

Gunnersbury Station Improvements

Gunnersbury Station is located in Chiswick at the eastern end of the GWC Opportunity Area. It serves the London Underground District Line (Richmond to Upminster) and the TfL Overground line (Richmond to Stratford). The station entrance is from Chiswick High Road and is incorporated within the Chiswick Tower development. Due to the nature of the site the ticket hall is restricted which leads to overcrowding at peak times. This means that on occasion, the station entrance can be closed or entry and exit controlled.

Improvements to increase the capacity of Gunnersbury Station, in particular more space for entry and exit, are needed to ensure that continued use of entry and exit restrictions/controls are not required in the future. The GWC Masterplan and GWC Plan policy GWC6 and GWC P3 support significant improvements to station capacity and environment.

Options to improve the capacity at the station have previously been investigated with discussions involving the council, TfL and the landowner. In 2018 three options were discussed:

1. A new secondary passenger entrance to Wellesley Road
2. Introduction of a new lift to platform level
3. An expanded ticket hall and circulation area with second set of stairs and lift to the platform separating entry and exit.

A fourth option has been investigated and costed by TfL that would relocate the platform waiting room to provide more circulation space on the platform and at the bottom of the stairs from the ticket hall.

Options 1 & 2 could be introduced with minimal intervention, albeit Option 1 would be likely to require the permission of the landowner, but both only offer limited improvements as does the decluttering option.

Option 3 could deliver the improvements considered by all parties to be necessary but will need to be facilitated in partnership with the landowner of the site. Currently, there is a vehicular link between the car parks on either side of the station and this link needs to be severed to provide space for the capacity improvements. Preliminary discussions were held with the landowner prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and these, led to the development of the outline options, as listed above.

In November 2018 TfL made an application for Access for All funding for stations across its network and which included £3.5M towards Gunnersbury. Ultimately, however, this application was unsuccessful as was a separate TfL application for funding for Gunnersbury from a GLA “Good Growth “fund”.

However, these funding applications and the co-operation of the landowner in trying to seek solutions demonstrate the will from all parties to reach a solution to improve capacity

at Gunnersbury station. They also demonstrate that a potentially viable scheme has been identified.

The land adjacent to the station (including the car parks) is allocated in Volume 2 of the DPD (Site Allocation 37 – Gunnersbury Station Car Park). It requires any future development of the site to improve movement and visual connectivity from the station to Chiswick High Road and Wellesley Road, including enhancement of the number and quality of existing pedestrian accesses as well as provide or at minimum facilitate step-free level access to the platforms and improved station capacity.

TfL has stated that it continues to support access and capacity improvements at Gunnersbury station, although no TfL funding is available at this time. All options for additional funding remain open.

Section 106 funding has been secured, and continues to be, from developments within the vicinity of the site. Sites where funding has been secured are:

- Chiswick Business Park: £637,508, received and allocated by the Council in 2015
- 1-4 Capital Interchange Way: £294,000, secured in 2019/2020, yet to be received
- Citroen site: £30,000, secured in 2020/21, yet to be received

Funding has also been negotiated in relation to other developments shown to have a significant impact on Gunnersbury Station, including 250 Gunnersbury Avenue (£250,000, ultimately refused planning permission), and Chiswick B&Q (£1.67M, due to be heard at Planning Committee 03/12/21). The council and TfL will continue to ensure contributions are negotiated and secured as appropriate. Should the B&Q application be approved and s106 agreement signed, the total secured amount of s106 contributions for Gunnersbury Station improvements would amount to £2.63M, providing a solid financial basis for future improvements. This doesn't include any CIL funding that may also be awarded to deliver this strategically important project.

One option available to the council to assist in securing the land required for the improvements is Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO). However, at present the council has no plans to pursue this route. Instead, the council believes that including the site within the Site Allocations is the best option in this regard, especially given that discussions with the landowner and TfL have been held with the intention of securing a negotiated route towards delivery.

Based on work done to date, it is considered that with the co-operation of all parties remaining funding could be secured and there remains a reasonable prospect that a step-free access scheme together with increased station capacity could be delivered within the Local Plan timeframe.