

**OLD OAK AND PARK ROYAL DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION - LAND ASSEMBLY AND
RELOCATION STRATEGY**

JANUARY 2025

This document sets out the principles that OPDC will apply in engaging with existing owners and occupiers of land and property within the boundary of the proposed Old Oak regeneration area.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Land Assembly and Relocation Strategy ("LARS") sets out the principles that Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation ("OPDC") will apply in engaging with existing owners, occupiers, and those with other interests in land and property within the boundary of the proposed Old Oak regeneration area ("Old Oak"), and how these interests will be brought together under single ownership.
- 1.2. Old Oak comprises approximately 31 hectares of land, from Willesden Junction station in the north, to North Acton in the south and to the east includes the new Old Oak Common HS2/Elizabeth Line and national rail station. The Old Oak area provides the opportunity for a nationally significant high density mixed-use development comprising around 9,000 new homes, three million square feet of commercial and work-space, new community and public facilities, new parks and open space ("the Scheme").
- 1.3. Much of the land within the boundary of Old Oak is in the public ownership of the Department of Transport (and currently used as worksites in connection with HS2), Network Rail and TfL.
- 1.4. The remainder of the Old Oak land is in private ownership. Since mid-2023 OPDC has been seeking to actively acquire this land (with considerable success) and otherwise engaging with landowners and occupiers. The LARS applies to the outstanding property interests that are not in public ownership, and seeks to document in overarching terms, the approach to landowner engagement that has been ongoing since mid-2023, and which will be pursued going forward.
- 1.5. All reasonable attempts will be made to engage with the remaining owners and occupiers and, where appropriate, efforts will be made to acquire these by agreement. However, given the outstanding number of interests to be acquired, and the complexity of land ownership, it is likely that OPDC will need to promote a Compulsory Purchase Order ("CPO") to provide certainty that all land and property interests can be acquired, for a reasonable price and in a timely manner.
- 1.6. The purpose of this LARS is to provide an explanation as to the basis on which the remaining privately owned land interests will be acquired and the support that will be afforded to affected parties, in parallel with the CPO process. It demonstrates how OPDC will act in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Government Guidance, whilst also recognising that interference with property rights can be unsettling and disruptive. OPDC will be transparent and deal with all affected parties fairly and reasonably.
- 1.7. OPDC is a Mayoral Development Corporation ("MDC") set up under Part 8, Chapter 2 of the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act') with the objective, as set out in section 201(1) of the Act, of securing the regeneration of the area for which

the MDC has been established.

- 1.8. Section 207(2) of the Localism Act 2011 provides OPDC with the ability to promote a CPO to compulsorily acquire the land and property interests necessary for the purpose of securing the regeneration of its area.
- 1.9. Before exercising its compulsory purchase powers, and throughout the preparatory and procedural stages of promoting any CPO, OPDC will have regard to the "*Guidance on the Compulsory Purchase Process*" ("the Guidance"), published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government in October 2024. The Guidance is available at:

[Guidance on the compulsory purchase process](#)

- 1.10. Paragraph 2.1 of the Guidance states that:

"Acquiring authorities should use compulsory purchase powers where it is expedient to do so and where there is a compelling case in the public interest to make a compulsory purchase order."

- 1.11. Paragraph 2.2 of the Guidance states that:

"The confirming authority will expect the acquiring authority to demonstrate that they have taken reasonable steps to:

- *understand the impact of the exercise of the compulsory purchase powers included in the compulsory purchase order on those with an interest in the land, for example affected owners and occupiers, through direct engagement with those parties*
- *attempt the acquisition of all the land and rights include in the compulsory purchase order by agreement and acquire all of the land and rights included in the Order by agreement."*

- 1.12. Section 6 in Tier 2 of the Guidance provides specific guidance to MDCs promoting CPOs under Section 207 of the Localism Act 2011.

2. Communication and Engagement

- 2.1. Paragraph 17.1 of the Guidance states that:

"Undertaking negotiations and engagement prior to, and in parallel with, preparing and making a compulsory purchase order can help to build good working relationships with those whose interests are affected. Acquiring authorities should be open and honest with those whose interests are affected and treat their concerns with respect."

- 2.2. Paragraph 19.1 of the Guidance sets out other steps that should be considered with a view to helping those affected by a compulsory purchase proposal.

- 2.3. OPDC will:

- Make reasonable efforts to contact each property owner and occupier and provide details about its intention to promote a CPO and the indicative timetable for this. Regular contact will be maintained and updates to owners and occupiers provided to ensure awareness of key dates and any timetable changes. OPDC will seek to keep any delays to a minimum by completing the statutory process as quickly as possible and taking every care to ensure that any CPO is made correctly, appropriately and justifiably.

- Provide plain English guidance that is publicly available. Currently, there are three relevant procedural notes published by the Government, which provide: A procedural overview (Guide 1); A compensation guide to business owners and occupiers (Guide 2); and, A compensation guide to residential owners and occupiers (Guide 4). Links to each of these are set out below:

[Compulsory purchase and compensation: guide 1 - procedure - GOV.UK](#)

[Compulsory purchase and compensation: guide 2 - compensation to business owners and occupiers - GOV.UK](#)

[Compulsory purchase and compensation: guide 4 - compensation to residential owners and occupiers - GOV.UK](#)

- Provide full details for a named person at OPDC (or its agent) to be the first point of contact for all issues relating to the proposed acquisition and CPO.
- Make owners and occupiers aware of the professional advice available (for example provide details of the CPO “helpline” operated by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) and (where appropriate) the basis on which any early fees incurred may be reimbursed by OPDC.
- Offer additional practical support to business and residential occupiers (see “Occupier Engagement”, below).

2.4. OPDC will also:

- Wherever possible, provide a “not earlier date” of when possession of land and property is required, and offer flexibility on occupational arrangements up to that date.
- Appoint a dedicated Business Engagement Officer, to offer to work with affected businesses to understand the impact of the proposed acquisition and provide support for relocation (see “Occupier Engagement”, below).
- Where compulsory purchase is likely to be required in the absence of agreement (see “Basis of Acquisition”, below), offer compensation consistent with the amount that would be payable if a CPO were confirmed and implemented (in line with the “compensation code”).
- Where appropriate, provide early undertakings regarding the reimbursement for reasonable professional fees incurred before the implementation of a CPO.

2.5. OPDC will maintain a continuing dialogue, where practicable, with all parties holding an interest in properties within the land required to deliver the Scheme or those from whom rights need to be acquired and those who have existing rights which may be affected by the Scheme.

2.6. OPDC and its advisers will seek to respond promptly to all enquiries received from affected parties.

3. Basis of Acquisition

3.1. In accordance with the Guidance, where compulsory purchase would

otherwise be required, OPDC will use reasonable efforts to acquire all interests by agreement or reach an agreement that establishes the basis on which a future transaction will be undertaken. Where the offer for early negotiation is accepted, OPDC will progress negotiations diligently and in all circumstances will maintain comprehensive written records to evidence the position with each party.

- 3.2. OPDC will have flexibility with regards to the structure of such agreements. It is intended that a range of contractual mechanisms will be used, to reach agreement on land interests needed to deliver the Scheme as far as reasonably practicable. This may include options, conditional contracts, or acquisitions of bodies corporate.
- 3.3. Paragraph 2.7 of the Guidance states that:

“Where acquiring authorities secure the acquisition of land by agreement, they may pay compensation as if it had been compulsorily purchased unless the land was already on offer on the open market.”

Paragraph 3.1 goes on to state:

“When offering financial compensation for land in advance of the making of a compulsory purchase order.... public sector organisations should consider value for money as a whole in order to avoid any repercussive cost impacts...”

And paragraph 3.2 states:

“Acquiring authorities can consider all of the costs involved in the compulsory purchase process when assessing the appropriate payments for purchase of land in advance of compulsory purchase.”

- 3.4. If an interest is compulsorily acquired, the holder of that interest is entitled to be compensated in accordance with what is commonly referred to as the “compensation code”. This is the name given to the collection of statutes, case law and established principles used in determining compensation claims and OPDC will engage with property owners accordingly, and in line with these paragraphs from the Guidance.
- 3.5. The compulsory purchase of a leasehold property interest would **not** be required if OPDC secures the superior (freehold) interest and is able to terminate the lease, either due to expiry or from the exercise of a landlord’s break notice, prior to the date on which possession is required as landlord. In such cases, OPDC will use its position as landlord to obtain possession, paying compensation if appropriate under s37 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.
- 3.6. Certain property owners (essentially residential owner-occupiers and commercial owner-occupiers with a Rateable Value less than RV£44,200) are entitled to serve blight notices which, if accepted, would require OPDC to effect the early acquisition of property. Any blight notices issued will be considered on a case-by case basis, but assuming any such notice relates to property located within the Old Oak area, the general presumption is that such notices will be accepted, in accordance with OPDC’s general land acquisition strategy.

4. Occupier Engagement

Commercial Property

- 4.1. Notwithstanding the proposed basis of acquisition, OPDC will seek to engage with **all** commercial occupiers within the Old Oak area in accordance with

paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 above.

- 4.2. OPDC will assign a Business Engagement Officer (“BEO”) to each occupier, who will usually be the principal point of contact in each case, in relation to supporting the business through change and relocation. Their role could include, inter alia: understanding the nature of the business and supporting the business to assess its future space and geographical requirements; coordinating a site search and connecting the business owner to local workspace providers and agents; utilising public-sector contacts to identify local properties, liaising with OPDC’s Delivery team regarding timetable and other practical arrangements; providing contacts for specialist business advice; and supporting applications for grant funding, business loan and growth support that might be available.
- 4.3. OPDC will aim to retain local businesses and employment within the OPDC or wider West London area but will work with businesses to support relocation elsewhere in London or beyond if that provides a better solution to meet business needs.
- 4.4. OPDC recognises the importance for existing businesses of being able to plan their relocations with as much advance information as is reasonably practicable, to assist in a smooth transition of their operations from one location to another and therefore where possible will provide a not-before date of the requirement for vacant possession of the site to allow the Business sufficient time to plan and organise relocation.
- 4.5. All engagement with commercial property occupiers will be aligned with the recommendations set out in the Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan prepared by AECOM for OPDC.
- 4.6. OPDC will also engage with qualifying businesses occupiers regarding compensation in accordance with Section 3 above.

Residential Property

- 4.7. OPDC recognises the importance of residential property owners and occupiers being able to plan their relocations with as much advance information as is reasonably practicable, to ensure a smooth transition from their existing home into another. OPDC will seek to engage with all residential occupiers within the Old Oak area in accordance with paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 above.
- 4.8. A dedicated officer from the OPDC Delivery Team will be allocated to engage with each residential owner, with a view to working collaboratively to achieve a mutually agreeable acquisition and/ or relocation solution.
- 4.9. OPDC will also engage with qualifying residential occupiers regarding compensation in accordance with Section 3 above. Assistance that may be available and considered on a case-by-case basis, could include providing flexibility on the timing of acquisition, the forward funding of costs and providing a short term “lease back” of property acquired. OPDC’s overall aim is to minimise disruption associated with the acquisition of property.
- 4.10. All engagement with residential property occupiers will be aligned with the recommendations set out in the Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan prepared by AECOM for OPDC.

5. Contact Information

- 5.1. All general queries relating to this Land Assembly and Relocation Strategy, and for owners/ occupiers seeking to engage with OPDC, should be made in the first instance to:

Aidan Fletcher Watts

Email: opdc_lat@london.gov.uk

Phone number: +44 7761 346014