Beckton Riverside Strategic Site (S01)

Introduction
The purpose of the Statement of Common Ground is to inform the Inspector prior to examination hearings as to the areas of agreement between the Council, Mayor of London/TfL and National Grid/St William (NG/StW) regarding the proposed strategic site at Beckton Riverside (S01) and the DLR depot expansion requirements and associated aspects of SIL designation and managed release.

This follows representations received from the Mayor Of London and TfL, National Grid Property, St William, with parties disagreeing on, inter alia, the appropriate balance between flexibility and certainty particularly in relation to depot needs, the availability of the site for SIL related purposes, and the extent to which needs expressed in the draft policy are sufficiently confirmed/evidenced.

In addition, representations from GLA Land and Property note support for the flexibility concerning the present SIL in the southern sector of the site given potential for reconfiguration through masterplanning and the associated scope for school delivery on the presently undeveloped triangle site.

Site Allocation rationale and operation
The site allocation at Beckton Riverside (S01) is as a Strategic Site by dint of its role in providing for strategic infrastructure relating to growth needs, a new Major town centre meeting local needs and making shopping/travel patterns associated with the existing retail park more sustainable, and in providing significant other housing, community and employment floorspace centred on a new station and wider transport hub. The former gas works is a largely redundant part of the site allocation and its regeneration as per the site allocation would provide significant benefits to the wider community.

Beckton Riverside will play a significant role in contributing to a mixed use borough, with all parties needing to work together to achieve compatibility of different uses in closer proximity than has historically been the case in this locality.

The Submitted Plan allocation enables these multiple objectives to be met through positive expression and inter alia the identification of much of the site for Managed Release from SIL as per Policy J2 and the designation of a new boundary to the SIL (as shown at Maps B1 and B2), providing for, within the retained SIL increased DLR depot capacity, legacy gas pressure infrastructure, new river crossing(s) and other new SIL conforming uses to help meet broader industrial and warehousing demand, (which may include waste) as set out in the Employment Land Review: Part 2. Other policies, notably J2, J1, INF1, INF4 and INF9 work with the allocation to shape how these uses are realised to meet wider plan objectives. The Joint Waste Plan Policy W2 also remains in place and material, albeit this is subject to review.
TheCouncilhas sought to strike a balance between providing for sufficient certainty in policy terms to enable masterplanning and investment decisions to proceed and the overall plan objectives to be realised, with sufficient flexibility for outstanding matters to be resolved.

In order to address some of these items, this document seeks to set out the agreed position on the following four matters relating to Beckton Riverside:

1. The quantum and location of the SIL land.
2. The position in respect of TfL/DLR’s requirement for increased depot capacity, and wider transport infrastructure planning in the vicinity.
4. Next steps

Common Ground
The agreed position on each of these items is set out below:

1. The quantum and location of the SIL land.

The Council is proposing a post submission amendment to the SIL designation, which will strike a balance between providing certainty, flexibility and opportunity. It is proposed to extend the SIL protection/reduce the amount of SIL de-designated around the existing depot to the line demarcated by Armada Way between the southern sector SIL and the existing depot footprint. This is set out in Map B1 attached to this document.

The amount and quantum of these changes are set out in Plan B2 appended to this document. Further details are found in the Schedule of Proposed Post Submission Minor Amendments, but the agreed elements of the SIL re-allocation between the parties are as follows:

- The extent and location of the SIL land should be amended as per Plan B1&B2 attached to this document.
- The area which has now been removed from SIL as per the revised site allocations map (B1 and B2), is still covered by Managed Release specifications set out in J2:2b and J2:3a. Of the Managed Release Criteria set out in J2:3a, the first two do not apply in this instance. The third re-iterates other plan policies in the plan concerning Neighbourliness (SP8) in adopted policy (noting the Agent of Change; a two way process securing compatibility of new employment uses in residential contexts or buffering e.g. SIL alignment behind Armada Way which is an advantage in masterplanning terms). The fourth criteria seeks to meet market demand (as evidenced with subsequent updates) and occupier requirements ensuring new employment propositions deliver what they set out to provide and reflect identified demand (reflecting J1).
Whilst there is no specific requirement for employment uses outside of the remaining SIL area, other than employment generating town centre uses and community infrastructure are welcomed. In particular in dealing with flood risk at ground floor and/or buffering of SIL where other spatial buffers do not apply, as well in time as in conjunction with any bridge/ramps/elevated road associated with the river crossings.

It is agreed that a release of undeveloped SIL on the southern sector of approximately 2.25 ha (land in GLA control), which can then be used to enable provision of a primary school to meet needs arising from sites S01 and S19.

Any capacity for other community infrastructure (including secondary school provision) would need to be provided in the wider site dependant on final numbers and iterative testing of infrastructure requirements against the assessment of local capacity and need as per INF9 and borough-wide practice.

Whilst slightly more SIL is protected as a result, in capacity terms this is presently reduced by the Thames Gateway Crossing (TGW) safeguarding, albeit it may be possible to achieve depot/industrial capacity and a crossing within the safeguarding alignments, particularly in the longer term.

Outside of the revised SIL area (which now totals approx. 24 ha) the remainder of the gas works site (which excludes the DLR depot footprint and land to the North West including the CHiP plant) is available for mixed use development, including residential development.

There is scope through masterplanning and engineering solutions to achieve managed intensification on the SIL around the depot as per Policy J2 which may provide for some limited further release if Managed Intensification policy tests are met, and/or development of further SIL uses which may include waste management facilities.

2. **TfL/DLR’s requirement for increased depot capacity.**

With respect to the proposed DLR depot within the amended SIL designated land at Beckton (Map B1), the agreed aspects of this requirement are as follows:

- The existing depot on the current site serves an important function for the DLR.
- There will be a need for additional depot capacity due to developments in the wider east London area including that at Beckton and the Royal Docks.
- It is sensible to consider the expansion of an existing facility rather than creating a new facility in a separate location.
- Initial expansion for committed Rolling Stock Replacement Programme can take place on SIL within TfL control and within the depot footprint.
- Further depot capacity is required for further rolling stock acquisition.
- At present there is insufficient detail available to agree the likely land take or form such further expansion.
- The revised SIL boundary as now proposed by the Council can accommodate a revised depot and such a use is agreed as being suitable for SIL, subject to a
resolution of detailed matters including; detailed design and options testing, (including re land take) relationship to neighbouring users and methods of mitigation.

- Any future depot expansion will be contained wholly within the newly reconfigured SIL area (Map B1), or other land in TfL control.
- The SIL amendment as proposed (Map B1 and B2), would allow for depot needs to be met in a way that minimises spatial impact as per other thematic policies in the plan notably INF2.
- In doing so it makes sense for depot expansion to be planned in a holistic manner together with other DLR infrastructure and refinement of river crossing requirements to maximise spatial efficiencies.
- Should the full SIL extent not be required for the depot expansion, (as tested by Policy INF1.2a) there is scope to include other SIL uses, or if Managed Intensification has been demonstrated (as per Policy J2), for further release.

3. **The Joint Waste Plan Schedule 2 Site.**

With respect to the existing Joint Waste Plan Schedule 2 site, the agreed position is as follows:

- There is an extant waste ‘Schedule 2 site’ derived from the Joint Waste Plan (JWP) 2012 covering part of the site to help meet strategic waste management need; however it is not expressly ‘safeguarded’ by the JWP and a proposed post-submission minor amendment corrects this.
- This cannot be removed unilaterally by the Local Plan, however, the process of Local Plan Review sets a new broader policy context for consideration of any proposals on the allocated land, most significantly its removal from SIL (which would have led to it being designated as a Schedule 2 site in the first instance) and continued designation of SIL with development capacity elsewhere on the site and in the wider locality.
- The remaining SIL quantum has been informed by demand analysis that factors in waste as part of general industrial modelling; a post-submission minor amendment notes the potential for this remaining SIL to accommodate a strategic waste facility or for evidence to be provided that this capacity is not needed.
- Should there not be sufficient space remaining on the Beckton Riverside SIL once depot requirements are accounted for, and existing waste capacity cannot be further intensified to meet strategic waste needs, other SIL and LIL in the borough would be the next area of search
- As with any new employment use, as per Policy J1, and any waste use as per INF3, and more general design policy SP8, the expectation would be that design should help to achieve compatibility with residential neighbours
- The Joint Waste Plan will be the forum through which the Schedule 2 sites and quantums will be reviewed though policy INF3:1b allows for developers to submit updated evidence in the interim to justify that the capacity is not needed. It will also be for the JWP to demonstrate ongoing need.
4. Next Steps (outside of the plan-making process)/implementation.
The Council has set out further amendments to the site allocation text in its submissions to the Examination as per the schedule of Post Submission Proposed Minor Amendments.

All parties with an interest in the area will need to continue to liaise and engage regarding each other’s requirements to meet the overall site allocation requirements in a comprehensive way, and addressing the need for all parties in a mixed use environment to work collaboratively to achieve compatibility. This will necessarily be an iterative process as capacity and its interplay with infrastructure sufficiency and design quality is tested to arrive an optimum quantum, format and distribution of housing, employment, strategic and community infrastructure, open space and mitigation measures.

The Council will encourage development intent to be formalised through PPAs, as this will provide for TfL/the GLA to advance business cases and evidence for further options testing, and funding bids for delivery of the relevant infrastructure. Of crucial importance will be early fixes on the new station location and any additional track alignments as well as their relationship with the depot expansion, and timescales for subsequent decision-taking.

It is also noted in turn that TfL, in applying for planning permission for depot expansion would need to meet the tests set out inter alia, in Policy INF1, which would require robust justification of the final approach and alternatives discounted in light of the policy concern to minimise spatial and environmental impacts, (which in this case focus on the extensive use of space in the middle of a mixed use Strategic Site, and noise and lighting impacts beyond the site) whilst factoring in costs, benefits and technical feasibility.
Map A: Existing site allocation map (as per Submission Plan, February 2018)
Map B1: Map of proposed changes (April 2018)
Map B2: Map of proposed changes to SI.L quantum (May 2018)