have all been heavily involved in the development of the proposals to date. The public and businesses will be consulted as appropriate as this work progresses.

## **10.8 Insight**

10.8.1 The proposals set out in this report build upon the findings of the "West London Infrastructure Constraints" project that was commissioned by Growth

Directors in November 2016. It also builds on extensive work undertaken by individual boroughs into orbital and rail connectivity solutions.