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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.

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Garden Bridge Review Meeting Transcript

Event: MH/ Thomas Heatherwick meeting

Date: 21 November 2016

*Present: Dame Margaret Hodge MP
Thomas Heatherwick
Margaret Kalaugher
Chloe Lamb*

DAME MARGARET HODGE MP (MH):

This is the start and I may come back. I am completely uncommitted either way on should there be a Garden Bridge, shouldn't there be a Garden Bridge, so I am not coming at that at all, I am just trying to look at the processes and I am trying to look at whether or not value for money.

So really what would help me, Thomas, if you started telling me how the idea first emerged, how you got involved, and what happened, take me through that, because I gather it goes right back for years.

THOMAS HEATHERWICK (TH):

Yes. So I have a studio in King's Cross. My passion is public projects and I realised that I wasn't interested in people's private homes. Rich people's homes or galleries, you expected specialness there, but as I was growing up the public world around us, a little mini me was walking around thinking, "Why is this school rubbish? Why is the hospital off? Why are the bus stops, why?"

And so I got to grow a studio gradually, I graduated from the Royal College of Art, set up 22 years ago, and was interested in ideas. There had been books full of architecture visions that never happened and so I was really interested. My background was making things and so my mother was a craftsperson, my grandmother was a textile designer, refugee from Dresden who set up Marks and Spencer's textile studio and was interested in beauty and craftsmanship.

And so that's just a little background. Then I heard of this idea and I got to do a bridge in Paddington 12 or 13 years ago, a little bridge that rose up into a ball.

MH: Yes, I saw that.

TH: And I'd had an idea for a bridge made with just glass, but I was working on a number of different kinds of things, I wasn't just doing bridges. When I was at the Royal College of Art Terence Conran was coming in and I was very interested in how there was design and why people wanted and what it does. Terence Conran is the only person. In the Royal College there were people going, "This should be red or this should be taller, shorter, wider", but he seemed to understand why even bother, why does somebody want it?

And he came into my college and my professor said, "No, he's too busy, you can't see him", and the only way to see him was to run down the fire stair when he was leaving and chat to him and he was incredibly generous to a student stopping him in a corridor and let me live at his house for four months to build a building project. And so he became like a mentor, it was incredible, it's the thing you want to do for someone else one day. And so him and someone else had the -- Joanna Lumley had this idea --

MH: So you knew her?

TH: No, I'd never met her.

MH: And when was that?

TH: I didn't know any of these characters, I was brought up in Wood Green and because my grandmother's accountant had said, "No, don't buy the house in Highgate, buy the house in Wood Green, it's £1,000 cheaper", so, no, I didn't know any of those characters.

MH: Okay, so you met her when?

TH: There was someone who used to be the head of Central London Partnerships and Terence Conran apparently had suggested to her speaking to me, but this was 14 years ago. So she came, and she'd already been in to see Gordon Brown.

MH: 14 years ago? She'd already been to see Gordon to ask him to do the ...

TH: She'd seen a number of people and all the middle-aged men had said, "Oh, what an amazing idea, Joanna, wonderful", and in the back of the head thinking, "This will never happen", you could tell. And when I met her I was introduced because she wanted someone to design this bridge.

MH: So who introduced you?

TH: Well it was a mix of people, it was Terence Conran apparently had been involved, but also the woman who ran Central London Partnerships, someone called Patricia Brown,

and so she came to my old studio in Camden Town and I thought it was a perfect idea. The reason I thought it was an interesting idea was not to do with flowers and plants, the thing that caught me was that London's river. I remember the Time Out doing a South London issue and a North London issue, it divides it. I think we think that the Thames is a bit like the Senne in Paris, but the Senne is 60, 70, 80, 90 metres wide, our river is quarter of a kilometre to 330 metres wide, so it's three times as wide and so the thing that struck me was that she was just pointing out that the Waterloo Bridge, it's actually a dual carriageway, even though the views are stunning, the priority is cars, buses, taxis, lorries and motorbikes. Southwark Bridge, all the main bridges, I've never met anyone who's met anyone in the middle of a bridge.

MH: I met someone on Waterloo Bridge the other day.

TH: Did they arrange to meet you there?

MH: No, no, I bumped into them.

TH: But the striking thing was it's not a place, it's always just a link, and the challenge was breaching the obstacle, which was a river, rather than, "Where's the best place to step back and look at the city from?" And we wouldn't be here if it wasn't for that river and in general in cities all around the world we started to recognise that in effect there's the servants' entrance or the delivery entrance to London, the old road, which was the river, is now the asset.

And the other thing is that we've understood more and more that the best cities are walkable, the city centres are a walkable place, and when you walk across Waterloo Bridge the view is stunning but the priority is cars, buses, taxis, it's lorries and motorbikes, and so commuters coming to Waterloo are plunging into tube lines, bus lines, and yet the city is just over there.

So what really struck me was that plants were a device, it wasn't a romantic thing about "flowers are so lovely", it brought the human scale down and making a place that connects. She'd say, "It's not a bridge with flowers on, it's a garden that connects north and south", and that struck me as a clarity.

And I'd seen her at these lectures about the future of London about 22 years ago, before a Mayor was appointed, and they were the most exciting meetings I've ever been to, at the Methodist Central Hall. I remember everyone was worrying about how are we going to breathe life into the South Bank which didn't have a London Eye, didn't have a Globe, didn't have those things, and she was there -- I remember seeing her in a couple of those lectures and at the time I just thought, "What's she doing here, she's an actress?" And so there was someone who was very seriously interested in cities; that's what was nice to have my preconceptions busted.

But I knew 14 years ago, I'd just got going with my studio, I had no platform to help make anything happen and I also knew that design wasn't the issue. The project, just because some people had seen the idea and gone, "Oh, lovely idea, Joanna", to their pinup heartthrob from the 60s, it didn't mean that an idea could happen. So at that time I didn't do any work on it but I kept it in my head because I just thought it's good. And so exchanged Christmas cards once a year, that was it. And so in the intervening years then she had had the thing with the Ghurkhas where she'd really said, "This is outrageous that the Ghurkhas were not getting residency after putting their life on the line, or pensions".

The other reason I was very sceptical originally was because the Dome had just happened and was regarded as not having succeeded. But in the intervening years the Olympics happened and everyone had that, "It's all going to go wrong, we're going to screw everything up in Britain", and then it didn't go wrong and everyone was like, "What, it didn't go wrong?" And there was this absence of pessimism for just a little pocket. In the intervening years we met very briefly years ago at the -- I think it was the National Theatre, talking about what might a British Pavilion be like in Shanghai at the World Expo.

MH: Yes, I knew you did that, yes.

TH: And I never thought I'd win that competition at the time because I was against amazing Zaha Hadid. I never imagined that I would actually get the chance to work on something with a bigger national agenda. And so it was doing the British Pavilion where we had half the budget of the other western nations, but used what Britain does well, its ideas, and we won the top prize at the expo. And so we'd got to know

some people, but just people we dealt with, like Mervyn Davies, who I got to meet after that, the chairman of the trust.

MH: After doing the pavilion?

TH: Yes, he had been in the background involved in that as Minister.

MH: When was the pavilion, that was 20 ...?

TH: 2010. We'd lost the competition for the Olympic cycling velodrome, we'd lost the competition for the sculpture that happened at the Olympic Park, we hadn't been selected to be in the short list for the main stadium design, so I was giving up. Then Danny Boyle and the head of Olympic Services asked us if we'd do the Cauldron, so we found ourselves having worked on a few things where there was some national dimension and where they'd been successful. And so, after the Olympics, someone from the GLA contacted the studio saying, "Got any ideas for London?"

MH: Who was that from the GLA?

TH: It was a civil servant within the cultural team and is now the Deputy Mayor for Culture, Justine Simons. And they said, "Got any ideas for London?" And at the time my first thought was, "Well that's your job", but then I thought well actually there is an idea, it's not my idea, but it's an idea that I thought was a special one and it was about togetherness. What had struck me at the Olympics, really hit me, was I'd never seen the British Union Jack -- in America everyone's waving their flags all over the place, but I'd never seen like girls with leggings on with the Union Jack on. And then there was the Paralympics, it was lovely seeing our land having a togetherness without a xenophobia, and that togetherness really hit me.

MH: The Olympics were around September 2012, weren't they?

CHLOE LAMB (CL): July to September.

TH: Yes, 27 July was the opening night.

MH: According to this, Joanna had already written to Boris in about June 2012.

TH: I don't know anything about that then, I don't know -- I didn't know anything about that. I was contacted and they said, "Have you got any ideas?"

MH: So you weren't contacted by Joanna.

TH: No. Not from memory.

MH: When was your first meeting with Boris on it?

TH: It would have been that autumn, later autumn, because after that I thought actually there is an idea and maybe now is a time to try to show it.

MH: You had a meeting in September 2012 with Boris, Ed Lister, Isabel Dedring.

TH: So that was after the Olympics had finished, yes.

MH: Well just about the same time, wasn't it? We'll still there, the Paralympics wasn't it, as I remember it? It was the Paralympics, so it was before the autumn. I don't know if there was a meeting before that. This is what I actually haven't got. But I think certainly there is, in the records, a meeting that you had.

TH: I wouldn't have had any meeting about it before the Olympics.

MH: This was in the middle of the Olympics. September 2012 we were still doing the Olympics.

TH: But that was Paralympics then, but the Olympics was over.

CL: The Olympics would have been two weeks, wouldn't it?

TH: Yes, and it started 27 July. The Olympics had finished mid-August.

MH: Here we are, first meeting June 2012. That's the first meeting was June 2012.

TH: Who was at that?

MH: That was Isabel Dedring and Ed Lister.

TH: But who was with them?

MH: You and Joanna.

TH: No, not in June, not to talk about bridges, that wouldn't have happened. I can go away and check our records and come back to you. There is no way, because it was post-Olympics.

CL: Do you want me to make a note to check?

MH: Just check it, yes.

All right, anyway, so come September. The meeting I've got is 20 September 2012, there is a meeting between you, Joanna, Isabel, Ed Lister, Mayor, et al.

TH: Yes.

MH: By that time Joanna had written to the Mayor, you'd been rung up by Justine, you had put in the concept of a bridge by then, had you?

TH: We did some work on trying to visualise what something could actually be like, so they could imagine it, which I hadn't done 14 years ago.

MH: Before September you were already doing that? Or after they had rung you and everything, when Justine rang you?

TH: It was after that that I got some, and my team and said, "Let's put an idea together".

MH: When was she in post, Justine, it's the first time I've come across her?

TH: She's been there for about 11 years.

MARGARET KALAUGHER (MK):

Yes, forever and ever.

TH: She's been there for ages.

MH: I think you might put in that I should have a quick chat to her, she's not on my list.

Okay, so you go and see the Mayor, you have done all these drawings. By that time have you got Joanna, is she an associate with you by then?

TH: We only put her name down as associate, because I'd kept contact with her over 14 years, I only met her because of this bridge idea. We put her down because we felt that we had a connection with her over that time, but we've never paid her or anything like that, over the years, in any way. So we thought that that was a good idea because to acknowledge that it was her idea, it wasn't my idea.

MH: I'm just trying to check that I've got the story right, she raises it with you 14 years ago, you play around with it, you think this is a great idea, you also, around that, you get to know Mervyn Davies, do you get to know any of the other Garden Bridge Trust people at all?

TH: Yes, the other person I knew, and probably knew better, was the Deputy Director, who was Paul Morrell, who was the Government's construction tsar, he seemed the person most experienced. I think he's famous as the best construction cost consultant this country has ever had, so on thinking who could you work with, who would be the best people --

MH: What I'm finding slightly difficult is how you started getting this idea together, what was the impetus? Was the impetus Joanna going and seeing Boris or writing to Boris and saying, "I want to do a bridge", which she did immediately after he got elected. Was it you getting a phone call from Justine?

TH: The impetus was the call from Justine.

MH: To you?

TH: To me.

MH: Then you rang Joanna and said, "All good"?

TH: Yes, exactly, I didn't know that she had already written to him or whatever she had done, I didn't know anything about that. All of us have just been trying to make an amazing free garden that will be open longer than any Royal Park. Also there is no garden in London of this quality.

MH: Do remember, I am completely neutral on the issue, I have to be, otherwise I couldn't do this work.

TH: But like the Chelsea Physic Garden, the whole thing that excited me was that it wasn't a park, it wasn't a place for throwing Frisbees. I only got to go to things like the Chelsea Flower Show because people have given me a free ticket every now and then, but it's really hard to go to see exceptional horticulture and Dan Pearson is probably the foremost garden plants man in the country, so the idea was there would be this free garden. Do you know the High Line in New York?

MH: I do. We'll come to the High Line in a minute.

TH: Some of the things that have been criticisms of this project have come from lessons learned in the High Line.

MH: I do understand that. So the early people involved were Justine, well obviously Joanna, Mervyn, Paul and --

TH: Mervyn and Paul weren't involved at that point.

MH: They weren't involved, so they came in when you decided to set up a trust really?

TH: When the Mayor's Office said, "There will need to be a trust", which made sense.

MH: Yes, which was around 2013, the beginning of 2013?

TH: I can go away and check and come back to you.

MH: Okay, brilliant. And you put Joanna on -- the only thing I would say to you, when you put her on, it's her idea, you didn't think through there might be a conflict of interest with her idea, your idea, and she's an associate, unpaid -- let me ask you then question in a different way, nobody raised that with you as a potential conflict of interest?

TH: No. I also felt, because we were proposing an idea, I couldn't pretend it was my idea, it was her idea, and so that does that make sense.

MH: Yes, I can understand that, but you will remember that you then tender for money, public money. So, it's just at some point nobody raised that as an issue?

TH: No. Well it's hard because I had heard of the idea from her 14 years earlier anyway, so I couldn't pretend that we hadn't.

MH: Okay. I'm trying to get to the chronology, so you then start doing up drawings, you get this phone call from Justine, Joanna writes to the Mayor --

TH: By the way, we didn't really do many drawings, all we did was we made a model of an idea, so it was a wooden model to be a representation of the notion of a garden as a place connecting north and south, a divided city.

MH: Right, so you then come in and see Isabel Dedring, Ed Lister and the Mayor, and what happened then? Do you remember that might be the first meeting, it might not? I think there's a 12 June meeting but we will check that.

Can you also check for me when the Mayor got legal advice about the relationship, the date that the mayor got legal advice about the relationship with Heatherwick? Because I've just got it down, "Legal advice about contact", and I haven't got a date on it.

MK: Okay.

MH: This is not you, so don't worry, that's nothing to do with you. But you come in and go on and the Mayor says, "Yes, I'm up for this"?

TH: Well he was a positive person, but many people have pitched ideas to Boris and proposed all sorts of things that haven't happened so you are aware that you are one of many things that people are discussing.

MH: Well it's his job, I don't have a quarrel with this, I think it's his job as Mayor to think of great things to do in the city.

TH: Yes, and there was a buoyancy about this, a sense of an absence of pessimism for a little bit and so putting an idea felt a joyous thing, especially because the whole point was a free garden.

MH: And at that point you had no idea how much it would cost or anything like that, you hadn't done any work on costings or business case or anything like that.

TH: No, I didn't know much about that. We had some conversations with an organisation called Mace, but I can get back to you about when we did, trying to think about what something could cost. Mace were the people who built the British Pavilion in Shanghai.

MH: Yes, they're not involved now, are they?

TH: No.

MH: Okay, so after that meeting you came away and thought, "God, I've got to do more work on it"? Because you did develop quite a lot of drawings.

TH: The other little bit of context is I grew up in the 70s and 80s in London and nothing happened and it felt -- I remember I had to go to Paris for cities where they dared to create future heritage, or Barcelona, things like the Louvre and the Pyramids and La Grande Arche de la Défense, and the Institut du Monde Arabe, with the façade that moves, and it felt like Britain was stuck with its heritage, paralyzed by the past. Then projects like the London Eye -- even I thought the London Eye, really, a big wheel in the centre? Then it was great and you think London can take it.

The other thing that was in this was that when you look at Central London there's the rhythm of crossings. Can I show you an image of it?

MH: All I'm focusing -- I'm focused on proof, I know it sounds crazy, you don't have to try and convince me of the greatness of the project, I just can't take a view on that, I really can't, otherwise I couldn't do the job that I've been asked to do by the Mayor.

But you do come away and presumably you're given some go-ahead on that and you decide to start doing work on it. That's what I'm trying to get at.

TH: It was thinking about how might a project like this happen, that was the thing.

MH: So costings, things like that, or just design, what did you do?

TH: I definitely had some conversations with Mace, who were those costs people.

MH: They then came to see you, didn't they, all of them, in Heatherwick?

TH: The Mayor never came to my studio.

MH: Isabel and Ed did?

TH: Yes, they might have done, yes. I'm sure they've been to my studio.

MH: In November. I'm trying to get a feel for what work you did after that original meeting. They must have come for a reason.

TH: I wouldn't have done a huge amount of work because there was an idea, it was an idea for a garden that was a bridge, there wasn't a lot more designing I could do.

MH: But there's loads of pictures I've seen. I know you've done a model, but there's also -- I probably won't find them now.

TH: There's some early slightly dodgy visuals. I can't remember if those were for that first meeting or not.

MH: By Christmas there were very clear -- there were clear ideas of costs, much less than they are now, but they must have been worked up by you?

TH: This was Mace did some thinking on this and came up with --

MH: With you for nothing.

TH: -- £60 million. For nothing, yes, absolutely.

MH: "Cost is up to 56", is what I've got. And that was just before Christmas 2012.

TH: So I imagine 60 would really wrap it all up.

MH: But they're not involved now at all, Mace?

TH: Not at all, no.

MH: Okay, so Mace did all that early work. And then you must at that point have been working on it. I'm just trying to think what you were doing. You had the Mayor saying, "This is a great idea, I want to do it".

TH: Yes.

MH: You have Joanna being really enthusiastic about it. You have an initial meeting. I'm just trying to think how much work you did following on October, November, December.

TH: Well no one was paying us to do any work. There was an idea that had been put forward. I can't remember exactly what we'd have been -- the challenge would have been how does an idea like this move forward.

MH: And you also met with TfL, there were several meetings with what's his name around TfL at the time. When were they? Peter Hendy.

TH: Yes.

MH: Here we are, in November 2012 and December and then 31 January 2013. So there must have been a lot of work going on. That's what it feels like to me, if I'm honest, that you were working up a scheme in some way, with others, Mace might have been

doing the costings, but Peter Hendy comes to see you three times, if Ed and Isabel come and see you once on a separate --

TH: When you say, "Working", what do you mean, "Working up a scheme"? I proposed a scheme.

MH: Yes, but you must be working on how to do it.

TH: Yes, I was definitely thinking about how, yes, absolutely, but I wasn't doing detailed drawings.

MH: When you do a business case -- were you working on a business case for it? I'm trying to think what you were doing.

TH: I'm not a business case person, I'm a designer, so I get the feeling there's a great idea --

MH: But you then eventually you were tendering to design it rather than to build it?

TH: Yes, I'm not a builder. I'm the designer.

MH: But you must have, working with others, in that period after the Mayor had given his little tick, you must have been working up costings.

TH: But I'm not a costings guy so Mace --

MH: Yes, but who was doing it?

TH: Mace.

MH: Were you meeting with them?

TH: They were doing it for free so it was just a very quick like roughly working out, right, a bridge of that length as you roughly designed it as, so they didn't put much work into it to come to that.

MH: Do you do an hourly rate, have you any idea how much money Heatherwick was putting in?

TH: I don't. If we did, if it happened now probably I would, but my team are designers, we're not engineers, we're not business people.

MH: Yes, but you still worked on an hourly rate, hadn't you?

TH: Margaret, the thing was I passionately thought this was an amazing thing for London and that's what I put my heart into this for the last three or four years. There was no business motivation in this, there was other studio things happening and this is maybe, just maybe, you could do something special and extraordinary like this. But all from the position of being a designer and I'm not a business planner.

MH: Who did you talk to? Did you talk to the Coin Street people for example at that point?

TH: I did go, one of the very first meetings was I met with Coin Street, but I don't remember when that was. I can come back and check.

MH: And anybody else, did you talk to Lambeth, did you talk to Westminster?

TH: I spoke to Westminster, I definitely spoke to the planners that we'd worked with on the rolling bridge, just to get a sense of what people might think of something like this. I didn't know Lambeth planners, we'd never worked with them before.

MH: And Peter Hendy is quite a tough one, I know Peter of old, so when he came to talk to you and he had three meetings with you, what were they about? What were you talking about to him?

TH: Transport for London had been charged by the Mayor to investigate this idea.

MH: So you were answering his questions?

TH: Yes. And chatting to him about costings.

MH: Costings, costings, and trying to get money, they had no money, TfL had no money in the budget.

TH: It's a free costing that Mace had done. I would imagine it would be like, "Oh, right, what are they saying?" Peter's a tough person and I'm sure they would have just --

MH: And the idea of building on top of the Temple underground, was that around at that time or is that later? That actually you build it up from the Temple underground station, was that then?

TH: I think that that was the location that made sense. It's the biggest gap between river crossings in Central London. The average distance is 450 metres and that's 900 metres. You can't just bung a bridge in, in a city, the lovely thing about the Millennium Bridge is the way it fits and now we stand on it and look at St Paul's, it feels like it fits into the city. That location, alignment with Arundel Street and the crescent of the Aldwych, and on the south, it's where all the buildings turn their back on the river. So the South Bank Television Centre has just got big fences to stop you getting to Graham Norton and all those were going to be redeveloped as well, and are. So there's the Princes Wharf, South Bank Television Centre and Gabriel's Wharf.

So there was this lovely logic that came together of on the north they're just building high-end residential, so Berkeley Homes and the developer of Arundel Great Court building super high-end residential just along from some of that. What was appealing was to make a place that was going to be more consolidated as just for rich people, to give it back to us. And I'm afraid I don't know the date, but we had a meeting, for example, with the Master of Inner Temple and how many of us ever wander around Temple, and he was there saying, "We want people to come here".

MH: They were very negative I thought?

TH: Not Inner Temple, there was someone from I think Middle Temple wrote something negative. When you spoke to Somerset House, they were like, "Connect it to Somerset House", spoke to King's College, "Please connect it here". The other thing to do with this was that, if you go to Somerset House and go east along Fleet Street, you feel like the lights go off for London a bit. It would be a true geographic centre of London if you take the outer edges, the park bench in front of Temple Tube, and I just found that so

powerful. Arguably London is the thought-leading capital of the world. That park bench is the epicentre of thought-leading capital world and how many people go to Temple Tube? It's the least-used tube station in Central London and there's street drinkers on the top of Temple Tube Station.

So there's a whole lot of things that came together. When I had a meeting with Nicholas Serota and showed him the idea and he added this lovely dimension, which was the Strand, there's the Mall that comes from Buckingham Palace, then there's the Trafalgar Square that got de-roundabouted, and then there's the Strand goes along, and then you end up in a massive gyratory and Somerset House has bus stops pushed against its face and he said, "Well there's the crescent of the Aldwych, if that became two-way traffic this Mary le Strand Church stranded in the middle of the Strand, you could make that a new public square and then the Garden Bridge, suddenly you're breathing public realm life back into that centre. I know you're not dealing with that part.

MH: All right, let me just ask some of the questions. What then happens, you have all these meetings, can you tell me when was your trip to Apple? When was that?

TH: Was it February or January.

MH: Was it 2013?

TH: Yes.

MH: So it was before we had the tender, wasn't it?

TH: Yes.

MH: Okay, and Boris suggested to you that you should go and try and get money from Apple?

TH: Yes, he did suggest to get money from Apple. The thing that hasn't come across is I was going there anyway. I'm a designer, I've got to know Jonathan Ive, and Jonathan Ive had asked us to come and be the second-ever designers to come and speak to his design team, so I was going there anyway to give a talk to his design team. And so

there was a tagging of two things. I was doing that anyway, so the Mayor coming was a coincidence of them saying, "Why don't we come at the same time?" because I was going to be there anyway.

MH: So they came because you were there really.

TH: Yes, my trip was paid by Apple.

MH: Apple paid for you, well, that was different, yes. But they came because you were there?

TH: I don't know, no, actually, no, no, no. I know that that's not true. They were coming also because they wanted to speak to Apple, Apple is the world's leading technology thing. They were coming because, what I understood, I don't know the Mayor's agenda, I was told they were also speaking to Apple about uses of iPads in city management systems and things across city-wide, so I think there were multiple issues to talk to them about.

MH: Are they interested in investing in this?

TH: No.

MH: They weren't interested?

TH: No.

MH: So you happened to be going there and you were going there anyway, Apple paid for you, and the Mayor happened to be there and you went along and lobbied for money, which didn't work out.

We then come to the tender, which started in March, didn't it? Were you surprised that the tender document didn't talk about a Garden Bridge?

TH: Well I knew that the tender was going to be for an idea and that I'd been told quite clearly, if there's a better idea that's put forward --

MH: Does anybody know about your idea then? Was it in the public domain at all?

TH: But it wasn't my idea, it was Joanna's idea. Joanna's idea had been around with lots of ideas, there have been lots of bridge ideas.

MH: And in all those meetings that had happened, it was more than an idea, the Mayor gives it its tick either in June or in September, and you've been working up on it and TfL working up on it and various people have been working up on it, and certainly Isabel Dedring and Ed Lister have been taking it forward and so have various officials, so it was more than an idea, it was what they wanted to go for, wasn't it? It was what they wanted to do.

TH: But I don't know. I didn't know what other people, what other ideas other people take to a Mayor.

MH: But you knew that was what they wanted to go with.

TH: They seemed enthusiastic for it, they did seem enthusiastic.

MH: Don't tell me Boris didn't say, "I want to go with this" at some point in some way.

TH: He was very positive about it, definitely very positive.

MH: So that's what they want and the idea wasn't really a new pedestrian access, the idea was this destination.

TH: Well it was both. The thing is, it does multiple things, it's both pedestrian access and place making.

MH: But it was clear that it was the Garden Bridge concept that was attractive.

TH: I didn't know what other things they might have been looking at. I'm an optimist so I will think that things are positive.

MH: So you weren't surprised when they talked about a pedestrian bridge?

TH: I was in the tender process for the cable car, to design that, and we had this process where we were asked to put ideas through and we weren't selected for that. And actually one of the people who was apparently in the selection process did get it. So I knew that they have their procurement methods and we've not worked with the Mayor's Office in that way --

MH: I'm trying to understand that everybody wasn't wedded to a Garden Bridge idea by the time --

TH: I hope they were and there was extreme positivity about it, but I don't know.

MH: Boris never said to you or Isabel or Ed never said to you, "We want to go with the Garden Bridge"?

TH: I don't know if that's the right word. They showed extreme interest and excitement in the project.

MH: So were you surprised that the term "Garden Bridge" wasn't in the tender documents but "pedestrian crossing" was, pedestrian?

TH: I'd been told that they were going to go out for ideas and if there was an idea that was better than that they would go for that.

MH: Who told you that?

TH: I can't remember who, the Transport for London team who put out that tender process.

The thing is there was a big exhibition at the Royal Academy, it must be about 15 years ago, called "Living Bridges" and there was bridges proposed for that location, there have been many ideas proposed for bridges in that location and the Living Bridges was quite an amazing exhibition. The big one was proposing an office building or a residential building going across, Zaha was joint winner of that and to me the idea of massive buildings was a horrendous thing to do but the business plan was good on things like that because property developers get free land.

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So I knew that this isn't an unknown area to have ideas in, there had been people having ideas over a long period of time for locations such as that. And I had not done a procurement process like this. I was optimistic definitely, but I am optimistic and lose lots of times as well.

MH: Okay. And when you actually, you then get a phone call, you put your document in quite quickly and you made a phone call about your day rates, is that right?

TH: I'm not sure who the call would have come to, I can't remember.

MH: On 26 February 2013.

TH: I can go away and check and come back to you on that.

MH: You were asked to change your day rates. I am just trying to find out what that meant, because that is a bit odd in the middle of a procurement process.

TH: I can go away and check on that for next time we speak. What happened on 26 February.

MH: People have been banging on about whether, as part of the procurement, whether they should have rung you in the middle of it. I can't believe you don't know about it.

CL: Could it have been Lisa Nolan or Kate or someone? I can check the emails.

TH: Yes. As much as possible, I'm a designer, I leave the procurement part to my team.

MH: But you're getting paid, you won that contract so you don't know about that. You won the contract and when did you start working with Arup?

TH: I can check the dates on that. Just to be clear about Arup, it seemed to me that they're the best engineers in the world and that to do this you should do it really properly and the people who made the Millennium Bridge wobble and then stopped it wobbling and put their own money into stopping it wobbling, that phenomenal respect and integrity for that, so it seemed that they seemed a very strong option as a team to work with.

MH: So you and Arup went off to look at the other thing in Canary Wharf.

TH: The cable car.

MH: Yes, and that was well before, wasn't it, you were working with them by then.

TH: With Arup? I remember going on the trip, it was Transport for London organised that.

MH: You must have been working with Arup therefore and that was well before the tender.. I'm trying to think what the date was for that. I've got it here somewhere.

TH: Arup are and would still be the obvious first people you would speak to about a project of this significance. But I wouldn't have started doing any design work really with them.

MH: You're paid by them now, aren't you?

TH: I think we were sub-consultant to them.

MH: And that's gone, has it?

CL: No, no, the contract's still open.

MH: May I ask how much you've earned from them?

CL: I can find that out exactly, the total is about 2.7.

MH: Is that including the initial direct contract with the TfL?

CL: I don't know, I can check that. I didn't know you had a separate contract with TfL before that, did you? Well I'll check that.

MH: Yes, there was a contract with TfL, which was 60,000. That was the original one. But I want to know about the day rate, how that got reduced. Then there was a contract with Arup, where you were a subcontractor.

CL: That's still open, that contract, we're still on that. We're still not paid out on that, that's through 2018.

MH: And it would be really wonderful to know how much you were earning from that. Can I just note there is no, as I understand it, the delay has no impact now, does it, all this thing about the Tideway Tunnel, you can build it, that's not going to stop it happening, is it?

TH: Originally, I had been told that, because of the Tideway Tunnel --

MH: You had to get it done before 2018.

TH: And so there was this huge jeopardy and rush. But I understand, and speak to the trust about this, that the Port of London Authority and the Thames Tideway Tunnel team have been very flexible and very positive about the project, about trying to accommodate the Garden Bridge to happen. So it's meant that that's been less of an obstacle than it originally felt like it was. And that had been something that supercharged it a bit, so I'm pleased you reminded me of that, "Oh this is going to happen, it will have to happen by then".

MH: I am so sorry about this we'll come back next time, because we haven't talked about the High Line or anything. Let's just confirm this that before this you'd done a park in Abu Dhabi, the expo pavilion in Shanghai, the Paddington Bridge and the bus. That's four pieces -- five pieces of relevant design. And I've got park, bus, Shanghai, short bridge, and I'm missing one, is that right? Are those the five bits of relevant design?

TH: When you say, "Relevant design", were they in the tender?

MH: They were in the tender documents.

TH: I can't remember what was in the tender.

MH: Tom, I am so sorry, this is really rude of me. I'm sorry about this. We're overrunning.