

Vauxhall Nine Elms Battersea

Opportunity Area Planning Framework

March 2012



MAYOR OF LONDON

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Acknowledgements

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Mayor's foreword



Boris Johnson, Mayor of London

I am delighted to introduce this Opportunity Area Planning Framework for Vauxhall Nine Elms Battersea.

London's population is growing and so is its economy. The London Plan identifies Opportunity Areas across the capital, identifying them as places in London with the potential to accommodate substantial numbers of new jobs and homes. Vauxhall Nine Elms Battersea is such an area. Its location in the city's Central Activities Zone, straddling the boundaries of the boroughs of Lambeth and Wandsworth, presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities that this spatial planning framework seeks to address by guiding the future development of the area.

The framework describes the area today, including its rich industrial heritage, which has so strongly influenced its character. It sets out current issues relating to the public realm, connectivity and legibility, and identifies some challenging transport issues. It identifies capacity for 16,000 new

homes and 20-25,000 jobs, supported in transport terms by a two-station extension of the Northern line from Kennington to Battersea via Nine Elms. It considers social infrastructure and open space requirements and sets a section 106 tariff for infrastructure provision, based on the recommendations of a Development Infrastructure funding study. The framework also provides guidance on building heights in the context of local and strategic views and heritage assets, and sets out environmental strategies for energy, waste, wharves and water.

The area has huge potential to make a significant contribution to London's economy. Considerable progress towards implementation of the framework has already been made since the consultation draft was published, and development is already underway. This has been achieved through collaborative and constructive working between key stakeholders including Lambeth and Wandsworth Councils, Transport for London, English Heritage, landowners and

developers, under the guidance of the Strategy Board. Sir Simon Milton was an integral part of this process until his untimely death and I am sure he would be proud of the progress made to date. I would like to pay tribute to his immense contribution to bring forward one of the most significant opportunity areas in Central London.

I look forward to continued joint working to address the challenges ahead, particularly the delivery of public realm and transport improvements including the Northern line extension and the linear park and the major development proposals that will transform the Opportunity Area over the coming years.



Sir Simon Milton (1961-2011)

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Executive summary

The project

The GLA has prepared a planning framework for the Vauxhall Nine Elms Battersea (VNEB) Opportunity Area (OA) in partnership with the London Boroughs (LBs) of Lambeth and Wandsworth, the London Development Agency (LDA), Transport for London (TfL) and English Heritage. The GLA has also worked with key landowners in the OA through a stakeholder consultation process. This final version of the framework supersedes the 2009 consultation draft.

As part of the Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF), the GLA and TfL has undertaken a major transport study in conjunction with key stakeholders, which considers various options for improving public transport accessibility within the OA on the basis of a development capacity study set out in Technical Appendix 9. The key findings of the transport study and its strategic recommendations are set out in chapter six of this report.

The OAPF is supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan. It sets out the strategic policy framework for development within the OA, articulating the key policy directions established in the London Plan, Lambeth's Core Strategy and Wandsworth's Core Strategy and Site Specific Allocations Document.

Evidence base, research and analysis

The report establishes the existing socio-economic conditions in the OA through examining anticipated demographic change

and current indices of multiple deprivation, including income, employment, health and disability, education skills and training and crime and disorder. This data is set out in Technical Appendix 1 to the framework. In addition, the planning framework also identifies existing social infrastructure in and around the OA, including nurseries, schools, health centres, pharmacies, community centres and libraries and spatial gaps in coverage for existing communities.

A thorough analysis of built and heritage context is also provided in TA2 including an overview of historic development, identification of heritage assets, analysis of built form and urban grain, existing and consented tall buildings, local views, land-use, land ownership, infrastructure constraints, connectivity and location of social infrastructure in the OA. On the basis of this analysis the existing character areas of the OA are defined. English Heritage undertook a Historic Area Assessment of the OA (April 2009), which provided some very useful input to TA2 and assisted in the definition of character areas in the OA.

TA2 also considers previous initiatives for the area including a review of potential strategic interventions such as moving Nine Elms Lane.

The planning framework also includes a detailed views assessment set out in TA3, which identifies the key strategic views that are likely to be affected by development coming forward in the OA. TA2 and TA3

provide the evidence base for the public realm and tall buildings strategies set out in chapters 7 and 8 of this report respectively.

Transport and movement context, which strongly define the physical character of the OA, is set out in TA4 and considers the existing situation for all modes. TA4 identifies accessibility and capacity issues throughout the OA including Vauxhall. These are assessed further in the VNEB transport study and chapter 6 of the framework.

In addition an energy strategy for the OA has been produced in consultation with key stakeholders. For further details refer to TA5 of this report. The GLA has also undertaken a waste & wharves strategy and water strategy included in TA6 and TA7 of this report respectively.

Proposed interventions

The planning framework supports the delivery of a high density mixed use development scenario comprising 16,000 new homes and a range of 20,000 – 25,000 jobs.

This assumes that 200,000 square metres of mixed use development is delivered throughout the OA including major office development in Nine Elms, plus an indicative 60,000 square metres of new CAZ frontage, 160,000 square metres of new office and 80,000 square metres of other employment uses at Battersea Power Station. The planning framework also includes a smaller

CAZ frontage at Vauxhall in line with LB of Lambeth's aspirations for a small district centre set out in their UDP.

The development capacity study (TA9) assumed that all developments will meet the London Plan requirement for open space provision (on the basis of the Mayor's SPG on children's play space) and contribute to the provision of strategic open space provision in the form of a linear park in Nine Elms, connecting Vauxhall to Battersea Power Station.

In addition, significant public realm improvements and substantial social infrastructure delivery are proposed to support existing and new communities in the area. It is anticipated that new schools, health facilities, community centres and libraries will be required.

The planning framework also sets out the approach to tackling climate change through development in the OA. The key principles include establishing a district heating network in the OA, with the potential to link to Pimlico, Whitehall and Waterloo District Heating Networks (DHNs).

The design and layout of the public realm strategy provides the potential to integrate flood risk mitigation with residential intensification.

On the basis of the transport study, the planning framework supports a transport interventions package focusing on capacity enhancements to existing bus services,

the introduction of new and extended bus services and the delivery of a Northern Line Extension (NLE) from Kennington to Battersea via Nine Elms. In association with a package of other transport measures throughout the OA including improvements at Vauxhall interchange and gyratory, this will achieve the step change in public transport accessibility and capacity that is required to fully realise the development potential and support growth within the area.

Stewarts Road industrial area will be retained as SIL where intensification of employment uses will be delivered through improving access to key sites and upgrading the quality of the public realm. The planning framework supports the ongoing protection of the safeguarded wharves. The rationalisation of New Covent Garden Market (NCGM) land holdings is also supported, with the focus for ongoing operational activity on the Main Market site.

The OAPF also includes a tall buildings strategy, which supports an emerging cluster at Vauxhall within the parameters of the London Views Management Framework (LVMF). The tall buildings strategy establishes a series of parameters, which respond to the need to protect the setting of the Palace of Westminster World Heritage Site (WHS) from key river prospects including Waterloo, Hungerford and Westminster Bridges. It supports high density development within the OA in the form of 8 – 10 storey perimeter blocks with tall buildings in appropriate locations so that

they do not appear in the background of the Palace of Westminster WHS.

A development Infrastructure Funding Study (DIFS) was undertaken, which informed the development of a section 106 tariff to fund the full range of infrastructure required to support new development in the OA. TfL is progressing the preparation of a Transport Works Act Order application for the NLE on the understanding that the associated costs will be recovered from future section 106 and CIL payments. Subject to a funding and financing solution being agreed and final Mayoral sign-off, the anticipation is to submit this in early 2013.

Consultation

The draft framework was subject to public consultation in November 2009 - March 2010; eighty responses were received. A revised chapter 12 Section 106 & CIL was subject to consultation in February - March 2011; 25 responses were received.

The majority of respondents expressed support for the land use strategy and considered the growth poles at Battersea Power Station and Vauxhall to be appropriate. Opinions were divided in respect of the preferred development scenario, with landowners generally expressing support for revised scenario 5, and local residents and amenity societies generally opposed to the proposed density of development for a variety of reasons, including overcrowding in the area, pressure

on local services and increased traffic congestion.

Some respondents emphasised the need for family housing, affordable housing and houses with gardens as well as flats. Others commented that the new development should not have a high proportion of social housing and that the framework placed too much emphasis on the provision of family housing.

Opinions were also divided in respect of the tall buildings strategy. Strong opposition to the proposed heights was expressed by a number of local residents and amenity societies. Concerns included overshadowing of existing housing and open spaces, blocking views towards the river, social problems associated with high rise buildings, impact on ground level environment and negative impact on Westminster World Heritage Site and Battersea Power Station. Landowners were generally supportive of the tall buildings strategy, but some commented that setting maximum heights was too prescriptive and unjustified in policy terms.

There was general support for the public realm strategy but some local residents expressed concern that the linear park would be too small and would be overshadowed by tall buildings. The need for sufficient children's play space, recreational areas and allotments was raised by a number of respondents. Some landowners objected to the scale of the park and its disproportionate impact on specific sites.

Several respondents welcomed the proposals to improve the riverside path but others expressed concern about the impact of tall buildings on the riverside. Proposed improvements to north-south permeability were generally supported.

Some respondents commented that new jobs in the area should be targeted at existing residents and that measures should be put in place to ensure deprived communities benefit from the development.

A number of respondents identified existing poor air quality at Vauxhall and expressed concern that this would be exacerbated by new development.

The majority of respondents acknowledged the barrier that lack of transport accessibility in the area has and continues to have to growth in the area. Overall there is general support for the transport proposals set out for the OA and an acknowledgement that any development coming forward will be required to be truly accessible and focused on increasing the use of sustainable modes of travel. The phasing and timing of delivery of transport interventions is a common concern and there is a desire to ensure early delivery wherever possible.

A number of respondents raised concerns in relation to the assumptions upon which the transport analysis was based and therefore its conclusions. In addition the density of development and the burden it would place on transport and other infrastructure was highlighted. Other concerns raised related

to the approach to car parking in the area; highways impacts and worsening pollution as a result of increased traffic levels.

In general there was overall support for a Northern Line Extension and supporting interventions, the majority of respondents recognised the limitation that a tram or light rail transit (LRT) led solution would have and therefore little support for this was identified.

Strong support was identified for the NLE, respondents described it as 'key', 'essential' and 'a must' for the area. However, for many support is contingent on the NLE being delivered as part of a wider package of transport improvements including a station in the Nine Elms area. Of those respondents who did not support the proposal the key concerns centred around funding and phasing; impacts on current Northern Line crowding; impacts at Kennington and Oval stations; potential to frustrate/delay development in the area and level of consultation to date.

Respondents recognised the existing high level of public transport accessibility at Vauxhall. Key themes related to the need to improve the capacity of Vauxhall station and services and the need for further commitments to improvements at the Vauxhall gyratory.

There was a general acknowledgement by all that traffic levels in the area would increase significantly over the longer term in line with development, concerns highlights on future highways impacts and support for traffic management measures in the area and beyond where highways impacts extend outside the OA.

General support for improvements to Nine Elms Lane, Albert Embankment and Vauxhall Gyratory in terms of 'humanising' these environments while acknowledging the strategic need to keep traffic flowing.

Many strong views on the need to redesign/remove/improve the Vauxhall Gyratory, asking that the OAPF make further commitments to bring about change.

Very strong support identified for the approach to improving walking and cycling connections and permeability in the OA through a series of interventions set out in both the Transport and Public Realm sections. Support for improved linkages along key routes, new linear park and riverside. Strong support highlighted for the proposed Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge; however further feasibility; analysis and consultation with locals and neighbouring authorities will be required if this project progressed. Concerns were identified in relation to cycle safety in the area during on-going construction.

General support for improvements to bus services and new routes in the OA; support for need identified to improve Battersea Park, Vauxhall and Queenstown Road Stations; welcoming activation of railway arches in the area.

Concerns highlighted in relation to the on-going/long-term construction impacts in the OA; support for co-ordination and integration of construction activity in the area; concern that the OA under-plays the role of the river in terms of transportation of construction materials.

In response to consultation on revised chapter 12, 63 The majority of respondents recognised the need for new infrastructure in the OA and supported the principle of pooling section 106 contributions for this purpose. There were, however, concerns raised about the methodology used for developing the tariff and its relationship with Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations and the transitional arrangements for phasing out section 106 and implementing CIL. A number of respondents emphasised the need for the OA to be excluded from the Mayoral CIL.

Several landowners commented on the potential impact of the tariff on development viability and emphasised the need for site specific financial appraisals to be undertaken to assess the viability of individual developments. The need for more clarity about how the charging mechanism would operate was a common theme – including the issue of net versus gross floorspace and clarification of the land use categories to which the tariff was intended to apply. Clarity was also requested in respect of the circumstances under which offsets against other planning obligations would be permitted. Some confusion was expressed over why four value areas but only two tariff zones were identified in the DIFS, and concerns were raised about the phasing of infrastructure contributions for individual developments.

The need for a clear strategy in respect of how and when infrastructure would be delivered was also raised by a number of respondents. A lack of clarity over the prioritisation of different types of

infrastructure was also identified, with respondents generally seeking more certainty over priority projects and the timing of delivery.

Some local residents and amenity societies raised concerns that some of the infrastructure requirements, particularly those relating to health and education provision, may have been underestimated and that existing facilities would be put under pressure as a result. They also expressed concern over the size of the funding gap and questioned how the deficit would be addressed. Some respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the priority being afforded to transport infrastructure at the expense of affordable housing, particularly in respect of the 15% affordable housing scenario, and considered that this did not comply with London Plan affordable housing policy. Concern over insufficient provision of open space, and the need for improvements to existing parks and open spaces, was also raised.

In drafting the final document, regard has been had to the representations received during the various consultation exercises and where appropriate the document has been amended accordingly. The final version is considered to strike a balance between conflicting views expressed over a number of issues. Importantly, the framework is consistent with London Plan policy and has the support of the boroughs.