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Head of Growth
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date:	7 June 2017
our reference:	46912

IMPROVING ORBITAL RAIL IN WEST LONDON

Dear Val,

We are writing to you jointly as the members of the West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB), a formally constituted cross-party joint committee comprising the leaders of the London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, and Hounslow.

Over the last 18 months we've been working together to deliver a shared economic plan, the West London *Vision for Growth*, which is already allowing us to improve prospects for our residents and businesses. The Vision contains within it an emphasis on enhancing transport infrastructure and connectivity between regeneration areas, reducing congestion on the road network, unlocking new housing growth, improving air quality, and allowing people from all backgrounds to move around easily without an excessive toll on their wallets.

1. A shared priority for West London boroughs

One transport scheme of particular interest has emerged from this work, based on independent analysis commissioned by officers, which appears to meet a pressing strategic need. This scheme is the Dudding Hill Rail Line, currently an orbital freight line connecting the regeneration areas of Brent Cross, Wembley and Park Royal, and then down to Hounslow metropolitan town centre. Taking into account planned future growth in these areas, we know from TfL's Railplan model that passenger demand would be sufficient to justify a regular four-trains-per-hour orbital service along the line, cutting the existing journey times by car by half or more whilst taking pressure of the A406 North Circular Road.

You will see attached with this letter a copy of the report that was agreed by the WLEPB in March this year identifying the Dudding Hill Line as a shared priority and instructing officers to proceed with the development of a more detailed feasibility study.

Our shared focus on this particular scheme reflects the fact that we know that West London is currently significantly less well served by orbital connections than other parts of London. One need only look to the East to see the huge impact of the DLR and London Overground network on improving travel times and unlocking growth in areas previously considered inaccessible by public transport.

The Dudding Hill passenger line would also support the Mayor's priorities as set out in A City for All Londoners if converted to a combined passenger and freight line. It would:

- Connect growth areas, putting a greater number of jobs and houses within easy reach of one another.
- Provide Londoners with improved options and capacity for orbital journeys that do not rely on cars as the capital's population approaches 10 million people by the 2030s.
- Allow passengers to access new services on Crossrail and High Speed Two via an interchange with the Dudding Hill Line at Old Oak Common, bringing more jobs within travel distance of West Londoners than ever before and reducing congestion around Heathrow Airport.
- Reduce passenger demand in central London Stations for orbital journeys that currently require travellers to journey into central London before then travelling back out to reach their destination.

Historically Dudding Hill was a passenger line, but for more than a century now it has been used almost exclusively for the movement of freight. Our goal now is simply to bring it back into passenger use within the next ten years.

2. What are we doing now?

We are already translating our shared political commitment to moving the scheme forward by jointly commissioning an industry-standard "five-business case" feasibility study on it. Once complete, this study will allow us to demonstrate the strategic, economic, and environmental case for a Dudding Hill passenger service, and crucially how it would align with and support other infrastructure schemes in West London including a possible future West Coast Mainline connection to Park Royal, High Speed Two, the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail), as well of course as the wider regeneration at Old Oak Common and Park Royal. The study will also quantify the volume of new housing the scheme will unlock, and how it would improve the accessibility of hard-to-reach areas (as measured by PTAL) along the route.

The study will be completed well before the expected closure of the forthcoming consultation on the draft Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS). Officers are also developing proposals for scheme development, financing, and delivery.

3. Our ask: How we would like to work with you to deliver the Dudding Hill line.

If the outcome of the independent feasibility study is positive, we would like to work with you and your teams at the GLA and TfL to bring a Dudding Hill passenger service to reality by the mid-2020s.

There is a golden opportunity, through the London Plan and the MTS processes, to realise fairly quickly a deliverable, well connected, and politically supported piece of new infrastructure for London that connects some of our largest growth areas, unlocks new housing, helps the environment, and is consistent with both the priorities of the Mayor and all of the boroughs it passes through.

Specifically we would welcome your consideration about the following:

1. Inclusion of Dudding Hill within the Mayor's Transport Strategy.
2. Support for further dialogue between the West London Alliance group of councils and officers at the GLA and TfL on the delivery of a Dudding Hill service by the mid-2020s. This would include for example work to understand the timetabling of such a service, engagement with Network Rail to influence their plans to incorporate the line, possible inclusion of Dudding Hill as a future overground concession, and whether the line would be best powered by electric or diesel rolling stock.
3. Exploration of options for funding the development and delivery of the line. Local government is willing to demonstrate on-going commitment by paying its fair share, and seeks support from London Government, for example in terms of financing expertise, and possibly joint resourcing of the technical GRIP studies that would be required to bring the line to fruition.

Local government in West London stands ready to support the delivery of this scheme with a sense of shared purpose and across party lines. We hope you will give it serious consideration for inclusion in the draft Transport Strategy and look forward to the opportunity to discuss with you when we meet in July.

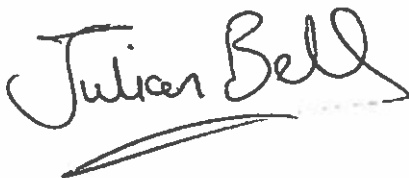
Yours Sincerely,



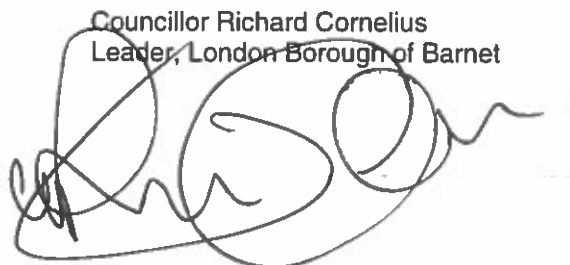
Councillor Muhammed Butt
Leader, London Borough of Brent



Councillor Richard Cornelius
Leader, London Borough of Barnet



Councillor Julian Bell
Leader, London Borough of Ealing



Councillor Stephen Cowan
Leader, London Borough of
Hammersmith & Fulham



Councillor Sachin Shah
Leader, London Borough
of Harrow



Councillor Steve Curran
Leader, London Borough of Hounslow

FIGURE ONE: Proposed Dudding Hill passenger service:

