

NOT JUST A PRETTY PLACE

**A NEW AGENDA
FOR SHAPING LONDON**
PLACEMAKING STUDY 2017



Gensler

This report has been prepared by London First with the support of a steering group of business leaders:

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The report has been informed by extensive discussions with leading private and public sector participants in planning and development.

FOREWORD

London's greatest success factor is its ability to attract and retain both national and international talent.

Key to maintaining London's status as a desirable place to live and work will be the development of great places, both dense and liveable: richly storied urban neighbourhoods, offering unique lifestyles and home to people of mixed incomes, from diverse backgrounds, and at all stages of life. These are the commercial districts that host new jobs and provide greater opportunities for all.

Creating and managing such dynamic places in the capital is a profoundly challenging enterprise. And while there is consensus that good 'placemaking' is vital for good urban development – the goal and measure of success for London's built environment – creating places where people want to live, work and play is fraught with uncertainty.

That uncertainty can be overcome in many ways, but I would highlight two. First, we will need closer and more creative collaboration between government and the real estate industry. But bold public sector leadership must be the starting point for success. Our civic leaders should be judged on the quality of the places their policies create. We need good place-based policy and placemaking leadership that eschews the reductive binary debate of growth versus Nimbyism, recognises the good that comes from good placemaking, and has an honest discussion of the trade-offs around planning decisions. In London, that leadership, starting with the Mayor, will be driven by a compelling vision for growth that extends opportunities to all Londoners.

- The second important means of tackling the uncertainty surrounding great placemaking is open and thorough collaboration with communities. Collaboration will in each instance be different and face its own unique set of circumstances. There is no one fixed model, but equally, there is no excuse for poor consultation. If places are to attract and retain people, it only follows that existing and growing communities must be engaged in their creation and management.

The second important means of tackling the uncertainty surrounding great placemaking is open and thorough collaboration with communities.

Thanks to urbanists such as the late Jane Jacobs, as well as her contemporaries and successors, we have come to appreciate that successful development is not simply a matter of building more homes and offices, and that regeneration cannot be best imposed from above. From our varied experiences in creating and managing places, the London business community recognises the criteria for success. We have summarised our view of these criteria in a series of recommendations based upon our collective experience and case studies of success.

We look forward to sharing and discussing these recommendations with the Mayor, borough leaders and policymakers across the capital. The kinds of places we help to create represent our legacy, and the prize is – so it seems to me – too great to ignore. Great, mixed urban neighbourhoods created and maintained with long-term investment will benefit and be enjoyed by Londoners for generations to come.



BY
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INTRODUCTION

London's appeal as a world city is attributable to a wide range of factors, which can be summed up as the city's overall 'liveability'. Liveability – although a somewhat nebulous term – encompasses a range of characteristics, from the calibre of a city's infrastructure and governance to the quality of its streets, buildings and open spaces.

One shared characteristic of cities is that they appear to thrive when they are host to urban neighbourhoods that are dense, attractive and distinctive – reflective of both their heritage and their present community – and home to people of mixed incomes, diverse backgrounds, life stages and employment. These are the commercial districts that maintain and create opportunities.

One shared characteristic of cities is that they appear to thrive when they are host to urban neighbourhoods that are dense, attractive and distinctive.

Many London neighbourhoods score strongly against these criteria. But there are also places in the capital in need of substantial redevelopment – sometimes accompanied by other interventions – if they are to thrive. London's success – marked by its rapidly increasing population and high employment growth – puts infrastructure, communities and quality of life under intense pressure.

There is a danger that quantity takes precedence over quality owing to this pressure, especially in an environment where local government budgets and resources are under threat. This would be a mistake: great places have much wider benefits than the number of bedrooms or work desks per hectare they generate. These benefits include:

- **Additional Economic Value** – increasingly, people want to live and work in vibrant urban centres with interesting retailing and a strong cultural offer. Therefore, great places support high-value jobs (e.g. Google at King's Cross).
- **Greater Tax Revenue** – flowing from added economic value.
- **Better Public Health** – attractive places encourage people to walk and cycle, thus improving their health with the concomitant health benefit of better air quality through the reduced use of cars.
- **Long-Term Resilience** – great places foster strong communities, enhancing London's ability to respond to change.

Despite these potential benefits, urban development often stalls – or fails to realise its potential to deliver great places. The principal reason for such failure is that successful placemaking almost always requires the coordinated effort of a number of stakeholders, each of which may be working to different incentives, objectives and timeframes. The benefits of placemaking often extend beyond those who invested in or delivered them.

The key question, then, is: what can be done to bring together the key stakeholders and align incentives to reduce complexity and create the best outcome for everyone?

Chapter 1 sets out London First's definition of placemaking. Chapter 2 explores how the value of creating great places can be measured and captured, and Chapter 3 sets out the actions that London First recommends in order to deliver great places in London.

London First believes that if the creation of great places is situated at the heart of public policy in planning, development and regeneration, this will strengthen London's economic competitiveness, support its continued success as a global city and, most importantly of all, it will improve the quality of life for all Londoners.

1. DEFINING PLACEMAKING

It is now widely accepted that well-designed, well-managed places deliver economic, social and environmental benefits and that placemaking goes far beyond good-quality pavements or street furniture.

At one extreme, placemaking means the comprehensive redevelopment of a whole neighbourhood; at the other, it involves a series of tactical interventions that enhance what is already there. At whatever scale, it is an iterative and consultative process: plan, create, sustain. The steps in this process will vary depending on the nature of the area, but the key aspects are as follows:

- **Overarching vision of place** – this should generally be led by the London boroughs, although large landowners can also play a leading role - this vision needs to acknowledge key principles:
 - **Places are for people** – be clear about who they are and what is their purpose (live, work, play) and engage them and those who do not currently live/work there, but could.
 - **Places do not exist in a bubble** – they need to connect with what is, and what will be, going on in the surrounding areas;
 - **Places need to be adaptable to unknown future change** – for example townhouses becoming offices and then shops; and
 - **Placemaking is a collaborative exercise** – even where there is single ownership there will be multiple stakeholders who need to work together to create the vision.

Placemaking is a collaborative exercise

- **Place creation** – for large schemes this will involve the lead borough procuring one or more development partners and seeking coordination and investment from public sector agencies. The process of choosing and working with developers should recognise the multiple emergent objectives, the need to manage the trade-offs that will inevitably occur, and the importance of collaborative working over time.
- **Stewardship** – this is often the reason that places which looked great at the design stage fail in practice. A developer seeking rapid exit from a project will have little incentive to plan for long-term community value. The borough might have placed more emphasis on delivering housing or local infrastructure than on the sustainability of its urban realm. Budget pressures can also make maintenance difficult. As discussed below, this is much less challenging when a site is in common, continuing ownership. But, where not, it is critically important to find new methods of quantifying the value of place and of providing the resources to deliver that value.

2. QUANTIFYING VALUE

Quantifying the value of great places and the means to capture financial value from investing in their creation are complex and often poorly understood processes.

That real value is created through placemaking is perhaps most clearly illustrated by London's great estates – areas of the city where, crucially, the land is largely in single ownership. In these areas, the owners can invest for the long-term, confident that they will reap the financial benefits. Where ownership is fragmented, master-planning, redevelopment or asset use/management are much harder, since different owners inevitably move at different paces and have different objectives. The contrast between Regent Street (owned by the Crown Estate) and Oxford Street (owned by a diverse number of freeholders) illustrates that it is easier to influence the look and feel of an area as a single owner.

In areas of fragmented ownership, stakeholders need to be willing to make a concerted effort to work together

In areas of fragmented ownership, without a concerted effort and willingness from stakeholders to work together (and ground rules which facilitate this), the placemaking that does take place is itself fragmented and often driven by a model in which private investment delivers public benefit, but only through the planning gain required from new development.

Such placemaking is often dominated by a developer's individual commercial objectives, rather than in support of an agreed vision that leverages and coordinates a host of individual interventions to greater effect and greater public good. The improvements that do take place can be piecemeal and poorly coordinated, and therefore often short-lived. The wider benefits of placemaking whether economic (higher rental yields in the area as a whole and greater tax revenues) or social (health, environment, wellbeing) are not fully realised.

The challenge of quantifying the value of placemaking, and therefore of establishing a sustainable means to finance and fund improvements or maintenance, is three-fold:

- 1 Different people can value places on many different levels, often at the same time.** Indeed, many places derive their value from the fact that they attract a diverse range of people engaged in a variety of activities. This makes defining the value of a place inherently more complex than for most products and services.
- 2 It can be difficult to capture the value of investment in public spaces.** Much of the benefit created by placemaking is used freely: individual land and property owners cannot charge visitors to visit London's iconic public spaces and architecture. When an area is in single ownership, this is less of an issue, as there is often a sufficient uplift in property values to justify investing in the improvement of public realm. But, where ownership is fragmented, capturing the value generated by activities which have a high degree of public benefit is much more difficult.
- 3 These first two points illustrate that measuring the value of place is difficult.** If the benefits of placemaking are diverse, and the potential beneficiaries are disparate, it is inherently difficult to quantify the value delivered by specific placemaking interventions, either in advance or retrospectively. However, as the volume of publicly available data about places expands, ranging from crime statistics to footfall and the number of trees in streets, it is becoming possible to track the performance of places using a much broader range of measures. In turn, these should enable greater collaboration between public and private sector players regarding investment, expected values and anticipated returns.

FIG.1:
ROUTES TO VALUE

There are a number of ways in which investing in places can create value for different parties. The key ones are summarised here.

TYPE OF VALUE	ROUTE TO VALUE	EXPLANATION
LANDOWNER/ OCCUPIER VALUE	ATTRACTING TALENT	Drawing in people who want to work and study in the place
	ATTRACTING VISITORS	Drawing in more visitors who spend money in shops, restaurants and hotels
	ATTRACTING RESIDENTS	Creating a place where people want to live
WIDER STAKEHOLDER VALUE	LEVERAGE	Attracting others to invest in corresponding ways
	EXTERNALITIES	Generating social value beyond commercial value (e.g. Greater tax revenue, better air quality, less crime, healthier lifestyles)
VOLUME	DENSIFICATION & INTENSIFICATION	Creating additional revenues by adding more space and the better use of existing space
RISK MITIGATION	DIVERSIFICATION	Broadening sources of revenue to avoid over-dependency on particular sectors and uses
	FLEXIBILITY	Adapting to changing circumstances (option value)
	REPUTATION/BRAND	Maintaining the appeal of the place to current and future potential customers and stakeholders, and thereby the 'licence to operate' with public support

The private and public sectors need to work together better in order to collect evidence of the impact of good placemaking and to identify techniques to quantify its value. This will enable the assessment of placemaking investments alongside other investments, such as social infrastructure. How this might work in practice is discussed further in the following pages.



LONDON FIRST

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3. DELIVERING GREAT PLACES IN LONDON

LONDON FIRST

The successful development and maintenance of the built environment in London requires alignment of strategic and commercial incentives across many parties in a complex and dynamic political, policy and stakeholder system. The more fragmented these interests are – for example through multiple ownership, cross-borough location or multiple, potentially conflicting, uses – the greater the challenge.

London First believes that there is a role for the Mayor of London in emphasising the importance of placemaking through planning strategy and in providing political and practical support for the boroughs by coordinating land use and through transport planning.

However, in most circumstances, boroughs lead on actual placemaking activity. They need to set out a clear vision developed from extensive consultation and, in particular, address how they will manage the complex trade-offs between the competing priorities of development, infrastructure, homes and place. There is also a role for London's Business Improvement Districts to champion placemaking.

The Mayor, boroughs and businesses need to continue to work together to make the case to central government for increased funding to manage the strains of growth, including investing in good placemaking which becomes increasingly vital as London's population and visitor numbers increase pressure on its streets, places and services.

Finally, care is needed to avoid mistaking good placemaking for the creation of grandiose schemes or for the use of the most expensive materials.



REGENT STREET

STRONGER LEADERSHIP FROM THE MAYOR

London First believes that the Mayor should articulate a capital-wide vision that supports the creation of great places.

To deliver against this vision, the Mayor should provide new public policy support in the London Plan, as well as practical support and funding to boroughs and local communities.

London First believes the new London Plan and associated guidance should support and incentivise a greater focus on placemaking across the capital. The London Plan already provides policies to guide growth and development in the capital; it should also provide a set of tools and best practice guidance to assist boroughs to deliver successful, high-quality places and good long-term management.

The London Plan should:

1 Promote investment in high quality public realm as a driver for regeneration. Policy should specifically identify where private sector funding or investment is required in placemaking, and where the borough will need to make trade-offs against other policy objectives of development, such as infrastructure or housing. Area-specific planning guidance such as Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks, borough-level planning policies or Area Action Plans could then set out the specific policy objectives, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) rates and planning obligations for each area or site.

2 Encourage a move from town centre policies that seek a minimum level of retail or retail frontage to those that support and encourage a more diverse and flexible range of uses, promoting activity and interest, particularly at street level. This can help high streets to respond to changes in the market as consumer shopping patterns and lifestyles change such as the increase in online shopping. A more flexible policy approach can reduce vacancy rates ensuring that high streets remain vibrant hubs for local residents to visit. Policy should also be more permissive to varied hours of usage to enable activity throughout the day and evening.

3 Encourage ‘meanwhile’, ‘pop-up’ and temporary uses. This could range from the use of vacant buildings to the curation of public spaces for different activities, such as markets or specific events. Accompanying guidance should provide examples of the scale and nature of these uses, illustrating how temporary activities can test the impact of longer term interventions and revitalise an area that might otherwise be empty.

The Mayor has recently announced a new initiative, Public Practice, which is a central pool of skilled planners and urban designers that the GLA can provide to support individual boroughs. It should broaden its remit to provide information and practical examples of how successful places have been delivered across London through a centralised database. The starting point could be the GLA’s own involvement in placemaking, from high street and town centre projects through to the work of the Mayoral Development Corporations, with boroughs encouraged to contribute their case studies to a centralised database.

To support delivery, the Mayor could establish a placemaking fund to sit alongside this, open to bids from boroughs to deliver specific projects. The Outer London Fund (OLF) provides a good model of how a support and funding function could operate within the GLA.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Mayor should provide placemaking leadership for London, setting out a vision for the city’s places underpinned by detailed public policy in the London Plan, practical advice and support for the boroughs, and targeted grant funding.

CASE STUDY 1: THE OUTER LONDON FUND – BARKING TOWN CENTRE

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham is one of the most deprived areas of the capital. It has a comparatively low level of employment along with poor education and health indicators. Furthermore, the borough has the highest proportion of 0-19 year olds in the country and the highest percentage of single-parent households in England and Wales.

But, while education and employment are essential for the economic development of the area, in the short term this diverse community needed inspiration to generate a shared vision.

Help was sought from the Outer London Fund (OLF) which was launched by the Mayor in June 2011. The OLF was a three-year initiative aimed at strengthening London's high streets and town centres. The fund provided £50 million to local authorities in two rounds, along with specialist advice on how to improve the character, quality and economic vitality of selected high streets and town centres. A team with expertise in economic development, event planning, community engagement and marketing was also made available to provide advice along with assistance in project scoping, design and delivery.

The first round of funding provided £10m which was used to support 30 places across 20 boroughs. The second round made £34m available to 25 places in 18 boroughs.

The OLF funding and support services helped to enhance long-term regeneration efforts and aided immediate activities which drew the community together and began to change perceptions about Barking Town Centre.



BARKING

Barking received £649,000 from round one and £1.4m from round two of the OLF, matched by £580,000 from the council.

Initiatives included the Molten Festival which brought Barking Town Centre to life during Christmas 2011 and 2012. The festival was a spectacular series of free events, which included music, theatre, fireworks and a lantern parade, and attracted over 1,000 visitors to Barking, encouraging people into public spaces and local shops.

Meanwhile, in an initiative called Paint the Town, shutters on shops in Barking Town Centre were decorated with creative designs in bold colours to make the area more attractive, especially in the evening. Utility boxes and market bins were also painted, injecting bright colours into a previously grey streetscape. Some shops were also offered new signage and window graphics.

Initiatives included the Molten Festival which brought Barking Town Centre to life during Christmas 2011 and 2012.

The first round of the Mayor's Outer London Fund also helped improve Barking station's forecourt by reconfiguring bus lay-bys. This created a more attractive station approach with new lighting, paving, seating and signage and made space more accessible for pedestrians.

As well as improving pedestrian access to Barking station, the Mayor's investment also enabled the redesign of the road space in and around this busy thoroughfare. The taxi rank and bus lay-bys have been reconfigured to make them more efficient and to free up space for pedestrians. Short-term parking bays have also been added to make disabled access safer and easier, and provision for cyclists has been increased. The station itself has been enhanced with step-free access to platforms and a smoother transition between different modes of transport.

The first round also funded the design of a new public space. Dubbed Short Blue Place, it was designed to connect the high street and market area to Barking's new Technical Skills Academy as well as a supermarket and housing development. The space was built with the second round of funding.

The investment was also used to support local businesses. Barking Bathhouse has provided training opportunities and space for new health and beauty businesses to flourish. Kick-start business grants were allocated to encourage four local therapists to take their first steps in the industry along with guidance from a professional spa manager. The scheme also worked with Barking's Job Shop to establish ten work placements.

The OLF also supported feasibility studies and preparatory work to help secure future funding, to ensure that new developments made a positive contribution to the wider town centre.

Even small changes, such as the shutter painting, improved Barking's night-time economy and boosted shop owners' sense of pride

Even small changes, such as the shutter painting, improved Barking's night-time economy and boosted shop owners' sense of pride, while the spa attracted over 5,300 users during a three-month temporary residency, helping to secure its future in a new permanent building. The initiative also attracted considerable media attention, further boosting visitor numbers to the wider area and, in turn, increasing footfall to other businesses.



BARKING

STRONGER LEADERSHIP FROM THE BOROUGHES

In most circumstances, borough leadership is critical to good placemaking. There are many examples of strong political leadership which have delivered great results.

London needs more of this leadership, with boroughs setting out a clear vision for place that responds to the needs and priorities of residents, workers, visitors, landowners and other stakeholders. A strong framework for delivery is also needed. Extensive consultation with local residents will enable boroughs to create a vision with ground-level support which will help to sustain initiatives.

London First appreciates the challenges of improving placemaking capacity during a period of great financial pressure. However, we think that most boroughs already possess many of the skills that are needed – whether in planning, regeneration, transport or economic development – and that better coordination will help to deliver better placemaking. Westminster City Council and the London Borough of Croydon have established multidisciplinary placemaking teams. London First welcomes this focus and believes that over time it has the potential to increase public support and attract private capital. And, as noted above, we believe that the GLA has an important role to play in supporting borough-led placemaking.

A further challenge for borough plans is to set out the ways in which the multiple objectives from development can be balanced. The difficult truth is that the public investment needed for London's growth, social infrastructure, and hard infrastructure – notably transport – cannot all be provided by new development. Even if every drop of investment that could be obtained through planning gain is channelled into the provision of core public services, it will be insufficient and will result in the creation of poor places – when achieving good quality should be at the very heart of planners' decision-making.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Boroughs should articulate clearly their placemaking vision, which should follow thorough consultation with all stakeholders including local residents and developers, and create a strong delivery framework based on better coordination between existing Council departments and resources with support from the GLA.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Borough plans should provide clear guidance on how competing local policy objectives will be balanced in planning decisions. For example, how investment in placemaking and public realm will rank next to other infrastructure or housing priorities. Such decisions should be co-ordinated across projects and with the public agencies tasked to deliver them.

CASE STUDY 2: CROYDON COUNCIL: PUTTING PLACE AT THE HEART OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Croydon Council is a pioneer of placemaking in London, putting 'place' at the heart of its corporate decision making, with support from every level of leadership including the Chief Executive and elected members.

The Council is structured around three departments each led by an Executive Director. 'People' (including housing, education and social), 'resources' (including operational functions – HR, communications, legal) and 'place' including planning, regeneration, waste, transport and highways, licensing, property and assets.

A dedicated placemaking team sits within the place department bringing together the expertise across multiple built environment and council functions. The placemaking team works across planning policy, regeneration and planning decisions considering not only planning applications but major infrastructure, highways and public realm schemes.

Croydon's spatial planning teams used a radically pragmatic placemaking approach to create these plans

Over the last few years, Croydon Council undertook the task of developing a series of coordinated, delivery focused technical masterplans and planning policy documents. Croydon's spatial planning teams used a radically pragmatic placemaking approach to create these plans – an approach that was strategically driven but locally informed. They set the framework for Croydon's evolution as a place that can accommodate substantial growth in the next 20 years.



CROYDON

Croydon created a 'Place' department including Regeneration, Development, Streets, Safety and all 'place' focused Council services including a dedicated Placemaking team.

The planning frameworks including the Development Plan and the Croydon Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) were prepared with cross departmental input and are underpinned by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

The Development Plan sets out strategic planning policies for the whole borough alongside detailed and locally specific policies on land use and design for 16 identified sub areas. These detailed policies perform the function of a design code, providing greater certainty for developers on the development specifics and design parameters expected. The Council believe this has led to better outcomes on planning decisions and development schemes.

The IDP identifies the social, physical and green infrastructure needed, where it is needed and when it is needed alongside annually updated information on delivery, funding sources, costs and funding gaps.

Croydon has recently established a 'place review panel' comprising architecture, regeneration, design and construction professionals to provide independent advice on key developments to ensure quality design and placemaking are delivered throughout all aspects of the built environment.

The Development Plan sets out strategic planning policies for the whole borough

The coordinated approach to place is evident through recent and forthcoming projects and programmes that have and will deliver transformative change to Croydon.

Over £50m of funding, including £18m from the Mayor of London's Regeneration Fund was secured to deliver Connected Croydon, a programme of coordinated public realm and transport improvement works to Croydon's streets, squares and open spaces. Examples include a new railway bridge and pedestrian link from East Croydon station to the town centre.

The Growth Zone will deliver 23,500 new jobs and 8,000 new homes as part of a £5.25bn scheme financed by business rates retention. Croydon has been granted devolved powers by government to retain up to 50% of business rates generated by the town centre. Initial funding will be invested in delivering transport, schools and community infrastructure, regeneration and public realm improvements.



CROYDON

CASE STUDY 3: HARINGEY COUNCIL: BRINGING STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE CONSENSUS AND CHANGE FOR TOTTENHAM HALE

LONDON FIRST

Although designated one of London's Opportunity Areas and a Housing Zone, the difficulties that beset Tottenham really only came to attention following the riots of 2011, which particularly damaged the town centre. It was then that the need for a real focus on regeneration was identified.

The Joint Strategic Forum (JSF) was formed by the Greater London Authority and the London Borough of Haringey with support from Transport for London, as a structure to bring together key stakeholders concerned with the regeneration of Tottenham Hale Town Centre, including local residents, community groups and developers and businesses.

The council adopted the Area Action Plan (AAP) for Tottenham Hale in 2014, which set ambitious targets of 5,000 new jobs and 10,000 homes by 2025 and the aim for a new district centre around Tottenham Hale station. The AAP did not provide a blueprint for delivery.

One of the key tasks of the JSF was to set an agreed vision and objectives for Tottenham Hale Town Centre so that all stakeholders were working in accord to deliver a new town centre for Tottenham Hale – this was achieved through a District Centre Framework (DCF). The DCF goes beyond AAP planning policies to look at what sort of buildings could be built and strategies to improve the streets and open spaces; it also set out an approach to working with the local communities on ideas which could evolve into bigger projects. It has begun to implement the DCF's placemaking vision through the Test Project initiative – a bottom-up approach 'test' for longer term uses that the community would like to see.

Under One Sun

A well networked community organisation, offers free access to allotments and growing projects. Producer of local organic food, a place for communities and cultural groups to meet, skill-sharing activities, and courses on how to grow, cook and eat healthy food.



Tottenham Masterplan

Partnership with the private sector has been central to the delivery of regeneration for Tottenham Hale. Argent is the strategic development partner for a five-year project that will deliver 900 homes and will also kick-start the redevelopment of Tottenham Hale Station. Improvements for people and places are paramount - a new district health centre, an employment and skills programme for local people and improved green spaces and better access to the nearby Lee Valley Regional Park will be delivered.

All this perfectly exemplifies the importance of leadership and partnership to convey and deliver the placemaking vision.

LONDON FIRST

CASE STUDY 4: OLD OAK AND PARK ROYAL – PLACEMAKING AT THE HEART OF THE GROWTH AGENDA

LONDON FIRST

The Elizabeth Line (formerly known as Crossrail) and the path of HS2, the new high-speed rail service planned to serve Birmingham and the north of England, will intersect at Old Oak in north-west London. Consequently, a new transport interchange is to be built on the site of the Old Oak Common railway depot.

The development will be a massive transformation of the site which will have a substantial physical and economic effect on both Old Oak and neighbouring Park Royal, and will be of strategic importance for the whole of London.

Development of the interchange, which will also link with tube lines and other rail services, will require substantial investment that could provide benefits to the wider area, as well as being a catalyst for regeneration.

The planned regeneration could deliver 25,500 homes and 65,000 jobs over the next 30 years, along with a HS2 and Elizabeth Line station that will also provide interconnectivity between various tube and rail lines in the area.

Fractured ownership and accessibility issues across two very different areas previously held back regeneration as a single, robust plan with clear direction and governance was needed to ensure delivery. Following extensive consultation, it became clear that the means of unlocking this potential, which spreads across three London Boroughs, was the creation of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) which would have planning authority.



LONDON FIRST

...a single, robust plan with clear direction and governance was needed to ensure delivery.

The Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC), established in April 2015 by the Mayor of London, has the task of regenerating 650 hectares of land around Old Oak and Park Royal. In addition to being the local planning authority, OPDC has statutory powers relating to infrastructure, regeneration, land acquisitions (including Compulsory Purchase Orders), streets, business and financial assistance. It will also take the lead on preparing the Local Plan, CIL (community infrastructure levy) and determining planning applications in the area.

The government has agreed in principal, as part of the Chancellor's 2016 Spring Budget, to transfer all public sector and central government owned brownfield land in the area to OPDC, which would also make it the largest landowner in the core development area.

"The creation of great places is rarely easy. It's a complex process requiring considerable love and attention. Perhaps the most challenging areas are not the large scale single ownership sites, but rather the everyday 'in-between' places and areas in multiple ownership that exist across Old Oak and Park Royal. Identifying effective ways to support great placemaking at the small-scale is a new and exciting challenge"
says OPDC Director of Planning, Michael Mulhern.

The regeneration zone broadly divides into two primary land components. Old Oak, is focused around a major area of industrial units and an extensive area of both operational and former railway yards. The railway lands alone provide a significant opportunity for the new hub station but also a major air-rights development over and around the tracks to deliver a major new commercial centre with high density homes. The second area, Park Royal, remains the UK's most successful industrial estate.

OPDC has undertaken a range of surveys within Park Royal since 2013 to evaluate existing uses and the site's character

But both areas require different approaches to regeneration. Old Oak requires a highly coordinated comprehensive redevelopment to take advantage of its development potential. However, Park Royal is already a thriving employment district so the focus there is to safeguard it through sensitive physical and infrastructure improvements. These contrasting regeneration strategies require equally contrasting approaches to placemaking. Redevelopment of Old Oak will create a range of entirely new places to cater for a new living and working community and will provide strong placemaking opportunities, particularly along the frontage of the canal which passes through the area but also along the complex edges of the site. OPDC is already targeting the edges of the regeneration zone early to ensure a comfortable transition with neighbouring communities.

The Greater London Authority, and subsequently OPDC, have undertaken a range of surveys within Park Royal since 2013 to evaluate existing uses and the site's character. One result has been the compilation of the Park Royal Atlas which show that 30% of the area is occupied by the food production industry, 20% is used for film and TV production, while the remaining area was predominantly used by distribution and other industrial businesses.

Mulhern explains that Park Royal is a fascinating zone of transition: "All the buildings and sites are in active occupation, but ownership is fragmented and the quality of place generally poor. There is great opportunity for innovative placemaking which can take root many years ahead of the comprehensive development that will follow on the adjacent Old Oak site.

"The delivery mechanism should come at an early stage, we'll be involving the local people and businesses in the journey of change so they can collaborate, identify and take pride and ownership in the process."

As a way of achieving this, OPDC has secured funding through The Great Place Scheme (funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund, working with Arts Council England and Historic England) to create a new innovative public participation programme. This will build local participation and engagement and is designed to pilot new approaches that enable cultural and community groups to work more closely together and to place heritage at the heart of communities. This active participation will shape the future plans for Old Oak and Park Royal.

The OPDC is currently working on placemaking strategies within this 'zone of transition'. These focus on the creation of temporary uses that could evolve into more permanent land uses in the future. For instance, the OPDC is putting together a specific strategy to engage with the food businesses in Park Royal in anticipation of the arrival of the army of construction workers which will be required to deliver the vision for Old Oak.



A GREATER ROLE FOR BUSINESS AND BIDS

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a defined area, approved in a ballot by a majority of business ratepayers, where a levy is charged on all business-rate payers in the area to deliver a programme of measures to benefit local businesses.

The first BID was established in London in 2005 and the city now has a total of 48.

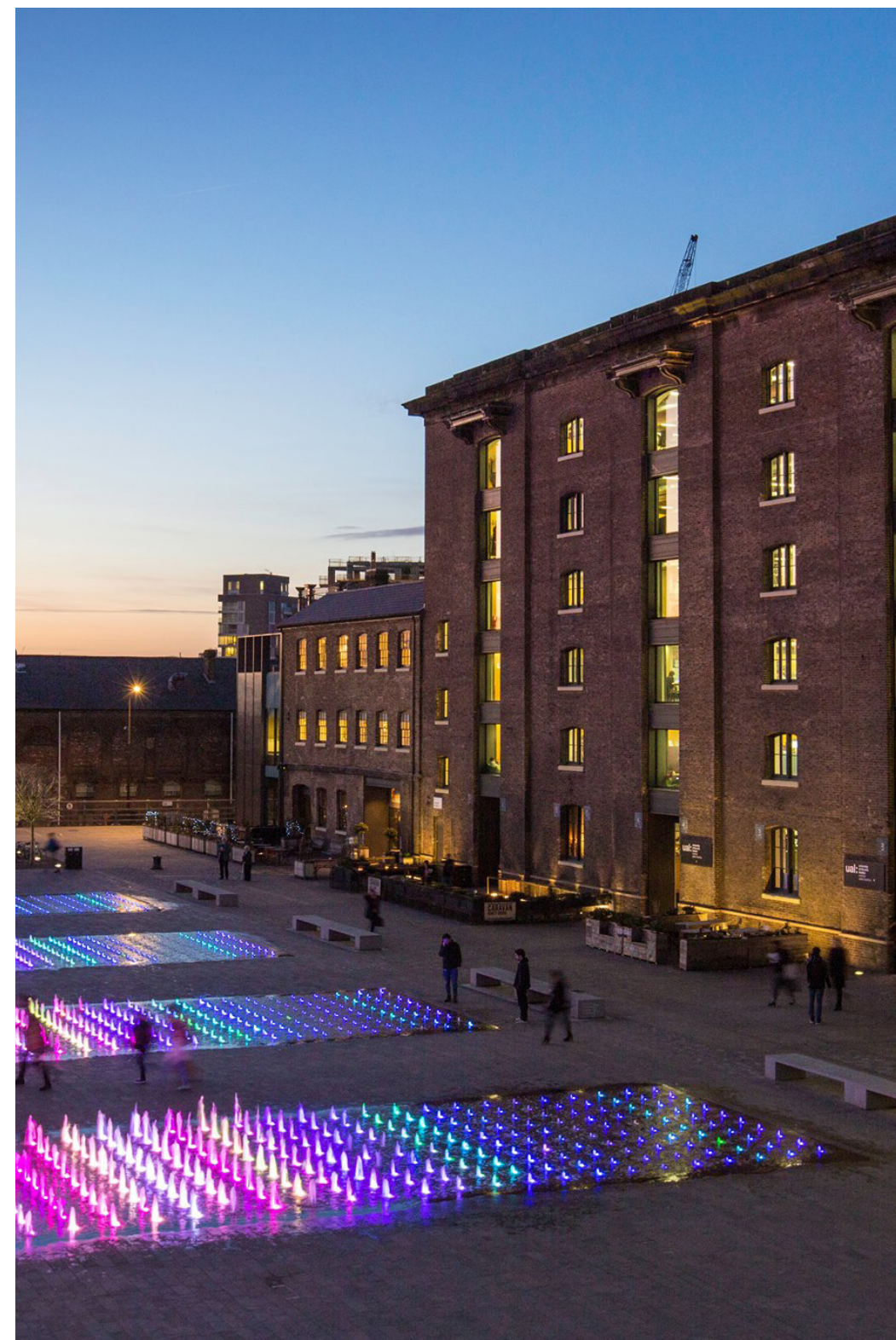
Although BIDs are not explicitly established as vehicles for regeneration, London First believes that they have a pivotal role to play in placemaking in London. BIDs have the network and infrastructure to bring businesses, local communities and the public sector together. They also have opportunities to build trust based on a record of success in local delivery, whether around the provision of better services or public realm improvements.

BIDs are well positioned to articulate and campaign for the benefits of reinvesting more of the proceeds of economic growth in local amenity and place. They can also play a practical role in delivery: for example, by creating and supporting delivery boards comprising key stakeholders and decision-makers to deliver against an agreed private/public sector vision.

Where there is no BID in place, existing local business groups could fulfil this role and drive the local agenda for investment in placemaking.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

BIDs and businesses should play a greater role in campaigning for investment to create better places as well as in working with local communities, the public sector and other stakeholders to drive delivery.



Kings Cross

CASE STUDY 5: SOUTH BANK EMPLOYERS’ GROUP – HOW BUSINESS AND EMPLOYERS DELIVER REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

LONDON FIRST

South Bank Employers’ Group (SBEG) is a membership organisation, comprising eighteen of the major employers in the South Bank, Waterloo and Blackfriars area, with a long-term commitment to improving the everyday experience of the area for employees, visitors and residents alike. It was established in 1991 to drive the regeneration of the South Bank neighbourhood. At that time, South Bank suffered from a lack of investment and had high levels of homelessness, with the subways around Waterloo roundabout dubbed ‘cardboard city’.

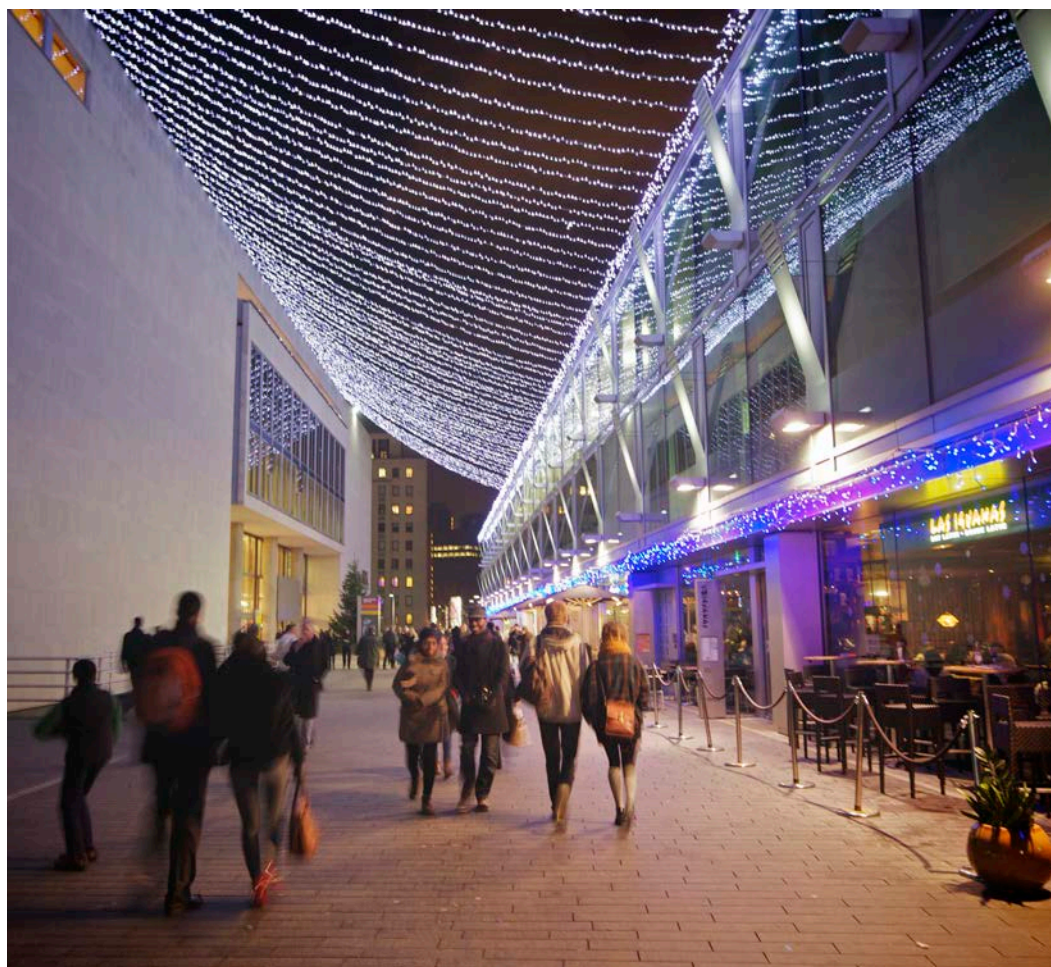
Over the past 26 years, SBEG has helped transform a bleak and unwelcoming area into one of the most exciting destinations in the UK. It works to make South Bank:

- a desirable destination for cultural pursuits, business, education and leisure
- a place which supports and encourages investment and business growth
- a place with a flourishing and cohesive residential community
- a place which provides jobs for residents of Lambeth and Southwark
- a place which welcomes visitors
- a friendly, clean, colourful, safe, dynamic and diverse neighbourhood.



LONDON FIRST

Southbank



LONDON FIRST

LONDON FIRST

Southbank

Establishing the South Bank Marketing Group was one of SBEG's first priorities. The Marketing Group's purpose is to promote South Bank as the cultural heart of London, and as a top destination for leisure and business tourism. It works on behalf of its members, including the three cultural powerhouses – Southbank Centre, National Theatre and BFI Southbank – and all of the main visitor attractions, including the London Eye. The Group runs the southbanklondon.com website and delivers various campaigns to promote South Bank to a global audience. It is clearly working: South Bank attracts over 30m visitors each year, a figure which is set to rise further in the coming years.

In 2014, SBEG established South Bank Business Improvement District (BID) to generate additional funding to invest in the area, support key neighbourhood services, undertake strategically important projects, and to engage a broader business community. South Bank BID has over 200 levy-paying members.

SBEG also delivers vital services to the neighbourhood, encompasses safety and security, and cleaning and greening – all vital to an area that has seen huge growth in visitors and economic activity, and is now easily one of the busiest parts of London. Using Section 106 revenues from an innovative agreement with the London Eye, SBEG coordinates and delivers a multitude of year-round services, including: South Bank Patrol, Met Plus – a partnership arrangement with the Metropolitan Police, delivering enforcement against illegal trading, cleaning and graffiti removal, and refuse collection. These services are further supported by financial contributions from South Bank BID, and additional sums from some of SBEG's members.

SBEG and South Bank BID demonstrate how business and employers can take a lead role in driving a regeneration agenda and in delivering results in terms of economic success, growth and jobs.

SBEG has also undertaken an extensive programme of investment in South Bank's public realm, including art, lighting, landscaping and urban design. It coordinated the design and delivery of the highly successful transformation of Jubilee Gardens, opened by HM The Queen in 2012 and which is now one of central London's most popular and busiest areas of green space. The Jubilee Gardens Trust, responsible for the Gardens since 2012, employs SBEG as its managing agent for the management and maintenance of the gardens.

Since 2002, SBEG has run a highly successful employment and skills service, through the Waterloo Job Shop in Lower Marsh. Working to ensure that local residents from Lambeth and Southwark benefit from the growth and jobs that are available due to the neighbourhood's successful regeneration, the Job Shop has helped thousands of people into work. There is an ongoing need for this service, as the area is set to generate an additional 19,000 jobs in the next five years as key development projects come forward.

SBEG and South Bank BID demonstrate how business and employers can take a lead role in driving a regeneration agenda and in delivering results in terms of economic success, growth and jobs. This takes commitment, resource, and innovation, and for over a quarter of a century, SBEG's members have demonstrated these qualities, as well as their commitment to the area and its future. But it also requires ongoing partnership working and support from local authorities, the GLA, TfL and central government.

GREATER LOCAL POWERS TO FUND PLACEMAKING

One of the major challenges that London faces in achieving better placemaking is the mismatch between the way taxes are collected and how the proceeds are subsequently allocated. This restricts public investment in placemaking, no matter how strong the business case, as local government bears the costs but national government receives many of the benefits.

New York sources 27% of its revenues from the property tax

The recent London Finance Commission report identified that London can only levy council tax and a supplementary levy on business rates (these are capped by Central Government and London has limited control on their administration). In comparison, other cities can levy a residential and non-residential property tax with access to a much wider range of taxes. For example, New York sources 27% of its revenues from the property tax (residential and non-residential), it also receives over 10% from sales and related taxes, 24% of revenues from income taxes and another 4% from other taxation. The report calls for more fiscal devolution for London, including the ability to set new property-based taxes to foster growth.

With local authorities facing more funding cuts there is an increased need for local areas to raise their own capital. While the government's commitment to retention of 100% business rates by local authorities by 2020 is a step in the right direction, we believe that boroughs should be given even greater freedom to set local taxes. This would both incentivise growth and development and could enable the boroughs to reinvest the funds generated in local infrastructure, services and public realm, which could deliver transformative placemaking.



The Nomadic Gardens

Another model with potential for emulation is the Mayor's Crowdfunding Programme, which is aimed at community groups seeking capital funding for projects with local economic and social benefits. This provides a framework for locally led placemaking programmes.

If a wider variety of funding sources could be made available and utilised locally, the poor placemaking decisions which result from short-term resource constraints would be avoided and a much better equilibrium achieved between the interests of local stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The Mayor and boroughs should continue to make the case for greater local powers, to fund and finance transformative placemaking by reinvesting the benefits of growth.

MAKE DO AND MEND: COST EFFECTIVE PLACEMAKING

Good placemaking is not always commensurate with the cost of materials or the level of financial investment. Integrating or supporting existing community endeavours can provide a valuable head start for placemaking initiatives. There are a range of low-cost and temporary interventions that can engage local residents and the business community to transform the look and feel of the area, generating both social and cultural value, for example, pop-up art installations, activities, or community gardens.

There are a range of low-cost and temporary interventions that can engage local residents

Boroughs could also review and seek to consolidate spending across the range of services involved in placemaking; savings from any efficiency could be deployed in funding placemaking projects in the area.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

The Mayor's new team should provide guidance to boroughs on cost-effective placemaking. Boroughs, through their interdisciplinary teams (see Recommendation 2) should review their existing spending on streets and public realm comprehensively. This will drive better value from investment and maintenance, looking at whole-life cost, as well as the overall benefits (for health, environment and the economy) flowing from such investment.

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The Mayor's Thames Festival

CASE STUDY 6: WHITE CITY – REVIEWING FUNDING SOURCES TO DELIVER PLACEMAKING OUTCOMES

White City, in the northern part of Shepherds Bush, west London, was renowned as the sprawling home of BBC television, for the stadium which was a hangover from the 1908 Olympics, and for its extensive public housing. More recently the area has come to prominence as the location of the large Westfield London shopping centre and because of the regeneration which is currently underway.

White City, which actually encompasses a diverse mix of ownerships, is undergoing massive transformation partly because of the withdrawal of most BBC TV activities to Salford, Greater Manchester.

Imperial College is also at the heart of the White City project and is developing a new campus. Developer Stanhope is in partnership with Mitsui, AIMCO and the BBC to transform the former Television Centre into a mixed-use development including office and studio space for the BBC. And housebuilder Berkeley St James has acquired a site where it plans to build 1,500 new homes and a new public park.

As the BBC's property holdings decrease, the corporation's role has changed from major landowner to catalyst, champion and advocate of the regeneration agenda for White City. Before development started, Imperial College and the BBC worked together, utilising the BBC's placemaking experience at Media City in Salford. From these discussions, the White City Forum, chaired by the BBC, was created to bring landowners and other key stakeholders together regularly to discuss issues, share concerns and agree on a common approach.



White City

CASE STUDY 7: LOUGHBOROUGH FARM – COMMUNITY LED PLACEMAKING ON A LIMITED BUDGET

Loughborough Junction, located between Herne Hill, Brixton and Camberwell in south London, has suffered long-term decline. Unrealised transport schemes and the neglect of the area's housing stock have both contributed.

However, the suspected homophobic murder of a young man on Southwell Road in 2008 provided the catalyst for community action. Local residents felt their neighbourhood had been neglected for too long and formed the Loughborough Junction Action Group (LJAG). This independent group comprises people who live or work in Loughborough Junction and its aim is the regeneration and improvement of the area and the lives of the people who live there.

Loughborough Farm, one of the group's successful projects, is a community food-growing endeavour launched in August 2013. The group built a network of planting areas on pieces of land that are currently derelict or underused. The food grown is for local consumption and volunteers run a Loughborough Farm stall selling produce grown on the first Saturday of each month.

In some cases the soil may be contaminated by previous uses so crops are grown in large builders' bags which also helps when sites are only available for short-term use. Although the project's main focus is growing food, the planting areas have become pleasant open spaces where local people meet up. And, as well as growing crops, volunteers help with DIY, arts and crafts, cooking, community events, selling and planning. Participants have also learned new skills, can access free training and obtain fresh food grown locally.

LJAG has received funding from Lambeth Council's Forums Network, the London Community Foundation and the Big Lottery Fund and the group is contributing to the Loughborough Junction Masterplan process.



Loughborough Farm

CASE STUDY 8: ARTWORKS, ELEPHANT PARK: TEMPORARY USES AND BOTTOM-UP PLACEMAKING

The Artworks Elephant is a joint venture project between Lendlease and Stow projects. The project is located on Lendlease's Elephant Park development site in Southwark, and came about as a result of extensive consultation on the Elephant Park masterplan. Many in the community expressed a strong desire to see active use of the large site through the development process through a range of temporary uses. Southwark Council and Lendlease jointly sought expressions of interest from partners to set up a temporary enterprise hub on the site. The Artworks is made up of 38 shipping containers, and three modular buildings, one of which houses the temporary Newington Library. The site also has a larger space which is available for hire, called the Trunk which hosts a wide range of events and activities from meetings, to fitness classes, talks and comedy shows.

Many in the community expressed a strong desire to see active use of the large site

There are over 30 individual businesses within the shipping containers ranging from creative and digital start-up companies, to a wide range of food and lifestyle businesses. Over 40% of the businesses* in Artworks are new businesses set up by Southwark residents, and over 130 people are employed by businesses within Artworks. The site opened in September 2014 and has been fully let since October 2015. Occasional turnover of units are typically re-let within 24 hours, demonstrating a significant demand for small and therefore affordable but self-contained units.



Artworks

The courtyard arrangement provides a natural amphitheatre and spill out space for the food businesses which have found the combination of great location, courtyard and small unit size, to be a great combination for taking their business to the next level. Many of the food businesses on the site were former street food traders, and the Artworks has provided a useful stepping stone from market trading to a more permanent restaurant set up. It is the aim that many of the businesses within Artworks will go on to lease space in the Elephant Park development as it completes.

**at last survey in autumn 2016.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

RECOMMENDATION

1

The Mayor of London should provide placemaking leadership for London by setting out a vision for the city's places. This should be underpinned by detailed public policy in the London Plan. This policy should:

- promote investment into high-quality public realms as a driver for regeneration;
- encourage a move from town centre policies that seek a minimum level of retail or retail frontage to those that support and encourage a more diverse and flexible range of uses, promoting activity and interest, particularly at street level;
- encourage 'meanwhile', 'pop up' and temporary uses.

RECOMMENDATION

2

Boroughs should articulate clearly their placemaking vision and create a strong delivery framework based on better coordination between existing resources and support from the GLA.

RECOMMENDATION

3

Borough plans should provide clear guidance on how competing local policy objectives will be balanced in planning decisions, for example, the degree of investment in placemaking and public realms by comparison with other infrastructure or housing priorities. These decisions should be coordinated across projects and with the public agencies tasked to deliver them.

RECOMMENDATION

4

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and other business-led organisations should play a greater role in campaigning for investment to create better places and in working with local communities, the public sector and other stakeholders to drive delivery.

RECOMMENDATION

5

The Mayor and the boroughs should continue to make the case for greater local powers to fund and finance transformative placemaking by reinvesting the benefits of growth.

RECOMMENDATION

6

The Mayor's new team should provide guidance to boroughs on cost-effective placemaking. Boroughs, through their interdisciplinary teams (see Recommendation 2) should review their existing spending on streets and public realm comprehensively. This will drive better value from investment and maintenance, looking at whole-life cost, as well as the overall benefits (for health, environment and the economy) flowing from such investment.



PLACEMAKING DOESN'T HAVE TO COST THE EARTH

Effective placemaking is not commensurate with the cost of materials or financial investment. Often the best placemaking happens organically or at a very low cost.

NOT
JUST
A
PRETTY
PLACE

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