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As part of this process, and following our own review of the transcripts, the GLA identified errors in the transcription of the audio recordings of the interviews. These included

- typographical errors;
- comments being attributed to the wrong person;
- text being omitted in the transcription; and
- instances where the transcriber completely misunderstood what was being said, and writing something wholly incorrect.

Where the GLA has identified genuine errors in the transcription when compared to the audio recording, we have made corrections to these transcripts using “tracked-changes”.

In each case, the corrected text is shown in the margins of the page and is accompanied by a brief explanation for that correction.

The GLA has taken this approach to ensure both the corrections and original text are available, and so we can balance our legal obligations under the EIR with our duty to help ensure accurate information is released in respect of the individuals interviewed as part of the Garden Bridge Review.

In some case, the parties interviewed have asked the GLA to include certain comments regarding their comments to help provide some clarification about what they were intending to convey. Again, these are clearly marked on the transcripts.

Please note however, the transcript may, despite our best endeavours, contain errors due the transcription process itself.

Garden Bridge Review
Meeting transcript

Event: MH/Thames Central Open Spaces (TCOS)

Date: 30 November 2016

*Present: Dame Margaret Hodge MP
Alistair Lenzner
Ian Ritchie
Walter Menteth
Dan Anderson
Michael Ball
Wai-King Cheung
Marilyn Evers
Claire Hamilton*

Margaret Hodge (MH):

Okay. Now, I think I'm going to start by saying over to you and you tell me what you want. I have documents like that that I have read, so I think it's more what do you want to draw my attention to. And then can I just limit you, I'm not here to decide is this a good idea or a bad idea, I'm just here really to look at what lessons can we learn around procurement and also is it value for money. So it's a more limited -- it's a limited perspective, not is it a good idea / a bad idea.

Michael Ball (MB):

Yeah. Okay, so if I start, and Thames Central Open Spaces was an organisation formed by local people to stop the bridge, nothing to do with value for money, nothing to do with the limitations you're saying it was a classic, "We want to stop the bridge". And it was fundamentally local people, that was the kernel of the campaign, and it was planning issues --

MH: I'm going to stop you on that one, on an early one, because one of the interesting things is when they did the original consultation, 85 per cent of people were in favour.

MB: Yeah. So the original consultation was an online thing that went across the whole of London. In fact, it went across --

MH: Yeah, but they also had presumably a model in community halls and things. They must have to come to quite a few.

Wai-King Cheung (WKC):

No, they didn't. They had one room at Somerset House and they had one in South Bank, but none of the residents were informed about this

MH: How come you weren't informed?

WKC: Exactly. We don't know. We didn't get any notification that this was being consulted on.

MH: So the first you knew about it was when?

MB: When the planning application --

WKC: June 2014.

MB: June 2014, when the planning application was submitted.

MH: And you didn't know about it beforehand?

MB: Well, I had a conversation with the chief planning officer. I meet the chief planning officer every couple of months, because he took our organisation seriously and the planning permission in Waterloo, and he asked me about this six months before the planning application came in, and at that point, he said, "What do you think about

this?" and I said, "I haven't been told anything about it. I know nothing about it. What is this? What's going on? I don't know". And still nothing came to me. I said "Send me some pre-app stuff" which is the traditional way to do it. And nothing came, and the first thing, we went to a public meeting where Mervyn - Lord Davies - stood up and announced the planning application was in and off we go.

So they started off on the wrong foot with the community on that whole thing. But as you say we're not focusing on that in terms of the value for money thing.

But what it is, as we built our support and we fought the planning application - and I did a judicial review against Lambeth on the planning application, the planning permission - we realised there were wider concerns about issues about finance, but value for money, about deliverability, a whole load of stuff like that, and engineering. And so we had a public meeting in May 2015 and we had another one in May 2016. And three of these -- Walter didn't speak, but the other three spoke. But they spoke as independent people who we'd found who were saying things of concern about the Garden Bridge, and that's how I want to present them. They are not the same as us, but they are saying things. Just as we would in a public inquiry, we present witnesses. These are our witnesses who will make these points.

Very quickly, I'm sure you know that the project has got a long history. It started in 1999, at the least the first idea we got of it, because Joanna Lumley went to Southbank Centre and tried to persuade them to have the British Games from --

MH: Who went there?

MB: Joanna Lumley.

MH: That was after the death of Princess Di, wasn't it?

MB: Yes, and in fact I spoke to one of their chief honchos there at Southbank Centre, and he told me a lovely story of how she sat down with a storyboard and she had the chair, a developer - I've forgotten his name now - a big developer and a chief executive and she had them on either side just sat there with her.

Commented [GLA Fo11]: Michael Ball has clarified he was referring to Elliot Bernerd

And she said how wooed they were. But they weren't really at all. In fact, Gordon Brown had rang them up saying, "Please, please take her, because she's bugging me". But anyway, that's where it was then. We then have learnt subsequently that she had conversations with Coin Street in 2002, 2003. This is in the biography and things like that.

So this process was going on then, and the critical point that comes into relevance to us is that she then met with Boris in 2012 and started that conversation. And it very quickly got very detailed, and Peter Hendy, the Commissioner, was involved and some of the senior managers and they were running around doing stuff, which looks odd from our point of view. It certainly didn't fit it with the procurement.

And a critical thing that I want to draw your attention to is the fact that the TfL board were never told about any of this. And the first mention is from 3 July 2013. I'm going to give you **here** -- I've gone through all the papers that the board received, the finance committee. This was actually drawn to our attention by a board member, a board member came to us, an appointee by Boris, and he said, "I'm really unhappy about this. We know nothing about it. The first thing we heard was X. I didn't know anything about this. The board hasn't approved it". So they're all direct quotes, they're all just simply statements from papers.

Commented [GLA FoI2]: Michael Ball has clarified he is referring to some papers he had just handed Dame Margaret which were copies of extracts of TfL Board meetings.

So the first paper that goes to the TfL board is on 3 July 2013. By that point the whole thing is procured, it's all off and running. So the oversight that the board is supposed to provide wasn't there and the managers - Peter Hendy and others - I don't think were doing their job in terms of informing them what was going on. So you'll see it goes on referencing through it. Even the financial issues are not -- because obviously there's a big financial impact. It doesn't get mentioned. It gets mentioned in passing as they go through and it's presented as a fait accompli.

Now, if I stop there and move to Walter, who's going to talk about the procurement, and he's an expert in procurement issues.

WM: Okay. The procurement on this is extremely complicated, because the procurement law is extremely complicated, and it's very lacking in transparency and it's extremely difficult to understand. It's taken me seven years to understand it and to enable me to put together the reports that I've been presenting, because I'm actually an architect, so I do this voluntarily.

Now, the issue that's actually emerged in the evaluation is that in both the procurements, there do seem to have been significant issues. From my perspective and on the evidence that's actually become apparent, it's what we used to call rigged contracts. And in the first one, which has been extremely well-covered.

And a report was delivered that I submitted to the GLA Oversight Committee and gave evidence for that on first procurement. At that stage, there wasn't much evidence on the second procurement. But in the first procurement, the criteria that was set for the evaluation were clearly not followed on a number of scores, so the majority of the score was for what's called the technical assessment. That's the qualitative side of it as opposed to the financial one. On the qualitative side, it was clearly apparent that Wilkinson Eyre, who have built 100-plus bridges, were getting a lower score effectively than Heatherwick Studio, who had built one, which was only going over a canal, and the same was the case with Marks Barfield, so this raised considerable concerns.

And it also became apparent when this was explored and FOIs released various bits of the information that the actual tender values that were submitted were not delivering the value. In other words, Heatherwick Studio initially quoted for a lump sum just under the procurement threshold values, which was well above -- they were £172,000. Wilkinson Eyre, who put together a team with an engineer, were bidding at £36,000 and Marks Barfield at £15,000. And the purpose that both Wilkinson Eyre and Marks

Barfield put their bid on was to test the idea, the idea being put forward, and it needed to be tested in the public domain to develop the argument for what was good value.

There was such aberrance and peculiar scoring between the technical criteria and the commercial criteria between those who were -- obviously had answered the brief that had been set, to set out to investigate whether or not a bridge was needed, those ones who were very much more qualified and Heatherwick, who wasn't. But also in the costings, so the costings were extraordinarily different. Now, TfL says of course that's not relevant, but that was the assumed return.

MH: Can I just ask you a question which I haven't bottomed out yet on the costings? It was were they asked to give a day rate or were they asked to give a total sum?

WM: They were actually asked to do both in the tender, but they were only told they were going to be evaluated on one, because the day rate --

MH: And were they told which one?

WM: On the day rate. But the other was an indication of what the actual practice thought was going to take to --

MH: To do it.

WM: Yeah.

MH: I see. And I haven't seen the day rate figures. Did you see the day rate figures?

WM: The day rate figures are not released because of commercial confidentiality under the FOI procedures.

MH: Right.

CLAIRE HAMILTON (CH):
That's what you will get when you get the unredacted.

MH: Okay.

WM: And this is the same with the framework day rates for the second term. So when the frameworks were appointed, the day rates are agreed at the framework appointment stage and then they submit another mini-tender for each and every job that is called ~~off~~. Those original costs haven't been revealed by FOI and they've been denied.

I'd like to give four FOIs which I've called up on those issues, but which haven't been responded to.

MH: Okay. But the day rate, what is in the public domain is that they were within 4 per cent of each other.

Commented [GLA FoI3]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription.

Deleted: on

WM: In the end that's what it came down to, yes.

MH: Okay. And did you discover from just your very detailed look at it whether there was any special information allowed by Heatherwick or were they all given the same rights under that?

WM: Heatherwick had had opportunity to meet with those on the TfL side prior to the tender.

MH: I know that, but during the process of the tendering, was there anything in there that was --

WM: The only thing that was particularly strange is that their bid was late, but it was only a small amount.

MH: What, a day late, was it?

WM: It was a small amount. We don't know exactly.

MH: Nothing about them giving -- having a second go at the day rate, that was only Arup?

WM: That was only Arup, yes.

MH: Okay, okay. That's just me using you, actually.

WM: No, the procurement is a nightmare.

The first procurement I think you probably have a very good handle on and I suspect you also do on the second, where of course the technical evaluation and the commercial evaluation were also split, so there was 70 per cent of the technical evaluation and there was 30 per cent for the commercial. And on this one, Arup never actually put through the formal bid that was required of the commercial call-off and this was revealed by TfL in their internal audit report. So they didn't actually bid correctly.

However, there was a spreadsheet available at the time and whether that was one which had come through from the previous award on to the framework or was available through some other basis is not known. However, that rate did not put them in a winning position. They were phoned up by TfL and they were invited to put in a second rate and then TfL mixed and matched the rates to get a favourable result for Arup.

MH: What do you mean "mix and match"?

WM: So they mixed and matched the day rates, the level -- the charging for the day rates internally within TfL to allow them and to actually --

MH: Are you sure about that?

WM: Yes, they say so. In fact, it was --

CH: The audit report picks up on it.

MH: Does it? Right, I missed that.

WM: It's in the report. So that is completely unheard of and none of the other bidders were given any opportunity to revise their bids.

Now, Arup's rates are aberrantly high. When we look at the rates that Arup were charging relative to what's called the knocked-off mean value, you see that their rates -- this is the second bidder. ||

And they can reduce it because -- so they're getting a very much higher rate, so in other words, at some places they're over twice the rates of most of the average bids in the top echelons of management. One of the other bidders who came in with high bid rates did this at the bottom range. They're very peculiar, these two bids, against --

MH: Yeah, I get this. I looked at some of your graphs.

WM: And then what happens, the way that works is that means nothing in the final analysis of what is reported to upper echelons of TfL and the board because the high financial rates that they put in are compensated for, because the higher your financial rate, the lower the score you get. So they've got an extremely high technical score which offsets that, so it comes out as an even graph.

Now, the other thing that is peculiar about this second evaluation is that the papers and sheets have been tampered with. So what was released under this FOI was not comprehensible to any of those in governance positions. It wasn't made accessible to them and it required a lot of effort to put it into the format which we understand, because we've put in bids so often. And trying to explain this is of course extremely difficult. However, it's been tampered with, so what has been done is there are issues - and I'm saying this in a closed meeting, I hope --

I am being recorded. Okay ... I have to be careful, because I work in the industry.

MH: We can turn it off if you want. I did offer that to you if you want.

WM: I would prefer to have it turned off, because it's here --

||
I'm not very good at being careful. Give me a glass of wine and I'm very uncareful.

So this is what these graphs are actually showing and the analysis is showing. Now, normally these are all checked by doing a thing which is called -- you knock off the top

Commented [GLA FoI4]: WM has asked the GLA to clarify that, from this point, the *Project Compass Garden Bridge Procurement Issues* report was open on the table and being used to illustrate and support the discussions.

Commented [GLA FoI5]: The GLA notes the recording was paused at this point

one and the bottom one and you compare it all and get what's called the knocked-off mean average and then you compare all the evaluations against it. When it comes to this, they adjust the figures or the figures are adjusted, so what is reported is not what's -- the one that's going forward into the evaluation.

MH: Say that to me again, because I haven't got that. So in a normal assessment you would take the top bidder and the lowest bidder and you would look at the criteria by which you got to their two --

WM: Yeah, so when you've got -- you've got quite a large sample when you've got 12 people bidding. You take an average by taking off the top and bottom, who might be peculiar, and that gives you what's called the knocked-off mean average. And you compare against them.

And what one does then is just see where people are, because it would be highlighted to many procurement professionals if there was an extraordinary range, particularly when TfL has got such an excellent framework already of the best in the world, the best of these professionals in the world here. So to get that peculiarity above that is highly unusual.

MH: And what made you say that they manipulated Arup's?

WM: Well, because in the evaluation, they have a separate report coming through here. They use the commercial evaluation, which is the -- I'm going to get muddled up which table it is, because I haven't looked at this for months. They use, I think, this table, table 8, rather than what is the actual output, which is the table 3. So from these, I had to work the tables forward, because no indication was given of what any of these are, and then what I looked at is their evaluations. I'm going to get the -- can I get back to you on which table it is to refer you to on that?

MH: Yeah. But you say they fiddled?

WM: Yeah. And that has been adjusted. Now, we haven't been able to extract from this process any other of the data.

WM: So in terms of this, Arup also bid for a contract which was advertised on the mini call-off being £890,000 and drew down over £8 million from that award. Now, when you tender in a contract, you normally all tender --

MH: They drew down £8 million, but not from TfL, from the Trust?

WM: I believe that the drawdown from TfL was somewhere in that order. It was above the £890K which they originally won.

MH: They transferred to the Trust, so the Trust becomes responsible for it, so they didn't draw down -- I don't know what the original tender was with Arup.

WM: Well, there is an issue that as a body covered under public law, TfL were managing the money, so that the --

MH: TfL were releasing the money to the Trust, but Garden Trust was paying, so you talk about the controls that TfL had on the way they release the money, which I can look at and will be looking at, but I think it ceased to be their contract when the Garden Bridge Trust was then -- I can't remember the timing after that.

WM: But it's quite important, I think, to find out that, because everybody should have been bidding for somewhere near the value of what was anticipated.

MH: So you're saying that when they bid in 2013/14, they thought they bid on the basis that they'd get £800,000 and they've ending up earning out of it in excess of £8 million?

WM: That's right.

MH: Yeah, but then the Trust gets established and then it goes over to the Trust. The Trust at some point took over the contract with Arup and I don't know when. So it's down to the Trust whether they choose to extend it and they're not limited by public procurement.

WM: No, but in terms of value for money, what is apparent is that the design of the bridge was already known by this stage, because within the documents that went out to be released, there was the full CGI proposal, and the value was clearly going to be above 890K for the engineering design of it, so --

MH: So what was the advantage of 890K? That provided them what?

WM: I'm not sure what the advantage was. It probably made it less attractive to the opposition for the bid, because that was quite --

MH: It's not really attractive to Arup. It's a tiny bit for Arup, it's not a huge chunk for Arup.

WM: Absolutely, and this is strange. But even at 890K, of course it's even less, and many of the other firms who were being asked to do quite an onerous bid package would have thought, "Well, actually, it's not worth us really investigating or bothering on this one".

MH: So I think the only thing we need to track is how much the original tender was for. How much has actually been spent with Arup and when responsibility transferred from TfL to the Trust.

WM: In terms of the pre-procurement activity, there is quite a lot. I've gone into it here and there's also in the other paper, and there's also some key issues in terms of governance that the construction industry have been very concerned about, because if there is not a fair and level playing field, none of us know where we are and we can't compete. There's no competitive outcome at all.

MH: Yeah, thank you. Good. Okay, where do we go to next?

MB: Okay. I'm going to turn to Alistair to talk about, first of all, the need for a bridge. I'm going to waive this thing. I'm not going to give this to you, but this is the Mayor's transport strategy and it's actually the executive summary of the transport strategy.

MH: Which Mayor? That was Boris'?

MB: This is 2010. And this was the live one when this whole process began in 2012 and it remains live now because Sadiq is renewing.

Commented [GLA FoI6]: This was text has been added after the GLA identified its omission from the transcription

And there's no mention of a Garden Bridge, there's no mention of a pedestrian bridge, there's no mention of any need for any bridges in this part of London. There's clearly a need for crossings in East London, but nothing, absolutely nothing.

MH: I've got to say to you that the Mayor can have ideas. There's nothing wrong with him having ideas.

MB: Of course, of course. But interestingly, and in fact the same thing happens with Lambeth, Lambeth have got a transport plan and they don't mention it. They've just issued their new transport plan. It doesn't mention it either. You need to embed what you're doing in some way and this is not embedded in any way. But I'll hand over to Alistair to go into some of that.

AL: Thank you very much. I'm an engineer, but a bit of background, I've actually worked in both engineering and architecture. I actually worked 13 years at Arup. I still am an admirer of Arup, so I'm not anti-Arup in any way. My interest here is about the public aspects and whether the project is what it purports to be. And so I've worked on major projects: I worked on the Millennium Footbridge, I worked on the Millau Viaduct in France - you might have heard, that giant bridge across the gorge - integration of architectural engineering; I've worked on Wembley Stadium. So I'm always interested in the process of how major projects come about, particularly large ones, which is the interaction between architecture with engineers. Typically speaking, the bigger a project gets, the more important the engineer becomes at the beginning in terms of setting up the basic parameters of the project, and I'll come back to that.

So I'm not going to get too techie in this, it's just some big picture stuff, so just starting off with about how the project comes about in the first place. Normally TfL are normally very rigorous about how they bring projects forward, such as a bridge, and the way the Garden Bridge seems to have come about, it seems to be quite aberrant in how it just suddenly emerged. So, for example, you've got the policy things, but TfL, for the Nine Elms Footbridge proposal, a whole lot of feasibility studies are carried out which takes over a year to examine the need for the bridge, where's the best place for the bridge, what bridge could it be, establishing cost constraints and you get reports out about -- which establish that before you go to any competition to select a design team to do it, for example, so --

MH: So who does that?

AL: Well, these are commissioned by TfL and they were commissioned -- different consultants. In this case, I think they got BuroHappold on the one hand, but they --

MH: So they commission without a tender?

AL: No, they go to tender to get people on board to do those initial studies, so that --

MH: So these studies will be the result of a tendered process?

AL: Typically, yes. TfL, normally any --

MH: It will be, yeah, for an original initial -- so just a study to give you next steps?

WM: That's right, because it's the feasibility. You interrogate your feasibility with technical work.

MH: Right, and they couldn't do this in this particular instance --

AL: Well the project shows all the hallmarks of something which has had a retrofitted process, where a proposal emerges and then it shows all the hallmarks of retrofitting a transport case, a business case etc. And it hasn't gone through what you would typically expect - what TfL normally do, in fact - and if you look at, for example, they've just started the process on Rotherhithe, Canary Wharf. They go through a process, they're quite rigorous in sifting options. That process didn't happen on the Garden Bridge, it suddenly emerged and it looked like they did things to retrofit a case for it to be there. So that's just to say it's very uncharacteristic of how TfL do things, and TfL are normally quite good at this thing, but it was like it's a different part of TfL. You can imagine it's a rogue part; I don't know. So how it comes about is interesting.

In terms of whether -- the fitness of purpose is another thing I'd like to call up, because the idea of combining a garden with a bridge is interesting, and as a designer, I'm always interested in exploring innovative ideas. And there is probably a very good example close to here: the Victoria Embankment is a project which was built back in the 19th century, where they combined a new river wall, they combined it with an underground railway, utilities, an interceptor sewer - very important at the time - a new road and public realm in the park, all part of one project, and it was integrated and it delivered lots of benefits to the public good. As it happens, it was virtually undeliverable today in the way that the infrastructure agencies are split up, but that's an example of compatible components, so the river wall doesn't make the underground railway not work etc.

It's conceivable that you could design a bridge which allows say for cyclists and pedestrians to cross a bridge and have a garden element to it which are compatible and alongside each other, but I would say from a test to justify combining those things, I think you've got to be able to show that they are mutually compatible in the sense

that the functions do not conflict the functionality of the parts. So for me, if you're going to have a footway crossing with a garden, you wouldn't want the garden to make the footway less good or you wouldn't want the footway to make the garden less good. And another very simple test also is that if you are to combine them, the combined cost of those separate elements, you would expect the advantage of the integrated project is you would expect them to come no more than or probably lower cost than doing them as two separate projects.

So if you were to look at the bridge and a footbridge, you could look at how much would a footbridge on its own cost, take a garden element, which you could look at what they've done in Paris with the garden element along the Seine, and add those costs together and compare to the cost of the Garden Bridge. And what's clear to me is that this is disproportionately greater than combining any two similar projects like that.

And if you want to take examples of the just pure bridge component without the garden, I worked on the Millennium Footbridge, which is open, successful, 24 hours. Today's costs, that's probably around about the £25 million mark. There's a little bit of churn to do with the retrofit, but around about that mark. So if you did index that up to cost today, you'd probably be around about the £40 million mark. Interestingly, the costs coming out of the feasibility study for Nine Elms, they concluded the costs - this is for a combined cycle and pedestrian bridge - they reckoned that the budget cost for that was in the £40 million-something, and that's the budget that was cited in the competition that ultimately went up to a competition for a design. So that's being compared with a project which is now being stated -- I think the latest number was £182 million and I could come back to that as well. So it's disproportionately out of kilter with anything which London has seen before, and it's just you cannot see that as value for money in terms of what it's providing. In terms of the functionality of it, what they're providing is not fit for purpose of a bridge in the modern context. If you were to specify a bridge, a footbridge, in London, you would want it to be - expect it to be - 24 hours and you'd almost certainly expect there to be -- in the modern context to have a cycle component to it. And this bridge hasn't.

If you look at the policies it's interesting, the policies, the way that TfL policies say they want to encourage cycling and walking the city. The way that the TfL document for the strategic outline business case, they say:

"Whilst cycling will not be permitted on the Garden Bridge, signage will be integrated at entry/exit points to promote cycling as a means of access to the bridge."

Which is absolutely perverse. They might as well put signs up at the end saying, "We encourage people walking around to the bridge, but you're not allowed to walk over the bridge" which is actually true at part of the time anyway. So from my viewpoint, it's not fit for purpose as a modern bridge. There's no other city that I'm aware of where a footbridge or cycle bridge over a river at the city centre is closed at night or closed for the proposed event days.

MH: Parks are closed, aren't they? Parks do get closed, because it's a park.

JR: That's the problem with why it's not a functional -- they're not working together. Parks can get closed, but a bridge doesn't.

Deleted: MB

AL: You could have imagined the footway element of this remaining open whilst the garden closes. The way it's been designed, they're making it so that it's so intertwined that they probably -- I imagine the reason for justifying the closure is because they're worried about people damaging the plantation at night or vice versa, that it becomes an unsafe place because people can be hiding in the bushes.

MH: How does it compare then when they compare it with the United States?

Deleted: The High Line closes at night.

DA: The High Line closes at night.

JR: The High Line is not a bridge.

Deleted: AL

MH: It's a destination.

JR: It's a leisure destination based on an existing viaduct on land.

Commented [GLA Fo17]: These have been corrected after the GLA identified obvious errors in the transcription where these comments had been attributed to the wrong person.

AL: Yeah, but the High Line was originally a railway viaduct, when they tried to find a new use, repurposing. So a comparison with the High Line is spurious.

Deleted: AL

MH: Has anybody been on the High Line?

JR: Yes, but it also comes from the one in Paris, which goes down to the Gare de Lyon, which was done ten years before the High Line. That's the origin. It's a borrowed idea, but again, it was the same thing, existing viaduct, make a reuse of it on land.

Deleted: AL

DA: Can I just add, the public sector sponsor for the High Line is New York City's Department of Parks and Recreation. Its only function is to be a garden.

Commented [GLA Fo18]: The attendees have asked the GLA to clarify:
This refers to the *Promenade Plantée* (1987-93) now known as the *Viaduc des Arts* near Gare de Lyon.

AL: It's just purporting to have a transport use. It's TfL, transport, it's the clue is in the name. So for me, you would never expect the functionality of a bridge to be compromised by being closed at night for a modern bridge, and you would fully expect it to have full cycling provision.

JR: I think you added also about the 24-hour life.

Commented [GLA Fo19]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription where these comments had been attributed to the wrong person.

AL: Well, the 24 hours, in the context of London, where now you've got night tubes, it's just going in the opposite direction of where all the other trends are going.

Deleted: WM

So if you come then to the actual structural design of the bridge, it's interesting when you see presentations that are jointly done with Heatherwick and Arup. It's clear that the inspiration for the form that's there didn't start off as an engineering functionality, it's an idea that Heatherwick presents about flowerpots growing and coming together

and then you can make shapes stand up. Engineers can make all sorts of shapes stand up. It doesn't make it efficient for a bridge.

The convention should be as it was for the **Millau** Viaduct, which started off with an engineering diagram, which Foster then worked in collaboration to hone and distil to it. This doesn't seem to be the case with the Garden Bridge and Ian will comment about the aesthetics about it, but most engineers looking at that would consider it to be very inefficient and it never seems to have been --

Commented [GLA FoI10]: This was corrected after the GLA identified it as an error in the transcription

Deleted: New York

MH: What do you mean by inefficient?

AL: It's structurally efficient. It's the cost -- it's the design has never been subject to scrutiny to find out whether it's value for money as a bridge. It looks like they've made an idea stand up. Ian will talk about it more.

The other point I want to make is the costs that are reported doesn't include all the inflation, the Bouygues and the French and Italian parts will be inflated by the euro going up. That will probably take it well past the £200 million mark. And it's also works about the moorings being moved and the works at Temple Station, which are labelled in TfL speak as enabling works. They're not enabling works, they're an integral part of works required to Temple Station to make the bridge structurally stable in the long term. So effectively, TfL has taken on liability for making the bridge stand up long term, whereas TfL's modus operandi is always ensure adjacent developments are independent and they do not touch TfL structures. So it's taken on liability and spending money to make that happen and putting lifts in, whilst not putting in lifts down to platform levels. All the money is being -- it's the wrong way around.

MH: The TfL money for Temple goes into the totality, ie comes out of the -- does it?

WM: No, I don't think it does.

MH: Well, let's find out. Let's find out.

AL: It's long-term and that's not being flagged up, they're using Temple Station.

MH: There'll be a continuing liability. But I think they also think they might put some shops there and so they might make some money out of it.

AL: Yeah. But all the money's been spent, but they're not putting lifts down to the platforms, which is everywhere the London Underground are desperate to try and help all the commuters.

MH: They're not putting lifts down to the platforms?

AL: No, the lifts are there just to try and get on to the bridge, and then whilst doing it, there's no lifts going down to the platforms. So I'll try and wrap it up there. One last comment that I would say is that it might be technically feasible to combine a

hairdryer with a toaster. Does it mean it's a good idea? I would say this fails the test of integrating structures and it's not value for money as an engineering structure.

MH: Okay. I don't want to curtail you. Can I just put to you that the Mayor is allowed to have ideas which the rest of the world may think is mad, but that's his prerogative. The cable car was an idea. If you look at the business cases of the two, they're both a bit -- you think --

DA: I worked on the cable car.

IR: I was interviewed for the cable car.

AL: We designed the cable car.

MH: Okay. Well, I drive past it when I'm on my way back from Barking and I think, "What the hell's this thing doing here?" but, you know ...

MH: But he's allowed to do that. And he's allowed to have a Heatherwick. If Heatherwick designs something that he likes, he's allowed to say, "Okay, I'm going to spend a bit more". I can see there are things going wrong with the procurement and I can see -- it's his choice how he uses money, so -- What's your real objection?

DA: Sorry, can I just speak to that point about it? Because you're absolutely right, and I think if this idea had come along, as it did twice late 1990s, the turn of the century, we built the two Hungerford Millennium Bridges and the Millennium Bridge. There was something at the time called the Millennium Commission and after that there was something called the London Development Agency, which was a lot more flexible in how it could interpret what was in the economic interest of London. Then we all got slightly distracted by the Olympics, to the extent that there was a lot of public sector investment and it was all going in service of the Olympics. Coming out of the Olympics, there was actually -- he could have that idea. He didn't actually have a pot of money that he could use to deliver the idea, which is why everything got twisted, and like I said, the project became a little bit schizophrenic, because it is now effectively a tourist attraction that is masquerading as a bridge. And I think that's where all the complications have come in.

MH: But is there anything wrong with having a tourist attraction?

WM: Yes. There, yes.

DA: There, yes, absolutely.

MH: Too many people?

IR: Safety, it's safety.

MB: Yeah, their own prediction is 7 million people coming to that bridge.

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Commented [GLA FoI12]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription where these comments had been attributed to the wrong person.

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Commented [GLA FoI13]: The GLA should point out, several people are speaking at the same time. The GLA believes this to be a mistake and that the comment was made by IR, not WM, but it is not entirely clear.

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AL: It's going to double the Millennium Wheel.

WM: If you try and get on to it past Westminster Bridge on the south side by County Hall. It's heavy.

MH: It can be heavy if you go at 5.30, 6.00, but I was there actually last night at 6.30 and it was fine, to be honest with you.

MB: The Wheel gets 2.5 million a year and this is expected to get 7 million.

DA: It's about three times that.

But the other thing about County Hall is it's at the end of that South Bank promenade, so a lot of people will skip it. As London residents, we've learned to avoid Piccadilly and Leicester Square, we've learned our way around Covent Garden unless we absolutely need to be there. The South Bank is one of those few places where residents, office workers, tourists, they all enjoy it and they all co-exist, except for County Hall, because we've learned to avoid County Hall now because of the crowds.

Now, perched at the end of the South Bank promenade, that's not a big deal, and for the prize of getting a London Eye and an aquarium and the dungeons, you take that. But now we're going to take that issue and we're going to move it right to the middle of the promenade. I think we're at real risk of wrecking the South Bank as a visitor destination.

MB: And I say that's where we came in as a local community. It was the despoiling of what is our open space, a fabulous space that is very busy at times, but it has the best views of St Paul's in central London, you look all the way along there. The biggest stretch of open river that you're looking across, which is open space. that's actually what drove us. And of course one of those issues we dealt with is planning, and ultimately they got planning permission and that isn't what you're looking at. So we haven't gone into that as fundamental reasons, but that's what drove Thames Central Open Spaces to argue the case, that this is the wrong thing. If this was in Kew Gardens connecting to Syon Park it might be a very expensive folly that the Mayor is entitled to do, potentially it will be something lovely, but here it will be potentially a wrecking thing for this area. That's what drove us, and I think to some extent particularly these two being driven to those depths, this is a very strange place to put this.

WM: I think everybody around this table fully supports all the other bridge initiatives because they see the necessity to actually spread that concentration and bring prosperity to other areas as well, certainly. But that's not my major reason for objecting.

DA: And the other thing with the cable car is there are places in London where it's almost at the point where doing anything is better than doing nothing, but I think Transport for London looked at the commuter numbers and realised, "This doesn't stack up as a

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transport project. Could you endorse it as a tourism project?" and we said, "No, of course not. Don't be ridiculous. Everybody will come once and they'll never come again" but at the time it was if they were going to get it done in time for the Olympics, we said, "You could sell the naming rights for this. That would get it done" and as a regeneration project, it's connecting North Greenwich to the Royal Docks. These are two big regeneration areas, so it wasn't something that we were going to die in a ditch in terms of objecting over.

Then there are areas where doing the wrong thing would be worse than doing nothing, and everything that we've done to make the South Bank the South Bank, we've done it now. It's working. It's like a bottle of wine, once you've uncorked it, you've got to let it breathe, and I've seen places where particularly public sector agencies, they get hooked on this success and they don't know when to stop, and then eventually you just overdo it.

MH: Okay. I think probably we should reconvene. And it's quite tight, isn't it?

CH: I haven't got any other slots in your diary, so I'd need to speak to Matt.

MH: Okay. I'm sorry about that.

MB: That's okay. I'd much rather that you took the time and went through this and we came back.

AL: Is it useful to leave you some evidence we've brought along today, is that -- or do you (Overspeaking)

MH: That would be --, I have got so much evidence, but that will be --

CH: Do you want me to take it?

MH: Yeah, I think what I'll do is put it with that new folder you gave me. So what are you giving me there? Just tell me what you're giving me. What's the timeline (Overspeaking)

AL: Well, it's just extracts from some of the TfL documents just highlighting that all the technical advisors just happen to be the technical team now, for example, and --

WM: Personnel going from TfL.

MH: Are you talking about de Cani and --

AL: Well, that's another issue as well, but I wasn't talking about -- I'm just talking about all the ones that are named as technical advisors there all just happen to be involved in the design team. This is technical advisors to TfL in assessing whether this is the right project. All those technical advisors you see named there all just happen to be the technical team designing and getting fees from the project.

CH: Was this taken from the business case?

AL: Yeah, the strategic business case, yeah. So there's never been any other independent technical advisors -- there's never been other people in the wider industry to give another opinion on this.

WM: And there's no peer review.

AL: Yeah, a wider peer review. There was a no technical scrutiny by a wider group.

JR: Peer reviews are quite standard in the industry.

MH: I'll take one of these. I don't need three, do I?

AL: Yeah, okay. Sorry about that, yeah. Well, I was just going to give some -- in red some responses to some of the claims about how the response to the transport policy ... I don't know whether you want these examples. These are probably a bit heavy, but --

MH: I don't think I'll need that, will I?

CH: No.

MH: You don't really want them?

CH: I can get them online. Without adding to the paper.

MH: Okay.

MB: This is the bit that -- the point about this was it was an iterative process of doing the feasibility before any (Overspeaking)

MH: What they might well argue is they were trying to do it before they were doing the work on the Thames, whatever it is, tideway.

AL: Yeah, but they also say that that's a red herring as well.

MH: They have now said that they can do the two concurrently.

AL: It's a red herring. There's a claim, but it was never true.

MH: So they were trying to cut corners to do it before the election. And that, in a way, again, if this is a pet project --

DA: There was a statement in one of the -- I can't remember if it was the Mayor's Question Time or it was one of those bespoke meetings that they had about the bridge, but where the Mayor very explicitly said, "I have a four-year term to work with and

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therefore we have to accelerate everything" and specifically Transport for London knew how to get these projects done quickly, which the first thing I thought when I heard that was, "Well, you inherited the bicycles, you inherited the Olympics. These projects, if they stand on their own merit, they span mayoralities". If they're good in the absolute sense, then they're good.

MH: Yeah, yeah. Thank you, and my real apologies that I've got to go, but I am speaking to a whole bunch of people.

MB: That's okay. It's great that you're engaged in this way.

MH: Thank you, yeah.

Event: Interview - MH/TCOS (part 2)

Date: 7 December 2016

Present: Dame Margaret Hodge MP
Ian Ritchie
Dan Anderson
Michael Ball
Wai-King Cheung
Claire Hamilton

DAME MARGARET HODGE (MH):
Now, where had we got to?

MICHAEL BALL (MB):
I was going to do a little recap.

So I remind you at Thames Central Open Spaces, we're objectors, we objected to the impact on the South Bank, on views. In fact, I brought a before and after.

MH: Oh, right. That's really helpful.

MB: This comes from the planning application, so it's all part of the verified views. So there's St Paul's, and you know the experience, you look at St Paul's, it's much stronger than that, and that's what it would be in fact before the trees are grown. In fact, there's another image where the trees are grown and -- because you can't see it's St Paul's Cathedral. So it's from the verified views. And in fact this is why many of us locally were opposed to it and why I did a judicial review was on this particular image, this particular issue, which are --

St Paul's were very upset, but didn't formally object, and City did object and did put some -- they didn't object, it was the wrong word, but they put forward a lot of points.

MB: They didn't follow it through, and this has been the case all the way through.

MH: Okay. Brilliant, all right.

MB: So just to remind you, so that's where we came from. We then became concerned that this was an expensive vanity project, value for money and the public purse etc, so we got professional experts, and they came themselves. So we had Alistair last time and he asked to give you some papers.

WAI-KING CHEUNG (WKC): It's not so much to read. They are --

MB: When you get to that, to refresh yourself, if you need.

MH: Okay.

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MB: And of course he made the point there isn't a transport case; it's not a good engineering solution; it's never been subjected to a peer review. And he was emailing this week saying, "You need to get this across. It's never been peer reviewed by structural engineers. This is the fundamental way you ensure that it's good and it's cost-effective and from an engineering point of view, it isn't". And we'll come to that, because Ian's going to talk about that.

And then we also talked about procurement and the regulation on Government procurement. The controls are there to ensure value for money and they haven't been followed. There's been systematic failure. And we're now going to hear from two more experts, which is Ian, he's going to talk about the quality of the bridge, and Dan, who's going to talk about the business plan and that's about the value, ongoing costs into the future, not about the cost to build it, and the financial robustness of that plan. You've had something from him.

MH: Yeah.

MB: But I want to flag up a fundamental point that we need to come to - and I want to flag it up now because it's so important - which is that this project is undeliverable and we can evidence why it is undeliverable, and that is because it needs money and a guarantee that it won't have from the Mayor. We're going to come back to that, how that is, and it's really important we've got enough space, because at that -- I think the point there --

MH: You want to come back -- well, it's undeliverable unless he gives a guarantee?

MB: He can't give a guarantee and I'll explain that. But the point is that -- and in a way --

MH: Yes, he can. Why can't he?

MB: Well, let's get to that, because the point is that I think you will understand more about the frustrations about the procurement and the business plan and the business case and all the rest of it when you realise that this is undeliverable for that reason. Why on earth has it continued all this way through and money continued to be poured into it when it's been known to be undeliverable for 18 months?

MH: Okay, so let's go quick. Shall I keep you -- if you can do it in five-ish minutes, is that all right?

IAN RITCHIE (IR):
I'll try.

MH: And then I'll ask you questions, so I'll give (Overspeaking)

IR: Just to recap on -- what I want to do is **talk** about the value for money, essentially, and then the design and why it's gone up in cost so enormously compared to, let's say, an

Commented [GLA FoI21]: This text had been omitted

ordinary bridge. The first thing is that neither GLA nor Transport for London actually promoted ever a pedestrian bridge here. It's never been on their radar, ever. That comes back to your point, rather than, "Well, the Mayor can come with an idea". My argument or my position would be absolutely correct, of course he has a right to, but then in a democracy you have checks and balances. And that's essentially what's been absent throughout the procurement process, in my opinion.

If there had been a design to have it, then there would be a proper brief. There was never a proper brief. Even the competition amongst the architects was not clear. Two of the firms actually gave strategies for where you might cross, how you might cross, and the other one gave a complete scheme designed to cross the river. So the brief wasn't there. Now, that is an astonishing position to be in.

Commented [GLA FoI22]: IR asked the GLA to clarify, this refers to a design competition

And then when Boris was asked by the civil engineers at the conference, "What's the bridge for?" he said, actually quoted, "Wasn't really sure what it was for, other than making a wonderful environment for a crafty cigarette or a romantic assignation". So therefore it is not vital and therefore it's a question of its value for money for something that's not vital in the public domain with public money.

MH: Okay, okay.

IR: That's my first position. You're from the east of London; so am I. There's been a case for 30, 40 years about improving crossing the river east of Tower Bridge. I just did a study for the LLDC with Sir Alexander Gibbs, civil engineers, on crossing from the barrier through to Tower Bridge and came up with the best strategy was in fact the river and having triangular routes going up and down the river. It's the cheapest, least cost in terms of long-term maintenance and gave better employment for everybody, and that's why we have the clipper. We do need bridges now.

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MH: Yeah, yeah.

IR: So in essence, it was announced to cost £60 million, privately funded, but it's somewhere north of £175 million, and I'll come very simply with these diagrams to say why the cost has gone up. And also picking up on Alistair's point, the solution of the engineer, you can have a bridge in a garden, but you don't normally see a garden on a bridge.

And the comparison was made with the High Line and with the Paris one. Both of those structures are heavy structures to take railways, to take mass, so therefore it's quite easy to put a garden on the top, okay? They're not crossing a river, which requires big span. So the South Bank has 25 million people a year, and that's where that view is taken from, and this is a big concern about safety. It's not the design I want to touch on, and that's both safety and in the evening before its shut you have to have lighting.

And I'm sure the Metropolitan Police will be consulted about security and they probably ask for X numbers of lumens or lux levels, and so the whole bridge is going to

glow, which also, in terms of the night view of St Paul's, you won't see, because you'll have a glow of light throughout the bridge. And they talk about an oasis. Of course it can't be an oasis, because it's in the middle of a major tourist traffic route.

The bridges that are put in to connect places. Now, the argument has been put forward that the South Bank needs to connect to the North Bank, because the North Bank hasn't been developed, but all of the developments taking place, this particular bridge goes up Arundel Place, which takes you to basically the Courts of Justice. All of that area has been redeveloped largely by Berkeley Homes. I couldn't find a site that you could develop, so to say that it actually needs development is misrepresenting --

MH: I think they're going up, to be fair to them. That's what the talk about, and a link through to Covent Garden.

IR: Yeah. Well, that's like walking backwards, because you don't want to do that. You'd actually go across the other bridge, Waterloo Bridge, back into Covent Garden. So it's a detour, if you like, or they're trying to make a circular route. Okay, I rest my case. Anyway, to explain why it's got more immense and costs a lot of money, you're familiar with that picture perhaps of the Millennium Bridge.

The Millennium Bridge is 4 metres wide for pedestrians and it packs out, so a minimum bridge based on the numbers from the South Bank going north, you'd need roughly 7 metres of pathway width. The bridge hasn't got it.

MH: What are they suggesting? What have they got?

IR: At this point here, it constricts down to about 3.5 metres and obviously you've got 3.5 either side, so you'll have a flow one way perhaps of -- you'll have signs saying, "Go this way" and, "Come the other way", inevitably.

MB: Actually, in their transport analysis they think that more than 50 per cent of people will turn around. They'll go on and come off again at the same place. They won't actually use it to cross the river.

IR: So just to give an example from just this drawing here, the red is the Garden Bridge and the black is a simple bridge with three supports. So you can see the extent of which structure is being added in order to span. Now, that span is coming from the navigational clearance rectangle. This is the primary design criteria for putting a bridge -- that you have to meet in order to put a bridge across the Thames in this place, this position. And the red area on the bottom right is the high tide/low tide, and based on the clearance requirements, and that is north, if you like, or west of Blackfriars and the other bridges.

A typical bridge that would do that would have the piers here and here that would span that, and this bridge being designed by WSP, which are a big firm of engineers and have done bridges, and that came out at £25 million three years ago. When you do this, you can see because it's the arch form, which downriver you can see lots of

arches, but there was different criteria when those were built. The new PLA criteria is this rectangle, so you wouldn't start with an arch, because it's massive.

They didn't, and if you recall, they actually started with what can be best described as two flowerpots. This is the Heatherwick concept, as in the planning application. So you plant two flowerpots and put some flowers it, then make it bigger, but you'll see the symmetry across the river, which is totally ignoring where you can have piers to support the bridge.

The consequence of that is this pier -- and there are earlier, in other reports we have, other illustrations which show this thing almost symmetrical in the river. It's actually -- it's the banner for the Garden Bridge Trust's website until even this year, which is an illusion, because this pier has ended up moving. Now, they started in here, so they ignored this to start with, and actually, with Arup, further and further out. And that explains why it went from somebody saying, probably Paul Morrell, "Oh, we can do it for £60 million, because £30 million for a bridge and a bit of extra gets the trees on it, £60 million." Never actually done any homework. The fact it's ended up around £175 million - well, when we were last talking, although it's gone north, I think - is because of this structural thing. It's not to do with copper nickel cladding.

Commented [GLA FoI24]: IR asked the GLA to clarify: 'navigation rectangle'

Commented [GLA FoI25]: IR asked the GLA to clarify: This refers to an increase in the figure, not a direction

MH: So why is this structure more expensive than this structure, just because it's got to hold more?

IR: It's got to (a) hold more, but you've got the piers in themselves are so much further apart. It's got the curve here. It actually was touching when we analysed it, but it's not significant, you just jack it up a bit more. But because of this curve, it's got to clear this rectangle. The rectangle doesn't move, so if --

Commented [GLA FoI26]: IR asked the GLA to clarify: 'navigation rectangle'

MH: Right. And is this design or is this necessity for the --

IR: No, that's design.

MH: So it's the design, it's just a more expensive design?

IR: The structure is more expensive, than all the cladding and everything else that follows is more expensive.

MH: Yeah, yeah, and you would argue that to maintain this height, you would probably have to go a bit further up?

IR: Well, they've moved further up. The consequence is that this flowerpot, which used to be in the middle, is now on the North Bank, actually hanging over the road.

MH: It's actually on the road?

IR: It's awful. Well, no, it's in the river, but its shape hangs over the road in a -- I haven't got the illustration with me. It's in --

MB: No, I haven't got it. Actually, they've hit rights to light issues on this right now, we've discovered.

IR: It's in here. So this is the Arup drawing showing how close this is, right over the road, so this mushroom is spreading over the road, all as a consequence of not looking at that in the first place and then designing something intelligent.

MH: Yeah, yeah, I get it.

IR: There we go.

And I think there's your view, which is their view of this thing in part coming out over the embankment. That's the vision and you see here that it's illusion. It looks like it's in the middle, yeah, symmetrical, and that's the results.

All because of the rectangle, which is where you should start designing. That explains why it's gone from £60 million to £175 million with no conceptual changes taking place other than that. So apart from probably additional costs on the South Bank, because they now want to put a building there in order to entertain people from and to do ticketing or work for events, which is why there was a discussion about getting the land off Coin Street Community Builders. Is that clear?

MH: Okay, yeah. That's fine, I get that.

IR: That's the big one. So when you look at the cost, let's say it's £35 million today for a pretty elegant bridge and just to say you can see what a reasonably elegant bridge could look like. There are two views, but neither of which affect St Paul's cathedral, and that's the diagram that we just -- I just showed you, yeah?

MH: But they don't need another bridge, they want a destination, don't they?

IR: The whole thing is masquerading as a leisure destination. It's got nothing to do with anything else, so it's a bit like **designing** a postage stamp. **We** did that for Dubai, because they wanted to be the culture centre of the Middle East. They didn't want to build in terms of designing a great postage stamp and they got people thinking about Dubai.

MH: Yeah, yeah. I think they would accept it's a destination.

IR: But, fundamentally wrong when they make all the other arguments that it's vital, it's necessary, it's tosh, basically.

DAN ANDERSON (DA):

I think when we were here last time, I called it schizophrenic. And the thing is, I don't want to get into the logical semantics of it, but it's never been a garden and a bridge.

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It's always been a garden or a bridge, depending on who you're talking to and in what context.

IR: And I think Joanne Lumley this year, earlier this year, said, "Well, it's a bit like the Millennium Bridge with trees on". So the trees are costing somewhere in the order of £150 million. I have no objection, private people can do what they like with their money. It's none of my business. When it's public money and there are public views, then there has to be a due diligence done on the project. And I think the fact that what I've explained to you there has never even been explained to engineers, to the engineering fraternity by anybody yet, and there's been no peer review ever of the design in terms of value for money, so this in a way is the first time anybody's heard certainly my view.

MH: Would you normally get anything like this peer reviewed?

IR: Yes, absolutely. Yes.

MH: At what stage?

IR: You would have it at the stage when you were looking at, if you like, cost and value, and because it's public money -- I'm doing a project in Malta, which is public company shareholders, and I questioned the engineering professor at Malta University, a nice guy, on just simply the thickness of the concrete slabs. Now, I actually said to the client, "Professor, I'd like a peer review this, because I think there's £500,000 going into drift". So we had it done by BDP Structures in London and we found £500,000 savings.

It's quite normal, and it's the same with anything to do with real engineering, you always have peer reviews. It's a bit like science. You want people to check that you've done the best you possibly can.

Now, here the premise, the starting premise, is a different one. It's a bit like saying, "We want whatever it is. We want to bring people to London to the South Bank, have more in the South Bank, therefore we'll come up with something and therefore it's not justified to do a peer review, because it's got nothing to do with money". Well, that's fine when it's private money and if the public authorities say, "You can build privately over the River Thames". Once that's established, fine. But once it's public money, a whole different ballgame, a completely different ballgame.

So the question then comes at the other end, if it ever gets built, the maintenance of it and potential damage, you know? I think the PLA -- they're very concerned about safety on the river. This is going to be -- if you say a destination, you're going to have leaves, wet leaves on decking, you're going to have all sorts of things potentially that could happen. Now, if you then take it to the extreme, and it's like getting into this building, you get suddenly an alert, a black security alert. Destination icons, so if it's marketed as an icon, then it's going to be a potential threat zone.

MB: Can I take up this destination point? I think it's important, because it is there in the business case at points, this idea that it is a destination, and this is going to regenerate the area. You have to ask, (a) I think the point Dan's made the North Bank doesn't need regenerating, the South Bank doesn't need regenerating, they're absolutely throbbing. Do we need another destination point in this space that's got a huge number of destination points? We've got all these arts centres, we've got the new Tate extension etc etc etc.

And then throw it over to this is going to cost public money and therefore how much value for money are we getting for the new destination? This is going to cost £60 million of public money to build and then some more to run it, and that's --

MH: £40 million of the £60 million is gone. That's the problem.

MB: We'll come back to that, we'll come back to that. Like I say, it's undeliverable, because I think there's a big question --

IR: Well, I think the ... at the end of my particular paper, which I'm quite happy to give a summary on with all the issues, is if you subscribe the standard cost fallacy -- I think there's wisdom has got to come on to this project somewhere, because within ten years, you will have the maintenance costs equal to about £40 million and where's that going to come from? Not sure that the Garden Trust is going to be raising that money if they can't raise the capital in the first place.

And I just wanted to say one final thing on the design, which a simple bridge can come in on. It doesn't have to touch Temple Station, it doesn't have to get into all the implications of that, which again I think is the ignorance of the people designing in the first place, saying, "Oh, we can land on Temple Station" and not understanding the structure of Temple Station, the fact of adding lifts and the design of such. Because it's also lifted up higher because of this clearance of the rectangle as well as going wider, it's meant you actually haven't got a ramp access for disabled, which was an original intention.

Commented [GLA FoI28]: IR asked the GLA to clarify:
This is a requirement

MH: So the disabled will have to get in, what, through the lift?

DA: The lifts.

MB: Yeah.

IR: This, a simple bridge here, has -- a bit like the Millennium Bridge, a Millennium Bridge on one side, yeah, and the other, basically it's straight on. There's no room for lifts. This one might need lifts, but you've got all the space in the world over here and you can design in a rearrangement to have a lift -- a ramp. So in a way, that's a real flaw. The consequence of all that is all of this structure hanging over it, it's not actually very nice. That's a visual thing when you're driving or walking or cycling here, and you've got this whole shenanigans of going up -- partially up a ramp here to get on the top of Temple Station, then you go up steps or take a lift, because it's got too big.

And there's a lot of money in there and there's a lot of money on this side, which is -- well, it might have started as a gardener's hut to look after the plants and has now turned into a complete entertainment venue, which is why they want the land for that in order to manage the entertainment they want to do on the bridge. All of this has accumulated. It's simply because they didn't look at the two fundamental points at the beginning.

MB: They started at the wrong place, yes.

IR: Correct. They started with an image and everybody goes, "Oh, nice to have a garden on a bridge" and everybody goes, "Oh, that's a nice idea" but nobody asks any questions and you end up where we got to. And is it worth it? No. In my opinion, it's a massive waste of money. But that's an opinion, but it's based on analysis.

MH: Yeah, okay. That's very helpful. And you're going to leave me with some of your argument and I think you've sent it to me, haven't you?

IR: Yeah, but I can happily leave you anything you want, but I've got a clean copy of my paper.

MH: Thank you, thank you. That's probably the best thing to leave. Thank you.

MB: Dan.

DA: Great.

MH: Dan, I think I've read your report. Yours is the one on management, on their --

DA: On the business plan.

MH: So I have read it, I have read it.

DA: Okay. Well, then I'll keep it very short on that, because I don't want to labour the point. I do want to just backtrack slightly on that issue about the £40 million. And actually, it's a question more than a statement. I assume you've got the National Audit Office report?

MH: Yeah.

DA: One of the things that jumped out at me was the -- when they're talking about the second increase in funding and all of it triggered by the signing of the construction contract back in February, there are four letters in here which, to my knowledge, have never been in the public domain. Have you got those letters?

CH: I don't.

DA: They are a letter of 27 January from the Trust to TfL, then on 12 February from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Mayor of London and there's an email in here as well. But it's basically four pieces of correspondence that lead to the signing of the construction contract in February.

If you develop anything, you need three things. You need the land on which to build it, the money to build and the planning permission to do it. They don't have those three things now. There is no way that they had them in February.

MH: I have to say, I have asked that question of other public construction, so, for example, the extension on the Tate, they didn't have money at the start.

DA: No, but they had the land and the planning permission. They haven't.

MB: No, they haven't got planning permission, because there was a number of outstanding things, conditions, and I'm coming to undeliverability, because the guarantee is one of the conditions.

So they haven't got the planning permission, and they -- certainly in March they had a whole lot of conditions that they still hadn't sorted out and they didn't have the land and that still isn't sorted out with Coin Street.

MH: They're on the verge of sorting out Coin Street.

DA: It's not unheard of to start construction if you're missing one of those three things. I would call it risky. If you start and you're missing two of those things, I would call that reckless. If you start and you're missing all three things, the only word I can think of to describe is brinkmanship. So on the whether or not it's on costs, if nothing else, we run the risk of rewarding that behaviour with a further £20 million, because we've already spent the first £40 million. And I cannot think of a project where somebody has started -- has signed a construction contract in those conditions.

So that's the point on that. Just going to the business plan, I can talk at length about the business case as well. I think it's really important that the terminology is right, because I have seen -- I think it was the Parliamentary Accounts Committee having a heated argument about where they were each referring to a different document and thinking that they were talking about the same one. So very important the business -- strategic outline business case ---- is about the capital project and it's about the capital funding. The business -- and to some extent --

MH: The operating plan is the other one, yeah, yeah.

DA: It is, and to some extent there is a bit of spilled milk about the business case, because the damage of that document has been done, it's the £40 million that's been spent. This document is a clear and present danger to the taxpayer, because this is what underpins the Mayor's guarantee, whether or not he chooses to extend it. Now, we've worked for local authorities that have been asked to underpin guarantees up to

£250,000, £300,000 and they get second opinions on that, they get independent reviews of business plans to make -- to understand what is the risk that this guarantee will actually come back to haunt us and that they will fall back on this guarantee. For a project of this scale and of this magnitude, it seems absolutely incomprehensible to me that that would -- sorry, that wouldn't have been tested and independently reviewed. So that's effectively what I did. Nobody asked me to do it. And I should stress I've been doing this for about 20 years. As a general rule, I don't like to publicly criticise other people's plans, if for no other reason than I don't want anybody criticising mine. I've broken that rule on exactly three occasions. One was the Millennium Dome, which I'm sure I don't need to tell you about. The other one was the Public in West Bromwich. Are you familiar with that one?

MH: No.

DA: That was the -- which I sent a letter -- because they were a client at the time, I sent a letter to [REDACTED] Council saying, "You don't need a business plan. You need to sell this building for £1 because it will haemorrhage money from the day that you open it". They opened it anyway, they haemorrhaged money for three years and then sold it for £1 to the local college. Those are the only two times I publicly criticised a business plan. This is number three.

Commented [GLA FoI29]: Redacted EIR 12(3) - Personal data has been removed as involves a third-party completely unconnected with the Garden Bridge or the review.

What do all these projects have in common? They don't have a -- leaving aside the detail of the business plan, there's no business model there. It's just flawed. And secondly, it's what I've just described as this accumulation of flaws. That was the same thing you saw with those two projects. It was the project ran away. It started from a reasonable idea and then in the haste to do things and doing things improperly, the project just ran away from them and then you start doing incorrect things to correct for the previous mistakes that you made and pretty soon it's gone out of control. The same thing has happened here.

I think I made three important points about the business model here. Fundamentally the business model is about fundraising. They dress it up in language about multiple income streams and varied income streams, but when you get a look at the detail, you realise it's six of them are six different ways of saying fundraising. The Charity Commission calls it voluntary income; a museum would call it development income. It's all different types of fundraising.

MH: Have we got the Charity Commission thing yet?

CH: As far as I know, it's not been published, no. It was yesterday I think I checked.

MH: Okay, thank you. You say 70 per cent is --

DA: It's 68 per cent. But it's actually higher than that. Well, it will be higher than that, because part of what I haven't included in that is the endowment income, so we keep talking about the gap between where they are now and the £185 million to build it, but

they're anticipating endowment income from day one, so really, they need to raise all of that plus another £13 million because they've got to. But --

MH: £13 million -- you mean to get to --

DA: To get -- well, they're anticipating income from a £15 million endowment at 4 per cent and the 4 per cent is right. You would expect that, even in today's market. Charities will have access to particular funds which will generate slightly higher interest than you and I would. So that doesn't concern me. It concerns me that I don't think they'll get anywhere near the £15 million and certainly not on day one. So out of this I gave them the benefit of the doubt on the endowment, but the reality is I don't think they'll get there.

The other thing is that I -- and this is still based on 12 private hires per annum and they made a commitment to the Mayor that they would cut that in half. They should be going up. They're going down.

MH: Yeah, I thought we were stuck at 12.

CH: I think the 12 is that they've got 6 private investors who have already committed here with donors, so in return for a donation they get a certain number of events each year that they will be allowed to have. So overall, with those and the private events that they to use for fundraising, it comes to 12, and they say that long term, those 6 that are for donors will deplete because they don't have them in perpetuity.

MH: Right.

CH: Does that make any sense?

MH: Yeah, yeah, but you've got to think there are 12 at the moment, really.

DA: Well, yeah, but you'd be double-counting, right?

CH: They won't get anything from six of those. Because they'll be for money already pledged to build it, for example. They're not additional fundraising.

MH: I get it, I get it. Yeah, yeah, yeah, okay.

DA: Now, they constantly compare themselves to museums and cultural attractions and we're going to show how actually their business model is very different, but just this has come out in the last week, which is an Arts Council survey of all of their funded organisations. And it's just showing the same thing, so this is national portfolio organisations and major partners museums, which are the big ones. This is the smaller ones in the Arts Council portfolio and that's the Garden Bridge, so it's fairly obvious one of these is not the like the others.

There are other organisations. They tend not to be destinations that are fundraising based health charities, things like that, are predicated on fundraising. Certainly when we assess business plans for the Arts Council, Sport England and the Heritage Lottery Fund, to the extent that somebody bases their business model on fundraising, they need to be able to justify that. Now, you typically justify that, you provide a very detailed fundraising strategy, "Who we're going to approach, how we're going to approach, what size gifts we use" but most importantly, you need to be specific about the inventory that you're providing to these donors.

People don't just give money to a garden because it's a pretty garden. You've got to come up with fundraising events like you describe or -- the ones that are most common are if it's a charging destination, then you waive the charge. But there's an inventory of things that you can calculate the market value and that's the value that you're giving to donors. So that's the way you go about justifying that business model. We're back to the idea, is it a garden or a bridge? Because they need to be a bridge, they cannot put together that inventory, because they've got nothing to discount, they got nothing to offer for free. They've got limits on how often they can close it to have private events. And the margins are so threadbare which is why the only specific thing that they say in this business plan about that inventory is dinners with the chairman. Everybody gets that, whether you're a programme sponsor or a patron or a member, everybody gets dinner with the chairman. And I'm sure he's very charming, but he's not that charming.

DA: Okay. Like I said, most of my thoughts on the business plan are in here, so I won't labour those points any further.

MH: Yeah, I have read it, I have read it.

DA: The bigger general point is the reason I wrote this and the reason I expressed a completely unsolicited opinion is that that statement that the Mayor made back in May about it would cost more to stop the project than go ahead.

And it's such a counterintuitive statement that you get taken aback. Then you do sit down and you do the arithmetic and you go, "Actually, it does work out. I get what he's saying" but of course it only holds under those two assumptions, which is that there won't be any further money going into it going forward, and secondly that they can actually repay that £20 million. So all I wanted to do was test, "And how exactly are they going to repay this £20 million?" So I went to their business plan.

MH: And it's not in there because it was five years.

DA: Exactly. The word "loan" doesn't appear in this business plan, not once. But more importantly, all I want -- I just wanted to do a spreadsheet, a cash flow, which is what anybody would do if you were talking about a 50-year repayment. TfL did it. We did their cash flow for the Northern Line extension. The first thing you do, 50-year cash flow. But they've only got five years, so I had to transfer all of these into my own spreadsheet, and as I was doing it, I was going line by line and I just found myself doing

this, "Oh, how did they get that?" and going back, every single line, I couldn't -- I couldn't reconcile these numbers.

And at one point the penny dropped, and it occurred to me it is entirely possible that nobody has read this document outside the Trust, which is breath-taking, if that's what happened. What I was looking for is where is the second report? If you apply for more than £500,000 from one of the lottery funds, there is an independent assessment. Somebody might have read it, but where is the second report?

MH: Because they would have to, on the basis of the underwriting satisfy themselves that there was -- I can't remember the word you use but something like capable. In his 22 April direction --

CH: So the judgement that the Mayor and/or Martin, depending on who ends up making that judgement on whether they've got a sufficient plan, will be based on their operations plan, as far as I'm aware. I don't think it's based on anything else.

MH: Yeah, so somebody would have to -- before they sign off --

DA: And in fact, actually, we've heard statements from Lord Davies on Newsnight. The Garden Bridge Trust has been saying it in tweets and press releases. It will have to be queried and challenged before we get the planning consent; it will have to be challenged before we get the guarantee. It's always in the future tense. The business plan should be the second or third document produced in the gestation of a project. It should get challenged right -- because if you find a business model that's flawed, you've got time to pull the plug on it.

The fact that everybody is saying, "We will do this, we will do this", that in itself is a huge flaw in how we've gotten to this. I've never seen a business plan like this for a project that has already spent £40 million. I think that's all I want to say.

MB: Did you have another business plan? You had a Bromley thing. It was just an example. It was just an example of something that cost £500,000. You tell us what it is.

DA: This is for a £2.5 million HLF grant for a £3.6 million project done by two industrious, incredibly bright young ladies in Bromley Council.

One of the best business plans I've ever reviewed, and the reason I know that is that they're -- I didn't bring it with me. Oh, unless it's back here. Yeah, that's the second report. So even though that was very obviously robust, because it's £2.5 million, the HLF goes and gets the second report and that's 15 pages of me saying, "This is a brilliant business plan". So how you spend £40 million and there isn't any evidence that this has been done and people are saying it will be done is astonishing.

MH: Okay, okay.

MB: Right, so I was going to talk about the strategic business plan -- the strategic business case, but I'll set that aside. I'll send you something else on that.

MH: I have looked at the strategic business case.

MB: Exactly, I've done a PFI, I've been involved in Jubilee Gardens, getting money for TfL for a trust, a very similar project for a piece of open space. And we got a couple of million pounds from TfL via the local authority and we had the business plan together like that and you had to have a strategic case etc. It had to come long, long, long before this process and the same with PFI. It's bizarre. So, okay, we'll set that aside.

So let's get straight to the guarantee, and the fundamental point here, this is £2.5 million, £3 million a year that this bridge is going to -- they've gone around that figure over the years. It was a condition put in by Westminster Council in their planning permission, but it's something that they can shift, they can move that around. It's a condition the PLA require and they still haven't signed off on it and it became a condition that Lambeth. That was sought because of my judicial review. That was agreed to do it, that was the court agreement, that they agreed to get a guarantee. So they cannot issue a permission until they've got the guarantee and they show that to me. And if they do -- they'll be in contempt of court if they do otherwise.

And I settled on that, because I knew that this was an almost impossible feat. They'd actually submitted in their documents to the JR their original business plan, which is just ten pages, and absurdly. It's a shame I didn't bring that, actually, because it's so thin. And this was -- they'd already had planning permission and the whole thing had been running for two years and it's ten pages. So the guarantee -- without the guarantee, they cannot start building. That's it, full stop. So why haven't they got the guarantee in place?

Well, the Mayor, Boris, issued an instruction in June 2015, a year ago -- well, 18 months ago, and it was actually at the same time as I did my JR, and in fact, it was designed to stymie me if we hadn't come to an agreement, they would have lobbed that into the court. It came out on the same day as the court hearing. The fact is that he issued an instruction to do it and a year later it wasn't done. And he issued another instruction, which was slightly thinner, he asked for slightly less, so they didn't have to have the five years money upfront for the first five years etc, but they -- and they still couldn't agree and get this guarantee out of the door before he left, which was clearly the intention.

And you have to ask why on earth that is the case. Why didn't they manage to get this out? Sadiq himself now has said, "I won't put any more public money in. No more public money will go towards this". Now, as soon as you sign a guarantee, you underwrite something, you accept that liability. That liability has to go on to your spreadsheet. That has to sit there on TfL's spreadsheet. They've got a liability on the side of it. They therefore cannot spend a certain amount of money because they have to hold it back for that possibility of that. So in that sense, it has a real effect. Obviously on the basis of what Dan's shown, and it's certainly in the evidence we've

got so far, we've ever had, there's no chance that they're going to manage to get the money to run the thing and therefore the guarantee is going to kick in pretty quickly. In fact, the graphs show that they're going to hit it straight away. The big problem is actually the first five years. maybe in 20 years' time, but by then (Overspeaking)

DA: Well, it falls off a cliff as soon as they have to start making repayments.

MH: There isn't an agreement when to start payment (Overspeaking)

MB: Up to 50 years.

MH: Is it up to 50 years? But is there an agreement when to start?

DA: It starts from year 6 onwards, but -- and we did put in that scenario -- the way it's worded, they could pay a minimum payment of £250,000, so if you wanted to repay over 50 years, you'd have to pay about £400,000-odd per annum. They could pay £250,000, make the minimum payment, and then a lump sum at the end.

MH: Sure, yeah.

DA: So that's part of the way that they could mitigate it. But you're giving with one hand and taking away with the other, because either the GLA is helping them fund the operations, which includes the repayment of the loan, or you waive the loan, but it's basically the same money circulating.

MB: Now, I'm going to tell you why I think Boris couldn't get this sorted out and Sadiq can't either - even if he wanted to, if he was going to break his word on not spending more public money - which is the rationale for putting in public money in the first place. The rationale stated in the strategic outline business case and in statements made by the Mayor and by George Osborne, the rationale is, "We'll put in £60 million of public money and we'll get £120 million of private money and private money to run the thing and therefore we're going to get a lot more private money than public money". If you sign a guarantee and effectively you could end up paying a whole lot, you're then putting in more public money than private money. The maths, it's pretty straightforward, it's about 65 -- 67 per cent or something if you -- depending on how you capitalise that liability.

But you're ending up putting more public money than private money. Your rationale goes out the window and I would have judicially reviewed Boris had he signed the guarantee and I will do the same with Sadiq on that ground. This is unreasonable. You cannot progress something and agree to put £60 million on the basis that it's more -- "We're just going to produce more private money than public money" and then sign something else that ensures that you produce more public money than private money. So that's why this guarantee can't be signed.

And the only -- there is one slim chance, I guess, which is that if they got a bond, if they got -- the Sheik of Araby came along with £100 million, which is the figure we're talking

and -- well, actually, Dan might give us a better, more precise figure, but I don't know how much you'd have to put as the capital, but I would guess £100 million to generate £3 million a year as potential. So that would be one thing, that it would effectively not need a guarantee as a result and would effectively cut away the argument that I've just given of this rationale. It would be irrational to sign a guarantee.

But unless the Sheikh of Araby appears, the Mayor is in a bind and that's why Boris didn't sign for over a year. I spoke to the -- Fiona Fletcher-Smith, one of the key officers involved in it, who was adamant they were going to get this done. This was last May, May 2015. They were adamant they were going to get this done and a year later hadn't managed to get it done before he left, and obviously Sadiq's got a different viewpoint. So you do have to ask why, if this is known, has this not affected what's been going on and I think the brinkmanship is the --

MH: I'm just saying, their counter-argument would be is if -- once my review gave it a tick and if Sadiq put his back into trying to raise money, they'd raise the money. That's the Garden Bridge Trust's view.

MB: No, no, you can't -- they raise the money? In order to raise the money, they've got to build the bridge; in order to build the bridge, they've got to get the planning permission; in order to get the planning permission, they've got to get the guarantee. The guarantee, signed, would be an irrational act by the Mayor because it is possible -- he has to put that in his liabilities and it's possible that it's called upon, and because of that, there is potentially more public money than private money going in and it's irrational of him to say -- well, and his predecessor said it, and George Osborne, that that line of argument, "We're funding this because it's going to bring in more private money", at the same time signing something that potentially allows it not to be the case and for public money to go in.

So they can't get off the ground on raising the money because the thing can't be built. That's the -- now, brinkmanship is the key to this, because it's an Emperor's new clothes situation, and if no one says, "The Emperor has got no clothes" the Emperor wanders around without any clothes. Sadiq signs it and no one questions it, which they will, but if we were in that scenario -- and why on earth this wasn't sorted out a long time ago - well, that's why - why on earth the business plan wasn't sorted out a long time ago and wasn't put forward and wasn't reviewed, that's why.

So my -- the fundamental point is that those really difficult things that should have been sorted out at the beginning have been left to the end, so that you then say, "Well, £40 million has been spent, £60 million has been spent". We all got used to this, so let's go along with it. And that would be -- well, actually, it would end up in court. That's where it will be in the first place. That's the route.

DA: Could I just add one additional point to that, which is again, had that all been done at the beginning and had there been a proper business plan in place, a lot of the compromises that have been made along the way that have created this situation wouldn't necessarily have been made. And there was a business model in there

somewhere. Something like this, the first thing you would do is just acknowledge that it's a visitor destination and charge for it. I'm not morally --

MH: They did try and do that.

DA: Well, initially, in the public consultations, they were a lot less guarded in what they were saying and they said, "We're reviewing it and we reserve the right to start charging".

MH: But they wanted to charge?

DA: Yeah, but then because the money was coming from Transport for London as a bridge and because there was an outcry that's a public bridge, that fell away.

MB: The same with the naming rights.

DA: The same thing with the naming rights. One of the -- I think in that basket of documents that Mike Brown sent to you, which was made public right at the very start, fresh from the experience with the Emirates Airline, is that they'd sell the naming rights. For whatever reason they chose not -- and now they can't do it, because they parcelled up all the inventory and have given it away in pieces. They designed a building into it from which you could have got lease income. That was a good idea. Yeah, that's the thing I would have advised them to do, but then they got into a negotiation with Coin Street and Lambeth and they gave away all of that income. Just bit by bit, because there isn't somebody who's taking ownership of that business plan and saying, "No, there's a line we can't cross. The minute you cross that line, we've got no business model any more". They're just not looking past the end of their nose.

MB: And that reflects the difficulty of the public/private type of partnership this is, because all the bridges are guaranteed. The PLA requires that guarantee. The state guarantees them, the state builds these bridges and requires -- because they're such key infrastructure, it requires that the state picks up the pieces if they fall down and maintain them. And in fact, the TfL board, I told you earlier they weren't informed until after the procurement and the design, the whole thing was kicked off. They are told -- I'll give you an example.

They're told there's a £25,000 improvement to Chiswick Bridge. Virtually every meeting they meet, there's information on Chiswick Bridge, along with lots of other bridges. I just picked out that one because I couldn't believe the minutiae they're given in the reports.

MH: What, this is the board?

MB: The board are given this stuff in the report and they're not told about this process, this -- until the process is ongoing. So another layer of scrutiny, had it kicked in, that the public part of it would have said, "Hang on a minute, we're a bit worried about this". To get that public/private interface is a difficult thing to do and part of what's

happened here is that there's been an expectation that the public will pick up the pieces, they'll sign a guarantee, but at the same time, the private bit hasn't driven in the way that you've described properly, so that a hard-nosed developer coming along with this idea would have said, "No, we want the naming rights" like the Emirates. It's fundamental to this making it work and that --

DA: And the Great Court at the British Museum, originally, if you recall, that was supposed to be a late-opening public square for London. About a year into the project we said, "You can't afford it. Well, you could afford it, but in order to deliver that, needlessly, for the simple reason that somebody thought it was a good idea to start, you're going to be sacrificing all these other things". We went back to the Millennium Commission and we changed it. So these things can be done.

MH: Are you against this bridge being built elsewhere?

MB: I'm not, personally. And I don't think there's been a question.

MH: Are you just against it being where it is?

MB: I'm against it as a public-funded thing, which is why we're here, and I think that's on behalf of the group. Personally, I always thought that a garden bridge between Kew Gardens and Syon would be a great place to have one. Yeah, Syon Park there's two wonderful parks. There's a stretch of about 3 miles with no bridge and a garden, with a connecting garden. But the Sheik of Araby, if the Sheik of Araby were to pay for it, that'd be fine. So that's another matter. And obviously a destination bridge somewhere east of Tower Bridge would be fantastic. I don't think there's any need for a destination, and indeed possibly even a destination a bit further west might be -- if you put at Battersea Park. , I'm not advocating that at all.

And part of the reason why we have to be careful, as my organisation is advocating, is we get into the next mistake, the next anxiety what does that take? Because all of these things require a lot of thinking. You can't simply say, "There's a nice spot. Let's put it there" because there's a huge amount of stuff and things going on, stuff you don't even know, one of the key things that clearly happened here was that Joanna looked at South Bank in 1999, 1997 and then in the early 2000s. There weren't 25 million going along South Bank then. The Millennium -- the Wheel opened in 2000; Jubilee Gardens opened by the Queen in 2012. Between those two spaces, 25 million people descended. There was less 1 million a year before that and now it's 25 million. So at the time, it looked like a piece of empty space. It isn't now, and that's -- so I'm nervous of saying it's fine somewhere else. But in theory, it's fine somewhere else at somebody else's expense.

MH: Yeah, okay. Let me just, because we're running out of time, look if there's anything I need to ask you. You know this £60,000 for letting it, if you look at it, is there anywhere in London that they get £60,000 for a letting?

DA: No. I put some comparators. I didn't put the names, because --

MH: You did put some comparators in, but you didn't -- is there any -- do you know anywhere where they get £60,000?

CH: No. I heard back from Tower Bridge though and I think theirs was more like £5,000.

DA: No, it's way -- much lower than that.

MH: I have been to a party at Tower Bridge, which wasn't very good, actually.

DA: I did write an article about all that.

DA: The one that made me laugh was the only real comparable, that in terms of the --

MH: £5,000 for Tower Bridge?

CH: You have to add things on to that though.

DA: But it's -- oh, and this one too: the £60,000 gets you the right to do it, but then you have to pay for the marquee and all the things, because if you're sensible, you want a marquee in case it rains. But, no, the only one that comes close is you can rent Silverstone Racecourse to race cars on for that much.

MH: That's £50,000?

DA: Yeah. Actually less than that, but it's in that order of magnitude. It's about £40,000, £50,000.

MH: Have you guys met the Garden Bridge Trust?

IR: Yeah, Mervyn. I had a meeting with Mervyn way, way back and it was --

MH: I don't know how he got involved originally.

IR: Because he likes -- you know the man, do you?

MH: Not -- I don't know him well. Actually, he was a Labour peer, but I don't actually know him.

IR: I do know him quite well.

MH: Right, okay. He just likes the mad projects?

IR: Yeah. Paul Morrell was roped in because they needed somebody serious about construction. But I was going to -- yeah, I was going to mention that I met the Mayor as a result of wanting to know whether to spend any more money on this potential theatre in this zone between Somerset House and what was then the Wellington

because we were proposing back in 2011/12 to put a theatre there, which was for regional theatres with thrust stages - having designed a Shakespeare theatre - in Sheffield, Chichester...

Commented [GLA FoI30]: The GLA made these corrections after identifying errors in the transcription.

Ian Ritchie has clarified this relates to the Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford upon Avon, and the regional theatres are those in Sheffield and Chichester.

MH: Yeah, so on the North Bank?

IR: On the North Bank, and the -- we'd done quite a bit of work, we developed up a scheme, we'd costed it, and the question was from the PLA, with this other thing lurking - and this was back in 2012 - could we find out or waste more money. So we did our due diligence, got a meeting with the Mayor and I presented our credentials, the recent bridge the bridge in Paris etc. And his reply was, "Oh, get this guy in touch with Thomas Heatherwick" to which the staff said, "Shh, we haven't made a decision yet" in the meeting. And he said, "Well, it'd be much better. Why can't we have the bridge and a theatre? That would be brilliant, better than having an ice cream at the north end". So again, I met Thomas, because I happen to know him and he said, "I can't talk about it. It's all under -- I can't say a word about it". So we stopped work on it.

MB: And I actually ran a meeting for the Garden Bridge Trust at the beginning of the consultation process. So I first heard about --

MH: This is before they put in planning application?

MB: No, no, it was with the planning application. There wasn't a public consultation before it, there was something online, which -- and actually, I want to give you something on that. I'll send you something on the figures, the 87 per cent that supported stuff, because it's really -- it's real bunkum. But they put the planning application in and the first thing I heard was - and I said this to you last time - the chief planning officer, I had a -- we discuss things quite regularly and this was a complete canyon.

We hadn't -- there was a public meeting. They announced it at a public meeting. It was Mervyn that stood up and said this and smiled and 150 people just went, "What? What? What?" and he was quite taken aback by the ferocity, and so was I, as somebody who runs the local group. So I then got in contact with him and said "You need to have a proper conversation with the community and I will help do that through our organisation" and they funded us to do that. So we ran a meeting in August and I worked very hard to try and tell them about different things to -- one of the things I said was, "Look at that strip of green and look at the South Bank itself and compare that strip, try and -- why don't you do a diagram to show that strip in the South Bank, because we all love the walk along the South Bank and show the similarity of that and how therefore we're getting an extra bit of South Bank?" That was one idea I threw at them.

Deleted: 100

They had the public meeting, we had the public meeting, and it was again a situation 150 people turned up, it was the people standing outside couldn't get in. It was that -- it was very unknown. It was the biggest public meeting I've been involved in in ten years in Waterloo. And it was again 100 per cent hostile. People went berserk

Commented [GLA FoI31]: The GLA made these corrections after identifying errors in the transcription.

Deleted: 100

about it, and as a result I then spoke to people, these two, for example, who live locally, and I said, "We need to start an organisation, you need to start an organisation, and this is the way to do it".

And we then engaged in conversation with the Garden Bridge Trust all the way through. We haven't spoken to them probably since I did the judicial review last year. I smile at Bee and she smiles at me,

WKC: But they have refused to come to any of our public meetings, like the South Bank Forum.

MH: I think we are there, aren't we? I've got to go.

WKC: Do you want say something about the polling.

MH: Anything else you want to say?

WKC: Well, the poll figures that you were referencing earlier on. At first they said 87 per cent from the original consultation from six bizarre questions, which I don't know how they got a yes or no out of them. It's just too quick to -- I haven't got enough time to explain it now, but those figures were -- you know the questions that were asked on the original consultation?

MB: "Please use this space to let us know what you think about the process of the Garden Bridge. You can tell us what you like or dislike most about the bridge and why."

That's (1). (2):

"Please use this space to let us know how you would change the proposals and why."

And (3), "Do you have any other comments?" And then (4), (5) and (6) are just about who you are. So there's those three questions, and out of that they then extrapolated that 67 per cent said yes, 20 per cent said yes "and", so that's how they get the 87 per cent. And this was an online thing in November 2013, and as I said, I answered this. I had no idea what they were talking about. I didn't know -- they talk about connecting to Covent Garden and I couldn't understand, "Well, Covent Garden?" and I was -- I actually thought, "Would there be a bridge going under Waterloo Bridge? Was that how it worked? I don't understand this concept" because Covent Garden is not --

MH: They did have some public meetings. They had a public -- they had --

MB: They had a public event, a public exhibition in Somerset House and in Coin Street for a day or two.

WKC: Which was not advertised to any local people.

Commented [GLA Fo132]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an error in the transcription where these comments had been attributed to the wrong person

Deleted: but they have refused to come to any of our public meetings, like the South Bank Forum.

MB: And it got -- they got a certain number through the door, which they gave a breakdown on.

WKC: They had a visitor book which had 292 comments.

MB: Two hundred and ninety comments.

WKC: And they said out of that, 90 per cent of local residents supported the bridge, which is what they spread throughout the newspapers for a long, long time until they got forced to do another poll in July 2015. Just two of the vacuous questions that have no bearing on the reality of what the bridge --

MB: How many in the Ward, in Bishop's Ward, have signed the petition against it?

WKC: In Bishop's Ward, a paper petition, there were 6,800 people. We had a paper petition along the South Bank, collect --

MB: But no, this is the ward, because we went around door to door.

WKC: Oh, the ward, 3,000.

MB: Three thousand. And the ward is about 6,000, it's a small ward, because they're expecting it to grow, so the Boundaries Commission made it small.

WKC: Yeah, and the online petition is nearly 20,000.

MB: You're someone **who was like** a councillor. You know to get 3,000 people to sign is extraordinary, really.

MH: Yeah. And what's your thing you've put on the top of this to sign? What does your petition actually say?

WKC: Oh, it's about the -- well, there were also 1,226 letters against the disposal of the land on the South Bank as well.

MH: So it's against the disposal of the land? That was the question you asked?

WKC: Yes, we put some bullet points down saying, "This Garden Bridge will destroy the views; this Garden Bridge would add to congestion. Do you agree or will you sign in opposition to this private development?" and we actually gave quite a few --

MH: So what you do put, what, "This will destroy views. Do you agree?" That's it?

WKC: We showed them pictures and we said, "These pictures --" we showed these very pictures and we said, "This is what's going to happen. This is how much it's going to cost. This is how much they predict will come on to the South Bank. We are collating a petition against this. If you disagree with this happening, please sign the petition".

Commented [GLA Fo133]: The GLA made these corrections after identifying errors in the transcription from the audio recording.

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Commented [GLA Fo134]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription. The comment had erroneously been attributed to the wrong person.

And we didn't give them anything of our personal opinion. It was all facts from the planning applications themselves.

MB: And I just -- , the point is I've been out there getting people -- canvassing and all the rest of it, and obviously you come from a point of view, but to get that response is extraordinary. It was about 50 per cent of people in the ward have literally signed it, physically signed it, which is --

MH: Yeah. Okay, I think we're there. Did you ever meet Isabel Dedring?

DA: Yeah.

Commented [GLA Fo135]: Dan Anderson has questioned this entry and has confirmed he has never met Isabel Dedring. It is not clear from the audio recording who makes this comment.

MH: As a group?

MB: No.

IR: I didn't.

MH: When you were -- during the early time?

MB: No, I never met Isabel. And that's all Boris.

Commented [GLA Fo137]: This was corrected after the GLA identified an obvious error in the transcription. The comment had erroneously been attributed to the wrong person.

IR: Boris. Boris actually asked TfL to have a meeting with us but Michele Dix never replied to any of the emails.

MB and IR speak over one another and the transcription erroneously included the phrase "I saw Boris" and wrongly attributed it to a party who was not speaking.

MB: We met with Sadiq's -- what's his name?

Deleted: I saw Boris.

¶
DA

WKC: Nick Bowes.

MB: Nick Bowes, yeah. We met with him about six months before the election and actually the guarantee, this was a key point we made to him. We basically said, "This is going to land on your plate when you get in."

MH: But then it landed on mine.

MB: Well, had he taken our advice, if he'd taken our advice, which is what Sadiq originally said, which is he would stop this, then that would have been enough, I think, to have finished this project some time ago or else he would have just gone down. No decision-maker all the way through has been willing to say, "I put my --" because, the Standard they are very powerful and they're so incredibly four square for this, so everybody has not been willing to say, "I'm not going for this". We met with Zac and he didn't say, "I'm against it" but he clearly thought it was a bit of nonsense, but there was no way he was going to say this when he was trying to get the --

DA: That incident, and that -- the resulting decision, which was that's where the loan came from. It was in order to turn Sadiq around when he was campaigning. They disappeared into a room and came out and decided, "Yeah, we'll have a loan rather

than a grant". If they had a business plan at that point, somebody would have said, "Hang on, we can't afford to repay it, to service the loan". It's another one of those ones where path of least resistance, make a decision, forget about the business plan. Everyone's going to be --

MH: And years down the line --

DA: -- everyone is going to be so in love with it that when the public starts putting money into it again, nobody will mind.

MB: Yeah, I think Sadiq is playing his hand very cannily, and I think we all hope it's going to just stop of its own accord. And they've got to put their accounts in on 31 December and I'm still just hopeful that they can't square the circle on that, because £6 million they've got to find just to cancel the contract. They've got to put this number right in, which is a good example of the guarantee story, actually, because you would be aware of this, that they went to the department to get the £15 and the department only said £9 million, said they've got to go and find £6 million and share the risk etc. That's the point, is that a liability is a liability. You need real money. It's not pretend, it's not that will never happen.

MH: I'm assuming the £9 million covers their liability.

MB: No. No, no, they've got £6 million outstanding liability for the (Overspeaking)

MH: Which will go on the trustees then?

MB: Yeah. So the emails -- I didn't realise you weren't aware of this. In July they sent -- they wrote to the department and said, "We will stop and we'll go under. We'll have to --"

MH: Yeah, I do know that. I do know that.

MB: Yeah, "If we can't get this" and they said, "Well, we'll give you £9 million and you've got to go and find the other £6 million" and they said, "Well, we'll put the accounts in the 31st (Overspeaking) put the accounts in 31 December". Where they find that £6 million is a private funder who's willing to put in money to cancel something. Well, actually, there might be people out there who would be willing to cancel the Garden Bridge for £6 million. Maybe that's what we should be doing, going and finding the money.

MH: Dear, dear, dear, dear. Thank you very much for your time.

DA: Thank you. Those letters I referred to in that correspondence between TfL, which led to that second increase. Just so you're aware, because I think that shoe will drop, because Will Hurst, who I'm sure you've met, he's got FOIs in for those, so I'm sure at some point they will be ferreted out by somebody.

CH: Yeah, I'll double-check. We might already have them.