

FOI: 8261478 Calders Wharf - Island Gardens Park World Heritage Site & Greenwich Foot tunnel & Crane erection

I am a local resident based in Island Gardens and a perpetual user of Island Gardens Park and the Greenwich Foot Tunnel.

We are privileged as a borough to have Island Gardens Park adopted as a part of the Prestigious World Heritage Site (WHS) prestigious award and managing the foot tunnel's heritage status as a whole. Island Gardens park is a gift to the local, national, international community, if not the whole world.

As you know there are millions of visitors who come to Island Gardens Park, part of the World Heritage Site to admire the Old Royal Naval College. So, I am sure you can imagine how alarmed we as a local community were when we discovered that Calders Wharf was to be "acquired" by a private developer when they submitted plans to erect a multi-storey building encroaching on the park, more so when we discovered restrictive covenants on the land registry (NGL241053) which prohibit transfer of the land and recognise that it is governed by the Open Parks and Spaces Act and need an official discharge from the Secretary of State, further evidenced by the maps filed at the Metropolitan Archives with support that Calders Wharf is a part of Island Gardens Park purchased by the London County Council (which included the land behind too, which the same developer built on). Somehow the plans were approved without considering the covenants when the purpose of this park was to have uninterrupted views across the river to Island Gardens and Millwall Park from The Wolfe Statue.

The serious matter does not end there - audaciously permission is being sought by the developer to erect a HUGE crane in Island Gardens Park - in the WORLD HERITAGE SITE itself. It appears that none of the local residents on the Isle of Dogs or tenants by Cutty Sark have yet been notified in writing to date and based on feedback we don't even know if LBTH council will stage a fair hearing and give the local community an opportunity to object to the application. The community want it back, it is a public asset.

There were numerous key stakeholders who LBTH failed to write to when the initial Planning Application was filed.

Now, this is one of the several supplementary construction plans, which we fear may fall under the radar:

<https://development.towerhamlets.gov.uk/...>

The construction plans clearly state,

"The following accommodation is provided on site;

- The cabins will be positioned in the rear of the site, it is important that they are positioned no closer than 4 metres from the Thames wall (Currently looking to lease an area of land within the Island Garden Park Area to install welfare cabins as we have

- concerns lifting the cabins from the back over the building and the size of crane required)
- Site Offices one to start but another office to be added as the site progresses plus 1 meeting room (Arranging new meeting with Konstructa to provide a light weight unit and possibly designing a welfare set up at the front of the site rather than the rear)
 - Welfare facilities will include a 4x2 toilet block, Drying Room and canteen

The Planning applications for the redevelopment of Calders Wharf (PA/12/02784) and conservation area consent (PA/12/0785) were not determined within the prescribed time period and went to appeal. The Planning Inspectorate allowed both appeals and granted planning permission subject to conditions. A copy of the appeal decision notice with schedule of conditions is attached for your reference.

A number of questions raised in this FOI can be addressed by reviewing this appeal decision as well as the planning applications and associated documents (linked to Calders Warf) and which are in the planning register. The Tower Hamlets online planning register provides a repository of information where interested parties can search for and view details of particular individual planning applications including submitted forms, drawings and, where available, decision notices and appeals.

The online planning register is accessible from the Tower Hamlets website, or directly using the following link:

<https://development.towerhamlets.gov.uk/online-applications/>

To narrow down all applications related to the Calders Warf redevelopment including subsequent 'approval of detail' applications follow these steps;

Run an advanced search, type in 'calders wharf' in the address box and '01/10/2012' in the date received box, and then click on search.

Q1. Have you officially accepted that the developer wishes to set up a building base in Island Gardens Park / The World Heritage Site Buffer Zone until January 2019?

Submission of details pursuant to Condition no 9 (Construction Management Plan) has not yet been determined. The associated planning application reference is PA/16/02258.

There was an informal proposal from the developer for the temporary use during construction of part of Island Gardens as a contractor's compound. No formal request for a licence was made and the developer has indicated that it now no longer wishes to use any part of Island Gardens' as a compound.

Q1a. If so, have you informed the WHS authority and sought permission from The Royal Borough of Greenwich council (considering they did not support the multi storey building development on Calders Wharf)?

Not applicable – see answer question 1 above

Q1b. Tourists walk through the tunnel to admire the Old Royal Naval college from Island Gardens Park, has Greenwich council made any considerations towards them?

Not applicable – see answer question 1 above

Q1c. Will Greenwich council uphold its moral duty to protect, preserve and enhance the beauty of the WHS / Island Gardens Park?

Not applicable – see answer question 1 above

Q1d. Considerations given to view of crane and piled cabins from Wolfe's statue?

Please refer to the appeal decision notice from which you will note that the view from General Wolfe's statue was a material consideration in determining that application. Also note that PA/16/02258 has not yet been determined. Further please note that the construction equipment such as the crane and cabins do not require planning permission.

Q2a. Have you agreed that the developers can now set up in a base in WHS / Island Gardens Park?

See above.

Q2b. If so, are you satisfied with the developers plan to use the main gate to load / unload the HGV vehicles which would mean shared use for pedestrians and cyclists?

The developer's constructions management plan will need to take into account any impact on pedestrians and cyclists.

As advised above, the submission of details pursuant to Condition no 9 (Construction Management Plan) has not yet been determined. You can view relevant documents through the planning register, using the associated planning application reference number PA/16/02258.

Q2c. If so, what safety precautions will you take for the WHS / Greenwich Foot tunnel users given that the main gate sits on a narrow bend, further exasperated by the Boris bikes, tourist coach drop off point and blind spot and Douglas Path (foot path) directly opposite?

See Q2b above.

Q2d. If so, what considerations have you given to the WHS and foot tunnel visitors, elderly, disabled, families and cyclists in relation to the inconvenience of the construction work directly outside the foot tunnel entrance building?

See Q2b above.

Q2e. If so, what considerations have you given to the impact of building debris in the park and local plant and wild life?

See Q2b above.

Q2f. What is your stance on the lights on the crane being on all night and the impact on local residents and wildlife and views directly from the ORNC?

The construction management plan will detail hours of operational working. However with respect to lights on the crane, this would most likely be in the interest of public safety and be a requirement of the HSE and therefore outweigh any temporary detrimental impact.

Q2g. Consideration to local & international Events: children's, tall ships cruise, Greenwich and Docklands Festival, The London Marathon to name a few?

See Q2b above.

3. There are trees lined up directly outside the Foot tunnel building entrance right up to the park entrance. Tree preservation Orders were issued for trees on the Calders Wharf site, yet the developer still has managed to trim the branches right back to reduce the

trees and resemble stumps. In an expert's opinion it is impossible for a crane to get through the gaps in Island Gardens Park as the trees stand.

Q3. What action will you take to ensure that LBTH does not do the same if the developer decides they do not have enough space to erect the HUGE crane and that the trees interfere with the development?

The 'Construction Management Plan' would usually provide further detail relating to contractual working times and patterns of operation, whilst the decision notice would detail any conditions associated to conservation. To date there has been one non material amendment application for the removal of tree (T11) and its replacement with two new trees.

If any further works to trees within the conservation area are proposed, a new consent will be required.

Q4. The Isle of Dogs residents have not been written to in relation to the recent events in relation to the development/ application, will you seek for LBTH to write to those and those who reside around Cutty Sark / the foot tunnel entrance building in Greenwich, English heritage and all the other stake holders you wrote to before?

Whilst the original applications were subject to full public consultation, there is no statutory or local requirement for applications seeking approval of details reserved by planning conditions to be subject to public consultation.

Where further input, advice or information is necessary, the relevant bodies would be consulted. For instance, in the approval of details application PA/15/02258, the following bodies were consulted; LBTH Transportation and Highways, Environment Agency, Transport for London, and Docklands Light Railway.

Full details of the applications are included in the public planning register on the Council's website.

Q5. The developer plans to knock the wall behind the foot tunnel down, thus completely changing the character of the foot tunnel completely. English Heritage were not fully supportive of the initial application.

Furthermore it will encourage loitering in Island Gardens Park / WHS buffer zone which has been a local issue as it is.

Q5a. Is it true that you have agreed for the developer to rip the wall down without prior approval from English Heritage?

See Q5b below

Q5b. If so, where will the tunnel maintenance team have their facilities, will you build new ones in the WHS / Island Gardens Park?

Q5a and b. Historic England were consulted on the scheme that was approved by the Planning Inspectorate and indeed gave evidence at the Hearing and also at the Appeal Hearing where they expressed no concern or objection to the loss of the wall, as it was not considered to be significant in heritage terms. Conservation area consent has been granted for the demolition of the wall.

Q6. The building site is situated in close proximity to the river wall, shallow DLR train tunnels, close proximity foot tunnels. And the ground is continuously moving.

Q6a. Have you carried out surveys to ensure that there will be no negative impact or effect on the Greenwich Foot Tunnel's integrity over time, is Greenwich council satisfied with this?

Please refer to the appeal decision notice, and associated documents attached to PA/16/02258 & PA/17/00256 (Submission of Details to Discharge Conditions) both of which have not yet been determined.

Q6b. Have you carried out an independent survey to ensure that there are no unexploded devices? Please publish reports.

Please refer to the appeal decision notice, and associated documents attached to PA/16/02258 & PA/17/00256 (Submission of Details to Discharge Conditions) both of which have not yet been determined.

Q7a. Did you grant permission to the developers to start work today?

Some preparatory work has commenced on site, including the erection of site hoarding but no demolition or development has taken place.

Q7b. Have the DLR approved the building plans to start?

DLR are considering information received to discharge pre-commencement conditions and have not formally approved them.

Q8. Did LBTH sign off and approve the sale of the site to Telford Homes Plc? How much was the land sold for?

The freehold of the site is owned by East End Homes, Telford Homes have a lease to develop the site.

Q8a. What consideration did the legal department give to the restrictive covenants in the parent title deeds: B2 prohibiting transfer in any shape or form?

None

Q9. Are there officers who work for EEH who were previously LBTH officers? If so, were related party disclosures made? Please may we have copies?

Yes there are officers who now work for EEH who were previously LBTH officers. 'Related Party Disclosures' are accounting processes and not relevant in respect of planning. You should enquire of EEH in respect of any such.

Q10. Were there any of the councillors present as guests at the hearing for Calders Wharf PA/12/02784 now on EEH board / directorship roles?

There were no councillors present at the appeal hearing who are on the Board of East End Homes.

Q11. Please provide a copy of the original asset transfer register circulated to local residents to prove that Calders Wharf was voted for and included on that list?

Calders Wharf was not part of the consultation on the stock transfer

Q12. If it was not on that list, how did it end up as an East End Homes asset, please provide evidence?

Calders Wharf was included as there was a Community Centre on the site.

Q13. Is it true that LBTH signed off on a £2m sale to a private developer?

It is not true.

We have been campaigning tirelessly and Friends of Island Gardens have accumulated in excess of 4,500 objections in total to date:

<https://outlook.live.com/owa/?path=/mail...>

We wish to preserve our Heritage. We have set up a charity Friends of Island Gardens park and will do our utmost to protect, enhance and preserve our beautiful park and WHS status and look forward to doing this with your support as our local council to help its local community.

We look forward to hearing from you urgently as the developer has appeared to have started working on the site today even though we were reassured that the planning permission was not final and that further opportunities to protest would be presented to the wider local community.

Island Gardens Park is part of the World Heritage site, as well as holding numerous other prestigious statuses. As our local authority we would urge you to uphold your moral duty and protect our park. Ancient trees, the park, gates, community spirit will all suffer detrimental effects if the main Island Gardens Park entrance and 20 metres around are assigned to a developer to reign on.

As your local residents urge you to put a halt to this matter until a full investigation has been carried out surrounding the site ownership. If the council needs £2m, we will raise it and buy it back and rebuild our community centre which appears to have been shelled out already, without full discharges and approvals.

Please respond to each of the questions directly.