

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Response to London Infrastructure Plan 2050

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham strongly supports the concept of a London Infrastructure Plan 2050 as contributing to the necessary long term consideration of London's growth and how it can be achieved to the benefit of existing and new residents and businesses. The Plan acknowledges the growth potential of East London and Barking and Dagenham provides substantial growth opportunities. 'Growing the Borough' has been formally adopted as one of the Council's three priorities under the vision of 'One Borough; one community; London's growth opportunity'. The Council has produced a Growth Strategy setting out the Borough's potential for growth and how it can be achieved.

As well as long term strategic planning for infrastructure, the London Infrastructure Plan recognises the critical importance of funding and we support the ongoing pressure for greater devolution of powers and funding from Central Government to local and regional government with a strong focus on prioritising where substantial residential and employment growth can be unlocked by the public and private sector working together.

The Mayor of London plays a critical role in three of the Borough's Growth hubs – the London Sustainable Industries Park at Dagenham Dock, Barking Riverside and Beam Park. All three offer opportunities for the Mayor to showcase the latest sustainable infrastructure as part of the development plans and we would encourage the Mayor to continue to actively engage with the Borough in ensuring these developments fulfil their potential.

This response addresses the key sections in the plan:

Public Transport

We support the Plan's assertion that public transport is essential to deliver growth. The following are the Council's key public transport priorities which deliver growth for London:

- **Barking to Stratford direct rail link with ultimately an eastern spur of Crossrail 2**
With Barking being East London's second busiest transport hub after Stratford, there would be real benefits for connectivity if a direct line was delivered between the two stations. The Council is exploring how this could be achieved through existing 'Forest Gate Cut' however ultimately the best direct link would be via an extension of Crossrail 2. We will work closely with TfL and Crossrail to set out the full benefits of this in terms of jobs, housing growth and improved connectivity.
- **Moving Barking Station from zone 4 to zone 4/3**
Although not an Infrastructure project the case for amending the zoning for Barking is critically linked to changing perceptions of Barking's accessibility/distance from Central London and thereby supporting growth and intensification in Barking. As such we believe the Infrastructure Plan should address such issues.
- **Direct rail access from Stratford to Stansted**
Alongside a direct rail link between Barking and Stratford, it is important to establish better airport links and whilst Crossrail will deliver this in relation to Heathrow, it is important to

address better rail access between Stratford and Stansted as part of improving East London's competitiveness.

- **London Overground extension to Barking Riverside and Abbey Wood Crossrail Station.**

The Plan set out proposals for a new London Orbital railway which includes the extension of the Gospel Oak to Barking line into Barking Riverside and a further extension across the river to Abbey Wood Crossrail station. We have worked closely with the Mayor of London to develop the extremely strong case for the London Overground extension to Barking Riverside and we strongly support the proposed extension under the Thames to Abbey Wood. However we would argue it should be brought forward to 2025 to help with delivering growth and the East London economy. More broadly we welcome proposals for additional orbital rail connections in outer London.

- **Barking Station Improvements**

Barking station has risen from the 79th to the 40th busiest station in the country. The Council's London Housing Zone bid for Barking identifies the potential for intensification around Barking station. This however requires the delivery of the improvements required for Barking station which will ensure it can meet the needs of additional users and provides an attractive gateway which ensures Barking becomes a more desirable residential location.

- **New road river (Thames) crossing from South Hornchurch to Belvedere followed by Gallions Reach to Woolwich. Plus Barking Riverside to Gallions Reach river (Roding) crossing.**

LBBB has formally commented on the River Crossings consultation and clearly London's growth eastwards requires new river crossings to unlock the area's full potential. It is critical that a Gallions Reach bridge accommodates East London Transit. In addition to the Thames Crossings forming part of a separate consultation, a River Roding crossing near to the mouth of the river is needed to for local traffic and public transport to improve access between London Riverside and the Royal Docks - two of the largest Opportunities areas in London.

- **Improved bus links to Royal Docks, Barking Riverside and South Dagenham/Beam Park.**

Bus routes can play a critical role in supporting growth and connectivity. Key priorities for new and improved bus links include progressing the previous ELT3 scheme from Barking Town Centre to the Royals (and travelling across a future East London crossing at Gallions Reach) – this should form part of the next Transport Strategy and Business Plan, new bus routes to unlock potential at South Dagenham/Beam Park linking up existing stations, and Barking Riverside bus routes to maximise connectivity.

- **A tram network linking Chadwell Heath to Dagenham Dock and Barking and Romford.**

Links between Barking and Romford and Chadwell Heath and Dagenham Dock (ie broadly north-south) are currently poor and the original plans for East London Transit to serve one part of this corridor were not implemented. Given East London's growth potential we would wish to encourage TfL to look at the potential for a tram service along these corridors to assist with widening the benefits of Crossrail and enabling intensification along improved a transport corridors.

- **New C2C stop at Dagenham East underground station**

A new C2C station alongside the tube station at Dagenham East would be able to support the strong potential londoneast-uk (formerly the Sanofi site) has for employment development including a science and technology park utilising unrivalled laboratories and clean room space. This site should form a key part of the Med-City triangle and a C2C station would improve journey times to Central London and elsewhere.

- **Docklands Light Railway Extension**

Whilst delivery of the London Overground extension to Barking Riverside is the key immediate priority to unlock Barking Riverside potential, we believe there is still scope for progressing the Docklands Light Railway extension from Beckton to Dagenham Dock. This would enable further intensification (including a potential secondary hub at Creekmouth) as well as supporting growth at South Dagenham/Beam Park. It would also provide a direct line between the Royal Docks and Barking Riverside/Beam Park offering scope for housing to serve the new business developments.

Road Infrastructure

Whilst recognising the importance of public transport in delivering sustainable growth it is important to recognise the critical role of strategic road networks in serving London's growth and the A13 is critical in this - particularly with the DP World/London Gateway developments and how London serving industries support the capital's growth. LBBDD believe the A13 should be a priority transport corridor for investment to relieve congestion and facilitate movement. This is particularly important with additional river crossings.

The A13 is major barrier to growth in East London with a number of junctions urgently requiring significant upgrading. We would support the previously raised concept of undergrounding such significant transport routes as offering scope for much greater quality of life in the surrounding areas as well as enabling significant additional new housing which could help fund the infrastructure costs as well as delivering other benefits.

24 Hour Transport

We support the proposals for creating a 24 hour transport system but are disappointed that the plans for a 24 hour tube beginning in 2015 totally exclude any service in Barking and Dagenham. We would wish to see an extension of the 24 hour tube to the Borough as soon as possible.

Cycle Networks

A comprehensive network of cycle routes is critical to delivering sustainable growth and with large scale developments such as Barking Riverside and Beam Park there is potential to embed cycling at an early stage to maximum usage. With the Mayor playing a major role in both these sites it is critical they are examples of best practice in delivering sustainable infrastructure. We are disappointed with the lack of news on funding for the Council's cycling proposals following the Mini Holland bidding as the Council believes its proposals can start implementing a long term future for increased cycling movements.

Green Infrastructure

We welcome the Plan's emphasis on green infrastructure including green spaces. Barking and Dagenham forms part of the East London Green Grid and we would welcome

ongoing Mayoral support and funding for this initiative particularly given the Mayor's critical land ownership role in the area.

Digital connectivity

Digital infrastructure is highlighted as a key feature of infrastructure required for future productivity. With many areas existing in London with poor or no internet connectivity, the plan outlines how this need will be assessed to ensure London is well connected for the future. Barking Town Centre and Barking Riverside, are both noted to have connectivity of less than 2Mbps in the Plan and we would strongly highlight the importance of improving this given the scope for substantial housing and employment growth.

Energy Infrastructure

The Infrastructure plan highlights the need to improve investment in energy infrastructure including the security and reliability of energy supply, which is within 2 years of demand differing to supply by only 2% at peak times. We would like to highlight the almost absurd situation where Barking Power Station built in 1995 at a cost of £360m is facing closure and decommissioning due to lack of contracts to supply National Grid. The operators recognise that they are likely to be essential in the future but that the current energy market means they have not been generating power since the summer and have extremely high standing costs. The company are seeking business rate discounts from the Council to address the high running costs when the station is not generating power. This is clearly a significant resource issue for a Local Authority facing unprecedented cuts - it needs to be considered at regional and national level.

The Mayor will also be aware of proposals for a London Heat Main related to Barking Power which could be implemented as part of a long term future for the plant which would be lost if a decision to close was made in within the next six months. We would request urgent intervention by the Mayor and the Government to prevent the loss of a power station that can play a critical role in ensuring power supplies to meet London's growth and provide longer term benefits in line with the Infrastructure Plan's objectives.

LBBB is committed to delivering new renewable energy sources for the benefit of the borough and is exploring scope for our own Energy company – we would be keen for financial and other support to deliver our ambition.

Waste Infrastructure

LBBB and the Mayor of London have been working closely together for a number of years to deliver the London Sustainable Industries Park at Dagenham Dock. This is providing a home for a number of businesses addressing London's waste in a sustainable manner. There is scope to progress this further to fully showcase the 'circular economy' concept set out in the plan.

Governance

It is important that London Borough representatives either through London Councils or Sub Regional partnerships have membership of the Infrastructure Delivery Board.

Social Infrastructure

The Plan makes limited reference to social infrastructure (health, community, culture) however nevertheless it is clearly critical to ensuring London's long term growth which delivers attractive places people want to live and work and cannot be ignored. While we understand the issues of trying to clarify the long term spatial requirements in relation to health it is essential that with a substantial growth in the population that this is addressed. The Council is working with the North East London Foundation Trust around an exemplar model for improving delivery in the adult care arena know as "Care City". And concepts like this should perhaps be expanded across the Capital. In relation to schools, Barking and Dagenham has the highest birth rate in the country and is facing severe challenges in addressing school place needs - this could become a substantial barrier to sustainable growth which has the support of residents - adequate and timely funding to address school places needs is an essential for growth.

This response was agreed by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's Cabinet on the 21 October 2014.