

10 March 2017

Navin Shah AM  
Chair of the Regeneration Committee  
City Hall  
The Queen's Walk  
London SE1 2AA

Dear Navin

I am writing in response to the Regeneration Committee's publication of its findings following its investigation; "Creative tensions - Optimising the benefits of culture through regeneration" and hoped to address some of the issues raised in the findings.

In recommendation two from the report it states that; "The committee also heard from that community that the viability of the area is threatened by LLDC proposals and it urges the Mayor to urgently review the plans for the 'H16' bridge and work with the LLDC, Transport for London, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the local creative community to explore alternatives and mitigate potential negative impacts of the demolition of Vittoria Wharf on Hackney Wick and Fish Island's cultural infrastructure."

As we discussed at the meeting in January the plan for the construction of the H16 bridge has been a long term ambition, widely consulted upon, and has existed in various planning proposals since 2007. It was consulted on in 2011 in advance of the publication of the Legacy Communities Scheme (LCS) and again as we formulated our Local Plan which we published in 2015. It is also included in London Borough of Tower Hamlets' own Fish Island Action Plan which was published in 2011 and forms a key part of our pledge to ensure that we integrate Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and its new neighbourhoods into the pre-existing communities that surround the Park.

It is disappointing that the report misses the opportunity to make a decisive difference to the future of artists and creative businesses in the area by mentioning and supporting the Hackney Wick Central masterplan, which is being co-promoted by the London Borough of Hackney and LLDC. The Hackney Wick Central masterplan, if adopted and delivered, will protect and re-provide 8,439 sqm of low-cost workspace, including artists' studios. By contrast, the report chooses to highlight the closure of part of Vittoria Wharf which provide less than 950 sqm of low-cost workspace, a significant amount of which was not used for arts and culture purposes but included businesses involved in, for example, food supply and delivery. This small gain would be at the significant cost of losing the H16 bridge, which will connect old and new communities with each other and with the new social infrastructure that we are building across the canal, including two schools, a health centre, a library and, indeed, creative and cultural workspace. It would be remiss of LLDC to ignore the lessons from previous failed housing, development and regeneration projects. Hackney Wick and Fish Island were themselves historically deprived areas in part because of a combination of rivers and the construction of the A12 flyover that left them significantly cut off from the surrounding areas. As we develop Hackney Wick and Fish Island as well as adjoining land in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, construction of new bridges is critical to our ambition of both addressing these historic problems and ensuring the creation of new and sustainable communities.

I would also like to put in writing that LLDC remains supportive of the Committee's proposal for Hackney Wick to be a Creative Enterprise Zone pilot to further its credentials as one of Europe's leading creative hubs; and as evidence of our continuing commitment to Hackney Wick and the surrounding area, we have recently jointly appointed (jointly with LB Hackney and LB Tower Hamlets) a Business Retention Manager who is actively engaging with local businesses to support them during the redevelopment period

I would be happy to speak with you should you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Goldstone', with a stylized flourish underneath.

David Goldstone CBE  
Chief Executive