

# Mixed Use Property Development and its Place in UK Urban Policy

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## APPENDICES

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Notes of Interviews with Planners**

Ref. PLA1

8<sup>th</sup> August 2009

PLA1 had worked for an inner-London council for eighteen months, had previously worked for a neighbouring LPA with a similar Mixed Use policy and provided a text book definition of the concept: 'Secure a range of different services to facilitate sustainable development, reduce the need to travel, promote good design and encourage 24-hour use.' However, PLA1 identified the need to secure new housing in the context of pressures for high-value commercial use as the authority's primary policy driver for Mixed Use. To achieve this, the LPA has a clear Mixed Use policy based on a requirement for any new development over 200m<sup>2</sup> to provide 50% residential use, preferably on site (and with separate access) and any scheme over 10 homes or 1000m<sup>2</sup> commercial space to also provide a proportion of affordable home. One of the principal barriers to meeting these objectives was the over-provision of student accommodation which did not carry affordable housing obligations.

Ref. PLA2

8<sup>th</sup> August 2009

PLA2 had worked for a suburban south-west London council for ten years and had previously worked for the neighbouring authority. The PLA saw Mixed Use in terms of 'place shaping' and the promotion of Mixed Use places, rather than buildings. This overall Mixed Use strategy was allied to policy drivers of environmentalism (with which the political leadership were closely identified), town centre revival and increasing housing supply, particularly to meet the demands of a rising student population, although PLA2 also stressed that lack of affordable family homes was 'a big problem'. Problems with Mixed Use had centred on compatibility of residential and non-residential uses, particularly nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour related to bars, clubs and the night-time economy, but also the 'squeezing out' of some uses by high land values.

Ref. PLA3

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009

PLA3 had worked for an inner-London council for over a decade and described the authority's 'growth strategy' as having been 'premised on Mixed Use'. This policy was focussed on half a dozen large sites that would be developed with a 'place making' approach based on achieving the necessary critical mass to support Mixed Use and regenerate areas that had suffered deindustrialisation and disinvestment. However, this strategy was based on an assumption of residential property values that had collapsed post-2008, raising questions for PLA3 as to whether banks would lend money for future Mixed Use schemes for which there were now 'reduced expectations'. PLA3 expressed some frustration with the previous wave of speculative development, particularly on riverfront sites, where developers would 'say anything' to get a change of use to allow residential use. PLA3 referred to this as 'the game' of negotiation between planners and developers, where the former would insist on some non-residential uses to promote local employment, but the latter would seek to build profitable supermarkets or 'useless' commercial, B-class, space, the combination of which produced the 'classic' property-boom Mixed Use development. PLA3 concluded 'the people who build the flats don't want to provide the jobs', but the LPA was now attempting to develop 'a broader and more balanced' approach, particularly targeted on deprived areas and making more effort to monitor Mixed Use because 'we've been taken to the cleaners in the past'.

Ref. PLA4

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009

PLA4 worked for an outer west London borough, but had only been in post for three months, having previously worked in the private sector and appeared to have little understanding of Mixed Use, beyond references to stated policy, summarised as 'We go with the London Plan'. The LPA was committed to using Mixed Use to redevelop several large sites, but there was little definition of how this would work, beyond a reference to the 'triple bottom line', although PLA4 did note that since the collapse of the property market, developers were 'looking at other options'.

Ref. PLA5

4<sup>th</sup> September 2009

PLA5 had twenty years of planning experience and worked for an inner London council that regarded Mixed Use as 'a good thing', but because of the LPA's unusual characteristics, this was primarily based on mixing retail and commercial, rather than residential uses. The area's peculiar political status also exempted it from pan-regional spatial strategies and the LPA's priority was to create 'a good place for business'. Mixed Use residential space was also perceived as problematic because it 'sterilises' potential future commercial development by creating longer-term tenure patterns. Despite this, a Mixed Use strategy had been pursued for 20 years, particularly through the encouragement of retail space to encourage local shopping by office workers and the LPA boasted some 'landmark' Mixed Use developments. However, some restrictions had been placed on A-class uses that had led to some behavioural problems and a retreat from the idea of a 24-hour city, in favour of a six-day a week evening economy and the avoidance of 'dead time'. The LPA regarded itself as a 'beacon' of sustainable development and one of the reasons offered for increasing retail use was to encourage commuters to shop before they got home and used the car. Mixed Use developments were not monitored post-completion for compliance

Ref. PLA6

7<sup>th</sup> September 2009

PLA6 worked for a suburban east London council, had been in post for four months, but had worked for six other London boroughs in the previous nine years. The LPA regarded Mixed Use as 'the answer', but 'it would not be appropriate to say that we've defined that'. A particular policy driver for Mixed Use was the comprehensive regeneration of its principal town centre, an area that 'dies after 6 o'clock', but while 'chasing the evening economy', the LPA was anxious to maintain a family-oriented environment. A Public/Private Partnership to achieve this had collapsed, but before the property crash the town centre had seen significant residential growth, continuing the borough's status as a commuter area for central London that had led to its original growth in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but causing some anxiety amongst politicians concerned about over-development. The LPA development strategy was heavily predicated on its relationship to wider spatial plans, particularly Crossrail which it was hoped would put the area 'back on the map'. Improved public transport links enabled the LPA to regard jobs in central London as 'local' and thus preserve its predominantly residential character. However, Mixed Use was seen as offering a more diverse range of development options, although previous experience had amounted to little more than 'playing the game'.

Ref. PLA7

16<sup>th</sup> September 2009

PLA7 had been in post for 'a really long time' working for a central London council that had 'pioneered' a Mixed Use strategy based on a set formula of residential space for new commercial development inside the CAZ in order to preserve 'the unique, Mixed Use character of a living city' that did not become dominated by non-residential uses. The policy had been in place since the late 1990s and was based not on 'tokenism', but on 'equal space'. The LPA had zoned specific areas for Mixed Use and 'developers hate it' because they would prefer to provide 'affordable' housing off-site by 'dumping it' in areas with lower land values. However, there was no specific definition of Mixed Use and no procedure for monitoring it. The LPA welcomed any environmental benefits from Mixed Use and wanted to encourage people to live close to work, although commuters tended not to drive into the CAZ. There was also a need to maintain the area's 'World City' status, but strict measures to control A3 uses. Despite the recession, there had not been a significant fall in development applications in what remained a high-demand area.

Ref. PLA8

22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009

PLA8 had worked for an inner-north London authority for three years, but had long experience as a planner in other areas. Mixed Use was regarded as 'characteristic' of the borough, but this was based on a basic definition and policy drivers of 'sustainability' and the prevention of 'dead zones'. The LPA has been confronted with developers wanting to provide 'token commercial uses' when their priority was residential. Given the borough's central location it has adopted a similar Mixed Use formula for the CAZ as described by PLA1 and PLA7 above, but elsewhere it used 'common sense judgements', depending on location, although there had been problems with vacant commercial space in new Mixed Use developments, perhaps resulting from the higher rents in comparison with the older 'more messy' employment facilities they replaced. However, the council's over-riding priority was to increase housing supply and this had sometimes led to the sacrifice of Mixed Use space, particularly if developers offered a higher proportion of affordable housing. Ultimately, the borough's planning policy was 'driven by the market'. The LPA had no specific monitoring

arrangements for Mixed Use and ‘no hard evidence’ to support its contribution to sustainable development.

Ref. PLA9

29<sup>th</sup> September 2009

PLA9 had worked for an inner-south London authority since 2001 and described sustainable development as the LPA’s primary policy driver, ‘not Mixed Use per se’, but housing ‘trumped all over uses’ and the LPA would not support Mixed Use if it jeopardised new homes. PLA9 viewed planning as ‘running with the land’ and described a ‘horses for courses’ approach to Mixed Use, but added that it was not the place of planning to ‘tell the market how to behave, within certain parameters’. The LPA recognised the potential for Mixed Use to reduce the need for travel, but had no monitoring arrangements to demonstrate this. Mixed Use was also seen as contributing to ‘natural surveillance’, although this had sometimes conflicted with the compatibility of uses, particularly housing alongside clubs.

Ref. PLA10

6<sup>th</sup> October 2009

PLA10 had been in post with an inner-south London council for 18 months and had previously worked for a rural authority. The LPA had no clear definition of Mixed Use, beyond ‘any development with more than one type of use’, but with an increasing reluctance to support the ‘Tesco Express with 30 flats above’ model. The authority’s primary policy driver was ‘social cohesion’ and it supported the concept of ‘active street frontages’ to this end, but increasing housing supply was ‘a given’. PLA10 compared the significance given to Mixed Use in urban areas with that of a rural LPA where there was a greater priority to discourage car use.

Ref. PLA11

13<sup>th</sup> October 2009

PLA11 had worked for an inner-east London borough for three years and regarded Mixed Use as ‘central to our understanding’ and ‘a core component of land use planning’. The LPA’s Mixed Use strategy was related to a number of policy drivers, particularly the

redevelopment of former industrial sites, the promotion of 'new' types of employment in the creative industries and the regeneration and 'reinforcement' of a network of 'town centres' designated in the borough's spatial development plan, but these objectives were shaped by 'what the market needs'. This core strategy was predicated on a perspective of the borough becoming 'more central', but an awareness that 'outcomes can vary from the intentions of written policy'. The LPA's Mixed Use strategy aimed to optimise land use and remodel public space that was 'truly public', but while 'sticking anything anywhere isn't going to work', PLA11 had a clear sense that building in a particular way will 'have certain social and economic outcomes'.

Ref. PLA12

15<sup>th</sup> October 2009

PLA12 had worked for 20 years for an outer north-east London council with a Mixed Use policy based on individual planning applications and the 'nitty gritty' of negotiations with developers. Thus while Mixed Use was encouraged in policy, this was not part of a specific strategy, but rather straddled a number of other policy themes, a particular focus of which was an attempt to reverse the impact of large supermarkets and retail parks that undermined local shops. This concern was compounded by the borough's 'asymmetric' pattern that lacked a clearly defined 'centre' and the possible impact of new development around the 2012 Olympic Park, in response to which the LPA was seeking to develop a network of local high streets with active frontages and encourage the evening and night-time economy.

Ref. PLA13

15<sup>th</sup> October 2009

PLA13 had been in post for an outer-east London council and had previously worked for the neighbouring authority 'for many years'. The LPA's current strategy was based on the redevelopment of a network of large sites forming an 'arc of opportunity' around the edge of the borough where Mixed Use was positively encouraged, but PLA13 acknowledged there was much less focus on planning for the remainder of the borough where there was a more flexible approach to Mixed Use based on negotiation with individual developers, although the general principal of sustainability was 'non-negotiable'. However, while compact, Mixed Use development was 'nice in theory', PLA13 also questioned how relevant it was in an area



with good regional transport links and access to a wider employment market.

Ref. PLA14

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009

PLA14 had worked for three years in the planning department of a city council in the south of England without a specific Mixed Use policy, except for the CAZ which boasted a 'flagship' waterside Mixed Use development. However, the regeneration of other parts of the city centre had been less successful, with a particular concern for the decline of the remaining 1960s era central shopping precinct, another of which had been demolished as a notorious example of Modernist architecture and was awaiting a redevelopment project that had stalled since the start of the recession. Mixed Use and improved urban design were seen as part of a strategy for controlling problems with anti-social behaviour in areas that lacked diverse activity after dark. The city council's core planning strategy was based on recovering its position as a regional shopping centre and clawing back retail activity that had been lost to another city twenty miles away and this was aligned with an aim of increasing the amount of housing in the central area. However, these objectives were heavily influenced by a significant flood risk which had already led to high housing densities. Options for more high-rise development and a residential 'over spill' district to the north of the city were being actively explored.

Ref. PLA15

4<sup>th</sup> November 2009

PLA15 had been a planner for twenty years, working for the same north of central England city council. Mixed Use was used as a strategy for 'anchoring' development and encouraging job creation and housing supply, but the LPA had moved away from blanket zoning for Mixed Use towards a more site-specific, prescriptive approach, although PLA15 also described, with some regret, 'allowing the market to dictate'. Previous laissez faire policy had led to a significant problem of unoccupied Mixed Use space. The LPA was also concerned to try to rebalance the loss of economic activity from large regional shopping centres, by concentrating retail use in a 'quarter' of the CAZ, alongside designated commercial uses and the promotion of 'city living', something for which the city was seen as having 'lagged behind' other northern cities, but PLA15 added 'no one's building anything at

the moment'. Alongside the encouragement of a more diverse range of activities, the council was also allowing more car parking in the city centre, seen as rebalancing a previous commitment to public transport.

Ref. PLA16

12<sup>th</sup> November 2009

PLA16 had worked for a Midlands city council for thirty years and regarded the LPA as a 'pioneer' of Mixed Use, as well as an innovator in other aspects of urban design. The overall aim of the Mixed Use strategy was 'to create places, rather than buildings, where people can do all the things they need to do.' Being at the cutting, or 'bleeding' edge has meant that 'some things have gone wrong', including the over-provision of apartments in the city centre, alongside an under supply of affordable family housing. The LPA's adopted a 'flexible, pragmatic, non-prescriptive' approach to Mixed Use and this had largely been successful, despite some 'glitches' with compatibility of uses, particularly complaints from residents of Mixed Use developments where other uses (particularly live music) led to noise nuisance, thus conflicting with the concept of the '24 hour city'. The LPA had also prioritised the cultivation of partnerships with private developers, in part based on a long tradition of municipal entrepreneurship in the city. PLA16 acknowledged that some Mixed Use developments had resulted in exclusive, gated communities, although an effort had been made to mitigate this by maintaining a degree of public access and permeability. PLA16 also referred to some of the difficulties with the 'sustainability agenda' in a city that was committed to continual growth and had 'a love affair with the car', although new development had reduced significantly since 2008 and there was a considerable amount of empty commercial space in the city centre.

Ref. PLA17

13<sup>th</sup> November 2009

PLA17 worked for an outer south-east London authority, had been in post for two years and reported that Mixed Use was a 'continuous theme' in the council's planning strategy, particularly in relation to several big, high-value brownfield sites where the LPA were seeking significant contributions from developers towards infrastructure projects through section 106 agreements, but these had been significantly diluted following the 2008 crash.

There was acknowledgement that Mixed Use had so far failed to dilute socio-spatial separations between new private developments and surrounding council estates and run-down shopping areas and the LPA was seeking to address this through its open space strategy in the hope that new parks within Mixed Use developments would increase social mixing, but the balance between private amenity space and public realm was difficult. The LPA did not monitor the results of its Mixed Use policy.

Ref. PLA18

19<sup>th</sup> November 2009

PLA18 had worked for a north-east England city council for nine years where the LPA 'strives to achieve' Mixed Use, but without 'much in the way of policy'. The reason identified for this was the need not to do anything that may deter development: 'we can't afford to be overly prescriptive'. However, the city had a 'flagship' waterfront Mixed Use development which was 'a bit dead at night', but had kick-started a boom in city centre flats. Affordable housing was not a significant policy driver for Mixed Use because house prices had traditionally been low and the city retained a large social housing stock. The LPA had been voted the UK's most 'environmentally friendly' city, but this was not explicitly linked to Mixed Use policy.

Ref. PLA19

26<sup>th</sup> November 2009

PLA19 had over ten-year's experience working for a north-west England city council and described the Mixed Use concept as 'nonsense' and a 'glib term', insisting 'our raison d'etre is regeneration...we don't talk about Mixed Use'. The focus of this strategy was the revival of the city centre and particularly on encouraging people to live in it. Mixed Use was not seen as a valuable component for the boom in city centre apartments and PLA19 rejected the idea that people 'fall out of bed so they can go to the gym and do their shopping'. The LPA was 'relaxed' about people driving into and around the city centre, although it would 'prefer' them to use public transport. The over-arching objective of the council was for the city to be recognised as a 'European, world-wide destination' operating in a 'global market' and the cultivation of Public/Private Partnerships to drive further development.

Ref. PLA20

7<sup>th</sup> December 2009

PLA20 worked for an outer east London authority and had been in post for three years. Given the borough's predominantly suburban, residential character, - more than half of which was in the greenbelt - the LPA's Mixed Use strategy was limited, but focussed on strategic sites, including one which was envisaged as the creation of a new, sustainable, riverside community, although this had experienced delays and frustrations resulting from the property market collapse and public spending cuts. Elsewhere, Mixed Use was focussed on the revival of a historic town centre with a regional profile for shopping and entertainment and on exploiting the areas strategic location.

Ref. PLA21

8<sup>th</sup> December 2009

PLA21 had worked for a pan-regional planning authority since 2000 and regarded Mixed Use as 'the right thing in the right place', but felt that some of the claims for the concept had been over-stated, leading to Mixed Use being treated as a 'panacea'. A particular consequence of poor planning and weak definition was the considerable amount of empty commercial space in Mixed Use developments, often at the expense of affordable housing. Furthermore, the 'received wisdom' of Mixed Use enabled LPAs to 'cop out' of making difficult decisions for changes of use, but a more critical approach may be adopted in the aftermath of the recession. PLA21 was particularly concerned that the reaction against mono-use zoning was contributing to the under-supply of housing, asking 'What's wrong with housing? London has many successful residential areas'. For PLA21, LPAs need to be 'more directive, if not prescriptive', but weaknesses in implementing Mixed Use reflected a lack of confidence within the planning discipline.

Ref. PLA22

7<sup>th</sup> January 2010

PLA21 had worked for seven years for a Scottish city council which not only encouraged Mixed Use, but viewed the concept as intrinsic to the city's historic, compact, fine grain character where some residential use in the city centre had been preserved, despite a

significant programme of decentralisation in the 1960s. However, despite noting that the idea of Mixed Use had ‘never been dropped’, PLA21 acknowledged that there had been some decline in non-residential uses, reflected in empty commercial space, although the authority was ‘relaxed’ about this and ‘took the long view’. A key priority for the LPA was to address an acute shortage of affordable family housing, alongside the ‘saturation’ of the market for apartments targeting the city’s significant population of high earners, although new housing development had ‘ground to a halt’ since 2008. PLA21 emphasised the link between Mixed Use, reducing the need to travel by car and environmental sustainability which was a political priority for the city council.

Ref. PLA23

25<sup>th</sup> August 2009

PLA23 is now a planning academic, but had previously worked as a planning policy officer for several London LPAs and expressed particular concern about the laxity of definitions for Mixed Use, suggesting the need for more rigid thresholds for different uses to be included in development briefs, based on a given proportion of residential space requiring a particular proportion and type of other uses, a system similar to that described by PLA 1 and PLA7 above. While LPAs were concerned to protect employment uses on brownfield sites, for PLA23 current practice let LPAs ‘off the hook’ by allocating blanket Mixed Use zones which amounted to ‘surrendering to market forces – and Tesco!’ Vague interpretations of Mixed Use were compounded by a failure to monitor completed developments, particularly the compatibility of uses and data for jobs created and affordable housing provided, partly resulting from LPAs being seduced by the ‘active frontages’ concept and Mixed Use being treated as a design issue, rather than a planning one.

## Appendix 2

### Case Study Project Details

#### Brindleyplace

<b>Mixed Use Type</b>	Piece of the City (2)
<b>Project Description</b>	Large scale, inner-city, commercial-led new build on brownfield waterside site, with some conversion of historic buildings.
<b>Location and Local Authority</b>	Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 Ladywood ward Birmingham City Council (BCC)
<b>Scale</b>	7.2 hectare site. Office space - 102,193 sqm Retail space - 15,740 sqm Cafes, bars and restaurants - 4,246 sqm Public space - 6,829 sqm Hotel rooms - 240 Homes - 143 Car parking - 900 spaces  Also on site: Ikon Art Gallery Crescent Theatre Sea Life Aquarium
<b>Developer</b>	Argent PLC
<b>Architect(s)</b>	Initial master-planning was by Terry Farrell, but this was revised for the final development by John Chatwin. One of the design principles was to use a range of different architects for different elements of the scheme, in order to provide variety and avoid uniformity of style.
<b>Planning History</b>	Outline planning permission July 1992 for phased development. Work started on site Sept 1993.
<b>Completed</b>	2005

<b>Residential Density</b>	20 homes per hectare
<b>Planning Use Classes on site</b>	<p>A1 (shops)</p> <p>A2 (financial and professional services)</p> <p>A3 (restaurants and cafes)</p> <p>A4 (drinking establishments)</p> <p>A5 (hot food takeaways)</p> <p>B1 (offices)</p> <p>C1 (hotel)</p> <p>C3 (housing)</p> <p>D1 (art gallery, aquarium)</p> <p>D2 (theatre and gym)</p>
<b>Public Realm</b>	Privately owned, publicly accessible thoroughfares linking Brindleyplace and waterside area, including canal walkways, to central Birmingham via Broad Street. Two large, landscaped squares within the development.
<b>Site Description</b>	<p>Brindleyplace occupies what was formerly vacant industrial land (see fig.23), comprising a number of plots with different owners. Immediately prior to redevelopment the land was being used for car parking.</p> <p>The consolidated site, assembled by Birmingham City Council from the late 1980s, is bordered by roads and canals, creating a self-contained site. It is adjacent to the International Conference Centre, Birmingham Symphony Hall and National Indoor Arena.</p>

## British Street

<b>Mixed Use Type</b>	Urban Infill
<b>Project Description</b>	Medium-scale, new build, retail led as part of regeneration of council estate.
<b>Location and Local Authority</b>	British Street Estate, Merchant Street London E3 Mile End East ward London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH)
<b>Scale</b>	3.75 hectare site Retail - 494 sqm Community Centre - 546 sqm Public Space - 2,610 sqm Homes - 185 new, plus refurbishment of 500 existing.
<b>Developer</b>	EastEndHomes (EEH)
<b>Architect(s)</b>	BPTW Partnership Leaside Regeneration Ltd (agents for the developer)
<b>Planning History</b>	LBTH Development Committee 31/1/07. Full Planning Permission 29/6/07
<b>Completed</b>	2009
<b>Residential Density</b>	Original estate 133 homes per hectare, rose to 183 homes per hectare post redevelopment.
<b>Planning Use Classes on site</b>	A1 (Tesco Express convenience store) C3 (housing) D1 (community centre and place of worship)
<b>Public Realm</b>	Landscaping to create new 'linear park' through the estate by consolidating and linking existing public open space and creating a children's play area.
<b>Site Description</b>	The British Street estate was built between 1969 and 1976 and prior to redevelopment comprised 500 homes in two 22-storey tower blocks and eight low rise blocks, a row of six shops with flats above and a community centre. The redevelopment facilitated the refurbishment of all existing homes, the demolition of the existing shops and their



	<p>replacement with a new retail facility on Bow Road and the addition of 185 new homes. The estate also features a church and GP surgery, but these did not feature in the redevelopment proposals. The site is bounded by the A11 Bow Road to the north, Wellington Way to the east, Tower Hamlets Cemetery to the south and the currently unoccupied, listed St Clements Hospital site to the west. The surrounding area is predominantly residential</p>
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## Charter Quay

<b>Mixed Use Type</b>	Urban Infill
<b>Project Description</b>	Medium-sized town centre, residential-led waterfront scheme linked to provision of new theatre and addressing heritage and environmental themes.
<b>Location and Local Authority</b>	Charter Quay, Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 Grove ward Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames (RBK)
<b>Scale</b>	1.77 hectare site Retail – 2,500 sqm Bars and restaurants – 1,500 sqm Theatre – 2,947 sqm (550 seats) Public Space – 200 sqm Homes – 239 apartments and 5 town houses
<b>Developer</b>	St George PLC
<b>Architect(s)</b>	John Thomson and Partners
<b>Planning History</b>	Five abortive planning applications between 1988 and 1997. Full Planning Permission for final scheme 9/10/98.
<b>Completed</b>	2003
<b>Residential Density</b>	137 homes per hectare
<b>Planning Use Classes on site</b>	A1 (shops) A2 (financial and professional services) A3 (restaurants and cafes) A4 (drinking establishments) A5 (hot food takeaways) C3 (housing) D1 (theatre)
<b>Public Realm</b>	Pedestrian link to/from Kingston Market Place and riverside walkway/Thames Path via landscaped piazza (Jerome Place) and wetland bird sanctuary.
<b>Site Description</b>	Site occupied since 12 <sup>th</sup> century when Kingston market square laid out: bounded by Market Place to east, Emm's Passage to

	south, River Thames to west and mixed retail and leisure use to north. Hogsmill River diagonally bisects site from north-west
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## Greenwich Millennium Village

<b>Mixed Use Type</b>	New Neighbourhood
<b>Project Description</b>	Large 'Urban Village' on brownfield, waterside site, promoted as a model of sustainable urbanism.
<b>Location and Local Authority</b>	Greenwich Millennium Village, London SE10 Peninsula ward London Borough of Greenwich
<b>Scale</b>	24 hectare site Retail and office space - 524 sqm Restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments and takeaways - 373 sqm Public Space - 4,000 sqm Homes - 1,095 completed, total 2,700 planned School Health Centre
<b>Developer</b>	Greenwich Millennium Village Ltd (GMVL), Public/Private Partnership comprising developers Countryside and Taylor Woodrow/Wimpey and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)
<b>Architect(s)</b>	Erskine Tovatt/Hunt Thompson Associates (Masterplanners and lead architects Phase 1) Edward Cullinan (Architects school and health centre) Procter Matthews (Lead architects Phase 2) Jestico and Whiles (Lead architects Phases 3 – 5, pending)
<b>Planning History</b>	Original Masterplan given outline planning approval 8/10/98 with permission for 1,377 homes plus mixed uses to include a health clinic, a teleservices centre, a temporary visitors centre, a primary school, a crèche, community buildings and landscaped open space.  Subsequent phases were subject to individual detailed planning applications, as follows:

	<p>Phase 1A, 100 homes April 2000  Phase 2A, 186 homes, May 2000  Phase 1B, 199 homes, April 2001  Phase 2B, 186 homes, October 2002  Phase IE, 196 homes, December 2004  Phases 1C and 1D, 228 homes, May 2006</p> <p>The total number of homes in phases 1 and 2 (1,095) was reduced from the original Masterplan figure (1,377) following changes in planning policy and due to the ‘high quality of design’ (BNP Paribas 2011).</p>
<b>Completed</b>	Phases 1 and 2 completed 2002 (although some homes were occupied in time for the new millennium celebrations), remaining phases 3, 4 and 5 were given outline planning permission 23.02.12.
<b>Residential Density</b>	Phase 1 (527 units) – approximately 245 units per hectare Phase 2 (568 units) – approximately 126 units per hectare
<b>Planning Use Classes on site</b>	A1 (shops) A2 (financial and professional services) A3 (restaurants and cafes) A4 (drinking establishments) A5 (hot food takeaways) B1 (business premises) C3 (housing) D1 (health centre and school)
<b>Public Realm</b>	Oval Square and network of pedestrian friendly streets and landscaped areas. GMV is adjacent to a 6.9 ha Ecology Park.
<b>Site Description</b>	During the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, site used for a variety of industrial uses and since 1889 was occupied by the South

	<p>Metropolitan Gas Works. Following the closure of the gas works in 1985, the contaminated site became derelict and was used for temporary car parking.</p>
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## Royal Arsenal Riverside

<b>Mixed Use Type</b>	Piece of the City (1)
<b>Project Description</b>	Large, residential-led, new build/conversion waterside heritage and Town Centre regeneration site.
<b>Location and Local Authority</b>	Royal Arsenal (Riverside), London SE18 Woolwich Riverside ward London Borough of Greenwich (LBG)
<b>Scale</b>	31 hectares Retail space - 4,666 sqm Restaurants and cafes - 975 sqm Drinking establishments - 2,945 sqm Office space - 8,309 sqm Hotel - 6,072 sqm (150 beds) Community space - 3,030 sqm Public space – 25,000 sqm (This will increase significantly as future phases are completed.) Homes – 1,700 completed, total 3,711 planned
<b>Developer</b>	Berkeley Homes
<b>Architect(s)</b>	Allies and Morrison Barton Willmore
<b>Planning History</b>	Original Masterplan approved March 2000, 550 homes. Revised Dec. 2000, 711 homes. ‘The Armouries’, approved January 2001, 1,248 homes ‘The Warren’ approved August 2006, 2,517 homes Revised Masterplan approved February 2011, 3,711 homes
<b>Completed</b>	Still under construction (November 2012), but approx. 50% complete
<b>Residential Density</b>	361 homes per hectare
<b>Planning Use Classes on site</b>	A1 (shops) A2 (financial and professional services) A3 (restaurants and cafes)

	<p>A4 (drinking establishments)</p> <p>B1 (offices)</p> <p>C1 (hotel)</p> <p>C3 (housing)</p> <p>D1 (museum)</p>
<b>Public Realm</b>	<p>Publicly accessible, but privately owned, thoroughfares linking Woolwich Riverside to Woolwich town centre and Thames Path, including public realm and open space distributed around development.</p>
<b>Site Description</b>	<p>Riverside site on former Woolwich Arsenal munitions and armaments factory, bordered by river Thames to the north and Plumstead Road (A206) to the south and west.</p>



## Watney Street/Tarling Estate

<b>Mixed Use Type</b>	Urban Infill
<b>Project Description</b>	Medium-scale, residential-led, public/private urban improvement/infill site, partly resulting from demolition of council housing. Arrangement of low rise (4 – 6 storeys) and one high rise (20 storeys) residential blocks clustered around landscaped courtyard and new street layout with 6 ground floor commercial units (672sqm floor-space) distributed on street frontages throughout the site.
<b>Location and Local Authority</b>	Watney Street, London E1 Shadwell Ward London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH)
<b>Scale</b>	0.72 ha Retail and commercial space (A1, A3, B1) - 672 sqm Public space - 1,238 sqm Homes - 221
<b>Developer</b>	One Housing Group (incorporating Toynbee Housing Association)
<b>Architect</b>	Stock Woolstencroft and S333
<b>Planning History</b>	Planning permission 12/1/05
<b>Completed</b>	2008
<b>Residential Density</b>	307 homes per hectare
<b>Planning Use Classes on site</b>	A1 (shops) A3 (restaurants and cafes) B1 (business) C3 (housing)
<b>Public Realm</b>	‘Watney Plaza’, a public thoroughfare providing north/south link to and from Watney Market, communal amenity space within residential blocks, landscaped beds and benches, including small public square on western side of Watney Street.
<b>Site Description</b>	The scheme is located within a compact urban site

	<p>between Watney Street Market and the east/west Commercial Road to the north and Shadwell Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and East London Line stations to the south. The site is in a predominantly residential area, with a high proportion of council and Registered Social Landlord (RSL) housing and several large estates, including the Tarling East estate immediately to the site's eastern boundary.</p>
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## **Appendix 3**

### **Notes of Case Study Interviews**

**Note.** Interview ref. MSC2 (04.02.11) was conducted under strict conditions of confidentiality, with no recording made or notes taken, due to commercial sensitivity. However, as well as providing valuable background information, the interviewee was happy for the quote in the final paragraph to be used. INT46 (21.09.11) arose from a telephone conversation about a specific enquiry, but included the quote at p257.

### **Brindleyplace**

#### **REF INT25**

**31<sup>st</sup> March 2011**

INT25 had worked for Birmingham City Council for over twenty years and had been involved in the Brindleyplace development from its outset.

**1. Was there anything specific about this scheme that made it suitable for a mixed use development? (What were the policy drivers?)**

We were in a different economic situation - that's one of the important things. We were trying to do something with the city. Brindleyplace met quite a lot of the criteria in terms of what the city was looking for in terms of its ambition because it was close to the city centre, with good links, close enough to establish some of the city centre type functions, as well as the aspirational stuff at that time around the Symphony Hall and the NIA. There was slum clearance in there, there was interest in the listed building of Odzells Street School, there was a degree of dereliction which made the site ripe for redevelopment, it had the canals. It was also a time when we were starting to understand a little more about place-making and masterplanning. We'd been through the Highbury House initiative, so we were aware of the links between Brindleyplace and other elements of the city centre. There was also a fit with the political aspiration to put Birmingham on the map. So it was a combination of all those things.

Mixed Use was part of our thinking. Birmingham has often been at the forefront of policy initiatives and urban renewal. One of the things the then head of planning did was bring urban designers into the planning department to look at things like Mixed Use.

**2. Does the LPA feel that the mixed use aspirations for this scheme have been achieved? (Is the scheme a 'success'?)**

Yes, I think it is. With hindsight we might have had more residential use within the site proper, but that was developer led. One of the things we've learned is that if you're working with a developer, you need to make some compromises, on both sides. The developer felt very strongly that the residential would work better on the triangle site and we accommodated that and we got some things in return, like the quality of the squares, but that was part of the partnership.

Brindleyplace continues to be somewhere that seems to work really well. It's a mixture of things. The developers were good and it was high quality, it was the first high grade, modern office accommodation the city had provided for a good while. I think it's also the mix. It's a destination that people like to go to, with the added attractions of Symphony Hall, the NIA, its setting with the canals works well, it's close to the city centre and it is a well-managed estate, that's well looked after. It's quite rigidly managed and that's helped people to want to be there and stay there. The evidence of that is that the new building (11 Brindleyplace) is letting quite quickly. The proof is in the pudding. Even in the slump, it is providing jobs, it is paying business rates and attracting visitors.

**3. Have any problems arisen with this scheme resulting directly from the mixed use concept? (e.g. noise nuisance, ASB, licensing etc)**

We did have some problems of different uses with the residential element, in terms of timing and phasing of the development. I think we should have built the commercial uses first, so that people moving into the residential knew what they were getting. But it was a relatively small number of people who complained.

**4. Do you think mixed use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I don't think it's a fad. If we continue to work towards the sustainability and green agenda and reducing peoples' need to travel and pulling people back into the city centre, there needs to be some degree of Mixed Use to help make that work. But there are other planning and regulatory regimes that would like to keep land uses completely separate. Our view is that to create a vibrant place, you can't do that.

**5. Does the CC have any sense of disappointment that housing element has been separated from remainder of Brindleyplace?**

I don't think we were particularly because one of the things the separation gained was that instead of just having apartments, we got some of the first houses in the city centre for many years.

When the previous developer got into financial trouble, Argent bought the land for £3million and then sold the residential site for £2million, so effectively they got Brindleyplace for £1million, with planning permission.

**6. Does the CC have any concerns about change of ownership?**

I don't think we do. It's still Brindleyplace PLC and it's some of the same people. We're also working with Argent on other potential developments, like Paradise Circus.

**7. Would the CC do anything differently if it were planning another Brindleyplace type development today?**

Across the road from Brindleyplace was a pub that was doing fairly well and did music on a Friday and Saturday, some of the residents complained and got the pub closed down, so we need to be careful about things like that.

**8. Is the CC still committed to bringing residential back to the city centre?**

Yes it is. One of the things that came out of the budget is the possibility of using empty commercial space for residential. Birmingham has always been very positive about conversions from different uses.

**9. Is the CC still committed to the night-time, 24/7 economy?**

It depends which politicians you're talking to. There's sometimes a conflict of interest between business users and the residential population, but we're committed to making the city as 24 hour as we can, somewhere you can live work and play, like a Mars bar.

**10. How does the CC respond to the argument that Brindleyplace is a sanitised, exclusive environment?**

We've heard that argument, but mostly in whispered terms. It does still stand out, but I think if we get more quality developments it won't so much because the others will catch up. When the economy picks up, quality development will spread out across the city. I don't think Brindleyplace is sanitised. You've got real people there, real jobs, real events happening there. It's open and you can walk through it: that's one of the things we insisted on. It does have some slightly higher end offers, but that's one of the things we should be aspiring to. We don't want Birmingham to be just about the markets. We need that range and I know people who will walk round Brindleyplace because it's a nice place to be. So I descent form the view that It's overly sanitised. It was ground-breaking at the time. We worked very hard with the developers made up for the fact that they got the land relatively cheaply with some of the investment they put into the delivery and maintaining the quality. We've kept in public use and we've kept it with a big public face, so there's a range of ways that we've contributed to the process. It was a partnership between the developer and the city and we were determined to make it work.

**11. Does the CC monitor journey patterns to and from Brindleyplace?**

We do it via monitoring company travel plans by colleagues in the Transportation department. We do that across the city with big firms and residential developments.

**INT28**

**27<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

INT28 was an executive with the developers and part-owners of Brindleyplace, Argent PLC.

**1. Was Mixed Use an important part of your development strategy for this scheme and if so, why?**

It was crucial. Mixed Use is what makes Brindleyplace, Brindleyplace. There's a million square feet of office space here and we tend to use an 80/20 rule. 80% of the income comes from the offices and 20% from the retail, leisure and other uses, but 20% of the management time is the retail and 80% is the offices. So if you wanted an easy life you'd just go for the offices. But the reason you get and keep the offices is the environment and everything else that's here as an offer. We tweaked the original masterplan we inherited that was linked to the wider changes in central Birmingham, but one of the key things was the requirement to put in retail and leisure at the waterside, which at that time was quite an unusual thing to do in an inner-city location. Having the NIA, ICC and Sealife Centre next door makes it a day and night and weekend venue. You can go to other Mixed Use developments around the country and in the evenings or weekends they're dead.

**2. Do you feel Mixed Use helped you to obtain planning permission?**

Over the life of the scheme, relationships with planners have always been good and we've worked very closely together and I think part of the reason for that is we've incorporated some of the things they wanted. But we don't only do it because the planners want us to. It's a model we always try to incorporate. The vision is about creating places and Mixed Use is a way of doing that. It's a business model, part of the culture of the company.

**3. Did the Mixed Use concept cause you any problems during the development and if so, what were they?**

It partly depends on the market. Take this building. It was going to have a hotel,

retail and apartments, but in the end partly because of the way the site worked and partly because of the way the economy was going, it became just offices, with a small element of retail.

The management time on the retail and restaurants is time consuming - litter and smells,

Banks and Funds used to struggle to get their heads around Mixed Use, but that's changing. But with the sale last summer we had some experience of the problems that come with different ownerships, like an office with some apartments where the commercial tenants had no control over who came and went. Similarly, some companies may not want a restaurant underneath them and we tend to be fairly strict with our leases.

But Brindleyplace is so successful because it's a private estate and it's heavily, well policed isn't the right word, but it's very safe and clean and if you look around there's lots of CCTV and visible patrols and in terms of anti-social behaviour, it's very limited. As soon as there's an issue the guys escort them off the estate. We've had four incidents of car crime in ten years. The fact that it's so highly managed is definitely one of the big plus points.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

It's horses for courses. You can't take this model and just put it anywhere. You need an area significant enough to generate a service that can be charged to occupants. Scale and diversity are important, otherwise it's just a business park.

**5. What, if any, on-going involvement will Argent have at Brindleyplace?**

Argent still owns number 11 outright. We sold the rest to the joint venture and it's gone into a massive global Real Estate Investment Trust. We're here for at least the medium term and looking at other Mixed Use developments in the city, like Paradise Circus, but we have to wait until the new library is finished in 2014.



**6. In retrospect, are there any aspects of the development that Argent could have done differently?**

Some of the plus points are also negative points. If there's a big concert at the NIA there can be a build up of traffic and there's only one way in and out.

**7. How significant is the separation of Symphony Court from Brindleyplace?**

I feel that it is linked to the rest of the development. Argent bought the whole site for three million pounds and then a few months later sold Symphony Court for three million pounds, so pretty much made our money back. It was one of the first residential developments in central Birmingham and it's quite prestigious and much less dense than the other housing schemes around it. It gives Brindleyplace more of a community feel, especially because it's linked across. A lady in our office lives there – I know quite a few people who live there.

**8. How do you view the area immediately around Brindleyplace, for example the council estates in Ladywood?**

I can see why people might think Brindleyplace is an exclusive place because the bars and things are certainly not the cheapest. But the counter argument is that, although it's a private estate, it's open to anyone. There's lots of events in the central square, it's family friendly, it's not just a business environment. We've got good relationships with the local schools, so I'd say on balance it's more of a benefit to the local area.

**INT29**

**27<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

INT29 was a Brindleyplace resident and also had a business in the complex.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of your reasons for moving here?**

This place would have been far less appealing to me if it was just offices and there were no restaurants and bars. That fact that it's got all this going on was a big attraction to me. I particularly like Brindleyplace and places like Brindleyplace. Certainly from a business perspective, if there were no offices with potential customers working here, or in terms of attracting staff, it's a good environment. Noone ever says 'I wouldn't want to work here'. People like the work/play environment – coming out of the gym next door, maybe having a coffee on the way to work. I'm a massive advocate of city living. I've got a house in the country, but I know where I'd rather be. City living tends to be related to people in their 20s who want to go out partying, but once they have children they want to move out, which is certainly broadly still true of Birmingham. Most people I know say 'if you have kids, you've got to move out.' But I know a lot of people of my age group who, like me, have got grandchildren, but prefer the city. I don't want to be in Solihull cutting the grass or washing the car on a Sunday. I want to be living in an apartment where if I go away I can close the door and know there's security around, I want to get a coffee in the morning, maybe go to the gym at lunchtime and I want to have a beer at night when I've finished work. I do all those things. And this place is like a village in fact it's better than a village. I've lived in a village, but here if you go to the pub, as well as the people you know, you meet different people.

**2. Has Mixed Use contributed to your business' success?**

Yes because we draw clients from all the different businesses in Brindleyplace, so it's a source of revenue. We've got guys renting from us from Deloitte. They've got a thousand people in that building. Flexibility of labour is a massive thing. They might be here for two years, they're from all around the world and they don't know if they're going to Tokyo or Los Angeles next, but they want to live in a city. They're

more used to living in a city than the average Brummie.

**3. Have any problems arisen from the Mixed Use concept as far as your business is concerned?**

No. Anti-social behaviour is unusual here. We'll get the odd heroin addict walking through and begging, but is like an oasis here. Look how clean and tidy it is. It's twenty years old, but there's constant maintenance. If I see anyone misbehaving I just call security and have them thrown off. Although there are sometimes problems on a Friday night on Broad Street, they don't come into Brindleyplace. All the bars close a bit earlier. It's a completely different vibe.

**4. Do you/your staff live within the development?**

Only me, the other four people tend to live a bit further out. The places close to the centre tend to be a bit dodgy really.

**5. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? Are there any downsides?**

I love the fact that on a wet Friday night I can see them beginning to queue up to leave the car park from Brindleyplace and I know that if they live in Solihull it's going to take them an hour and twenty minutes to get home – less than ten miles away. I've been all over the world and it's different in European cities. They say 'Why would I want to live in the country if I'm not a farmer?' They want exactly what we have here. They may have a slightly better choice, but we've got Carluccios and some Michelin star restaurants at Brindleyplace. The city centre used to only be somewhere you went at night if you were going to a nightclub, otherwise everyone just cleared out. There was no infrastructure. The city is transformed, far, far better than it used to be.

**6. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to 'sustainability'?**

I would never profess to be a great advocate of green issues. It's more selfish and

personal. It goes back to my time driving to work for twenty years and I just think 'thank God I don't' have to do that'.

**7. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

See answer 1 above.

**8. How significant is the separation of Symphony Court from Brindleyplace?**

If I sit on my terrace having a glass of wine I'm looking at the back of my office building. I like it. My commute to work is about 50 seconds, but for 20 years I drove from Pangborne to Hayes every day. I started off leaving for work at about 8am in 1980; by 2000 I was leaving at 6.30 am to arrive at the same time. I'm ecstatic that I don't have to get into a car to go to work.

**9. How do you view the area immediately around Brindleyplace, for example the council estates in Ladywood?**

I live in Ladywood. Someone told me the other day the average life expectancy for Ladywood is 64 and I'm 60! I've come to understand how this could work. There are properties near here that have sold for a million pounds and fifty yards away you've got deprivation, or whatever you want to call it, but that's no different to London. That's not a new phenomenon. I know Brindleyplace management work with the local schools, but what does that mean? People who have won't rub shoulders with the have nots will they? It doesn't happen because we don't eat or drink in the same places. I'm not sure if they'd feel unwelcome and would rather sit around 400 yards away than come here and enjoy the sunshine – it's free. I don't know, but we don't see lots of groups. But at the weekend you do see a lot of Asian people come here to have picnics. I grew up on a council estate, big Irish family and I don't know how I would have felt here, welcome or unwelcome. Because you don't tend to go to places where you don't feel welcome, but a lot of that could be in your own head. Maybe they just don't feel comfortable. I know a lot of people do go drinking on Broad Street, but wouldn't come into Brindleyplace. Maybe it's the style of the bars and the drink's more expensive.

**10. How do you feel about Argent selling their interest in Brindleyplace?**

I've heard the new owners might only be here for ten years then try to sell it on. We're in the third year of a ten year lease here. They really wanted a brand. I've not had lots of experience of commercial leases, but I don't see why they wouldn't want us here. I know the girl who ran the hippie shop got bumped off and she'd been here fifteen years. They wanted 'Yo Sushi' instead and she was pretty fed up and we were a bit concerned about that.

**INT35**

**26<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

INT35 was a Birmingham city councilor and chair of the planning committee.

**1. To your knowledge, was Mixed Use a consideration in the decision to grant planning permission?**

I'm sure it was. I can't imagine it now being. The Masterplan was written in 1991, which is before my time, but Mixed Use must have been part of it. There's no other way you could put it together. If it had just been offices, it wouldn't have fitted the city's long term aim of reseeding the city centre with residential use. Everything's Mixed Use now!

The principle has been that the city is moving west. The council was buying up former industrial land at a good price in the 1960s. Where Brindleyplace is now there used to be iron foundries, brass-works, polishing workshops and back to back housing which also had industrial uses: all pretty anti-social. No investment went into them so they became slums. Bingley Hall was built where the ICC is now in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a place for Birmingham to display her products and that expanded after the war, but the ICC in 1991 was the catalyst for a lot of other changes.

**2. Do you feel the scheme has proved a success and if so, is Mixed Use part of the reason?**

Of course, yes. You get the buzz when you're there and those who study urban design are frequently there with their notebooks and its spread out from there. I'm being optimistic on behalf of my city that it will be copied elsewhere, just as Bournville Village was imitated at Letchworth. It's not just Brindleyplace, but the area around it. Bringing people in spreads the vibrancy of the area. Our former head of planning is now working in Newham where there's a lot to be done and he's the right person to do it.

**3. Have any problems arisen specifically from the Mixed Use concept?**

Yes, noise and the introduction of the Human Rights Act. Prior to that we could say people knew what they were getting when they moved into an area. Now people say they're entitled to quiet enjoyment and therefore other people aren't entitled to make a noise. There have been some disadvantages to encouraging more residential use in the city centre. Brewery Wharf, near Brindleyplace became the 'Fiddle and Bow' public house and about ten years ago it was closed down because the local residents used the Human Rights Act to say they were entitled to quiet enjoyment. We're noticing this. Increased residential is having an adverse effect on local industry. We had an application to develop a site for residential use which is right next to the site where they test guns and rifles and we refused that application because it would have caused an industry we've had since around 1812 to be closed down.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

It's got to be there, on a larger scale. You've got to provide places where people can work, ideally next to places where they can have a bit of fun as well, then all you need is residential around it. We're coming round to the London appreciation of public transport and walking. We're going to have our Metro, we hope. I've always said this area needs development oriented transport – DOTs instead of TODs

**5. Do you think the political culture of the city has been significant in Birmingham's redevelopment?**

Yes, I think the tradition of social improvement, going back to the Chamberlains, is still there and you learn it from other councillors, or on your parent's knee, like I did. So nobody questions developments like Brindleyplace, they think 'regeneration – good, stick in the mud, leave it as it is - bad'. The downside is, we had a beautiful Victorian library that was knocked down to put up the 'book burning' structure that's there at present. Right the way through the 60s we got rid of a lot of Birmingham's heritage on the grounds of improvement. We were doing improvement innately.

**6. Do you still think of Birmingham in terms of being a global or international city?**

Yes, we're very protective of our airport and we'd like to be London's fourth airport. We've got plenty of plans to expand. And the High Speed 2 train link will come into Curzon Street and the journey time to London will be forty-five minutes which is comparable to a tube journey.

**7. How do you reflect on the changes to the central city since the Highbury Initiative?**

The idea was to get the great and the good to wander round the city and comment on their observations, the most prominent of which was the 'concrete collar': the inner ring road which was stifling city development. Going by the number of people who've copied it, I'd say our approach has been successful.

Broad Street and the west will continue to have a lot of new development. We've agreed a ninety-six storey tower block

**8. How successfully do you feel Brindleyplace has integrated with the adjoining Ladywood estate?**

Nothing lasts for ever and when the Ladywood estate was built it was to give people who lived in slums new high rise housing, with access to fresh air, greenery and places to play. Cities in the sky. Of course we now know they became sink estates with high crime levels. But they've now been knocked down and we're going back to low rise housing. A community grows up from a number of families and when we slum clear and bung them out onto some new estate in the countryside, we don't realize that they've lost the social cohesion, the sort of thing that binds people together, which is doing each other favours. But relationships are building up in the new residential apartments, especially in the expensive ones, which is ultimately healthy, although some of the new blocks are dreadful - the slums of the future.

I can understand why some people from Ladywood wouldn't feel comfortable at



Brindleyplace. Whereas you and I would think 'what fun', some people would see it as a threat because it appears to be a better off social group using it who people may not have the confidence to deal with. You can walk through Brindleyplace and it doesn't cost money. It's a form of inverted snobbery or an inferiority complex, but then if we don't suffer from it ourselves, it's very difficult to appreciate that people feel out of it.

There are always jobs at Brindleyplace, unless people are in the poverty trap, but otherwise there's no reason to be refused a job there. You'd be welcomed with open arms. There's never been a shortage of work at that level.

**INT37**

**13<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

INT37 was a long-standing Birmingham city councillor who had been involved in the redevelopment of the Brindleyplace area from its earliest stages.

**1. To your knowledge, was Mixed Use a consideration in the decision to grant planning permission?**

The starting point is some years earlier than the widespread adoption of Mixed Use policy. It's 1988 and the Highbury Symposium that looked at city centre regeneration by doing a number of things: creating a larger city centre and a place where people lived, worked and had leisure, retail and cultural opportunities. All of that came out of Highbury. The other important aspect of Highbury was the issue of quarters. It identified a number of existing quarters and the potential for a number of new quarters, one of which was the Convention Quarter. I actually prefer the French term 'quartier' because the French word is not just about physical delineation, but about the character and vibrancy of an area. So what Highbury was about was developing 'quartier' across the extended Birmingham city centre and therefore, Mixed Use activity.

**2. Do you feel the scheme has proved a success and if so, is Mixed Use part of the reason?**

Yes, absolutely. It has been a success in terms of residential, hotels and serviced apartments, but in other respects you've got all the ingredients you want. You've got public squares, small cafes, good restaurants and in terms of employment there are 8,000 people working at Brindleyplace. Compare that to the number of people working in that area prior to Brindleyplace and it's a huge increase in the employment base of that area. It's a very vibrant quarter, particularly when it's nice and sunny and people are out enjoying themselves. That's what Highbury wanted – places where people could live, work, enjoy and shop, all in one area.

**3. Have any problems arisen specifically from the Mixed Use concept?**

The only problem is the Broad Street activity. Over a period of time, drinking establishments became the centre piece of Broad Street. It was very difficult to use the licensing laws to limit that type of activity, so now you have space for something like 10,000 people in bars and clubs in Broad Street. A huge opportunity there for young people to go out on Fridays and Saturdays, but also increasingly on other days, using Broad Street as a haven for bars and night-time activity through to the early hours of the morning. The consequences of that are late night disturbance of residents, some of them living on the outskirts of Brindleyplace itself. It's a bad neighbor problem, but we're looking to see how we can use licensing and public health laws to try and counter that.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I think it has to. If you go to the outskirts of cities like Birmingham you find these huge homogeneous council estates, where all you've got are council homes. It's not even mixed in terms of tenure. It's simply sprawling municipal estates, which often have very little in the way of facilities, both shopping facilities and leisure activity opportunities – and they're a long way from where people can work, with bad transport links. That's a problem that we have, but have recognized in many British cities, so what we've been doing over the last ten or twenty years is trying to combat the failure of previous policy. Elsewhere in Europe, the further south you go, they're still repeating what we did wrong in the 60s and 70s, building sprawling estates on the outskirts, without the infrastructure or Mixed Use activity that would make them livable places. From the perspective of maintaining livable places, places where people want to live because it has all those activities, a planning policy that enshrines Mixed Use is very necessary for the long term future.

**5. Do you think the political culture of the city has been significant in Birmingham's redevelopment?**

You've got to put this question in a particular economic context. In the early to mid.1980s, Birmingham took a real hit in terms of jobs. The shake out of the recession was late in Birmingham, but when it hit it was savage. Something like

200,000 jobs were lost over a ten year period. That's more jobs lost in that period than the whole of Scotland and Wales put together. Average unemployment in the city was 25%, in some areas it was over 50% and in those places there were tracts where no school leaver was getting a job. Birmingham had to change and see itself in a different way and that was about an economic strategy that preserves the best of the old manufacturing sector and looking to introduce high added value technology and service industries. One of the highest areas of employment growth in the city in the last ten years has been in the professional sector. The often forgotten component of that strategy is the human capital - moving from an economy that is low skilled based to one that is high skilled based. You've got to do something about educational achievement and skills training. That changed the political culture. Moving from a city that is perceived to be a manufacturing city to one with a different employment base changes the political culture and aspirations of the city. The political culture had to change and so did the perception of what Birmingham wanted. All that was important for re-shaping Birmingham and remains important. In the late 1980s and early 1990s when we built the ICC people said it would be a white elephant because it wasn't in the tradition of Birmingham, but it was the trigger for all the investment that followed and as Brindleyplace and the waterfront activity developed and the jobs followed, the mood of Birmingham changed. So when we re-redeveloped the Bull Ring there wasn't a peep of opposition because the people understood and were part of the vision. Lately there's been less partly political consensus, but Birmingham used to be a pendulum authority, swinging from one party to the other at each election, so major projects like the ICC had to have cross-party support because they couldn't have happened otherwise. Some of that cross-party working is returning, but there was a difference of view on the location of the new library which the previous Labour authority, under my leadership, wanted to put in the Eastside, where public sector investment could kick-start private sector investment, but now the new library is in the centre of the city where the private sector doesn't need a kick-start. But it was really about re-branding the project as Con-Lib Dem, instead of Labour.

**6. Do you still think of Birmingham in terms of being a global or international city?**

I don't take the view of the current council leader's slogan that Birmingham is a 'global city with a local heart'. He believes that this city is no longer world stage. Not so. I do a lot of European work and I don't believe that Birmingham punches its weight globally as other cities of comparable stature do, for example Lyon. Birmingham has to be a player, but not just for the city, or the region, or nationally. It has to have an international dimension. Our relationship has to be with the best in the world. We have to be in that global market place, but we also have to look after that currently deprived population who should be benefiting more from Birmingham's success. So it's about balance. In the mid. 1980s we had to change the economic agenda in order to affect the social agenda.

**7. How do you reflect on the changes to the central city since the Highbury Initiative?**

See above

**8. How successfully do you feel Brindleyplace has integrated with the adjoining Ladywood estate?**

I've just been talking to journalists about the need for the success of Birmingham to be felt by believed in by everybody. That's still an objective we have to address. That problem's best set out by looking at deprivation statistics and identifying where the health, unemployment and low educational achievement problems are. You've got estates like Central Ladywood that still have higher than average deprivation, lots of single parent families, no secondary schools, primary schools that aren't doing as well as in other areas. So Ladywood residents aren't benefiting from the change that has come about in Birmingham as a whole. That's an agenda that some of us are now starting to have a further look at. As part of my Mayoral campaign, I intend to set up an independent commission on social inclusion. It's quite obvious if you look at a map of multiple deprivation in Birmingham that it hasn't significantly changed over ten to fifteen years, despite Brindleyplace and other new developments. The areas with high deprivation are still the same. There are things we're not doing right here and we need to do things differently to affect places like Central Ladywood.

People in Ladywood will tell you they need more social housing because they want to keep their families in the area, but there's no housing for them. The private market isn't available to them because they don't have jobs or high enough incomes. That ring of private apartments along the canal-side that is really the edge of the Central Ladywood estate has created almost an 'us and them' division. It's not that we haven't tried to tackle that, but the vehicle we used was wrong. Some 70 to 80 million pounds of Estate Action money went into the Central Ladywood estate in the late 80s, early 90s. But it was simply physical improvement. It didn't deal with the relationship of tower blocks, low rise blocks, open space and jobs and canals. It didn't do it with an integrated, coherent regeneration strategy.

**INT39**

**20<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

INT39 was a Brindleyplace resident.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of your reason for moving here?**

Not directly. I've never driven and decided I'd like to live in the centre of town because it would be so much easier. Someone suggested an apartment in Symphony Court. I didn't know where it was, but I had a look round when it was still being built and bought it. Brindleyplace was only about a quarter built. It's changed a lot and I never imagined it would develop in the way that it has. I had no idea what I was buying into. When the agent asked what I did for a living and I said I was a teacher he said 'are you sure you can afford it?' It was quite an exclusive address. I've had professional footballers, pop stars and Lords and Ladies as neighbours. But I could walk to work – twenty minutes down the canal, there's a supermarket within walking distance and there's the odd pub around. The Water's Edge had been developed and was touted as a glamorous place to be. There was a buzz. I didn't realise when I moved in, but when you have the G8 conference and Eurovision – big events – and although the security might be intrusive, you might see Bill Clinton walking through Brindleyplace or drinking in the local pub, it's exciting.

**2. Are there any problems you associate with the Mixed Use concept?**

Not really. Things have got better and better. There are restaurants and now a cinema, the amenities are fantastic.

Broad Street has peaked as a trendy place to go and some venues are closing down. But you very rarely see a fight. What I do get tired of is seeing people urinating in corners. But Brindleyplace is very well maintained and has security guards. One hassle of living in the centre is you can walk down Broad Street and be accosted by at least three beggars, but you don't get any in Brindleyplace. They get moved on. They don't even waste their time going in. It's very sanitised, but I don't mind that.

There was a pub, the 'Fiddle and Bone' that was closed down because of complaints from residents of King Edward's Wharf, but the pub was there before the residential blocks and if you buy an apartment opposite a pub, how can you complain about noise? It's been a real loss to the area. It was a unique pub – you could go on a Sunday lunchtime and there'd be a string quartet playing and it would be packed out.

**3. Do you use the Mixed Use facilities/services?**

I use the Spar in emergencies. It's close, but it's expensive, but I live like Seinfeld: I buy cereal and fruit. I eat out. The pubs are close enough to walk to and close enough to stagger home. There's no point going further afield. I use the private gym six days a week. I never used to go to the gym before.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability?**

For some people yes, for some no. I know people who drive from Symphony Court to McDonalds that's just up the road and others who get a black cab back from Broad Street after a night out when it's three minutes away. They're just bone-idle and once you've got so much money, you don't care. We have recycling on site, but it's a frame of mind.

**5. How do you feel about the separation of Symphony Court from the rest of Brindleyplace?**

I think of it as part of Brindleyplace. I always include Brindleyplace in my address because people recognise it. If I say 'I live in Brindleyplace', people know where I live. The separation doesn't really affect me. The City Council still own the freehold and it has a Ladywood address, 'B16', so I always tell people I live in a council flat in Ladywood! Some people sued the house builder because they thought they were promised the address would be 'B1'. I found it very amusing. It's pure snobbery.

**6. How do you feel about the relationship between Brindleyplace and the Ladywood area?**



It must be very hard for people living less than five minutes away when they see those cars driving into Brindleyplace or Symphony Court. We've got security guards. In fact we've just spent a small fortune on state of the art infrared security cameras. It's a shame our residents feel we need all that security, but property prices wouldn't be the same if we didn't. Brindleyplace is a different kind of culture and environment so I can understand that people from Ladywood might feel out of place. I'm from a working class background and I've sometimes had to tell some of my neighbours not to talk to me as though I'm one of their servants.

**7. Is there a sense of community within Symphony Court?**

There is, but not as much as there used to be. We used to have monthly meetings at the 'Fiddle and Bone' and we'd have a drink and a laugh, but that died a death. One of the reasons and one of the things that's not good for the site is the level of renting and often the tenants aren't paying the rent themselves, it's their companies. And there's lots of Buy to Rent flats. It stops community spirit from developing because people are moving on constantly.

**8. How do you feel about the overall redevelopment of central Birmingham?**

They've tried very hard and parts of it have improved, but the Eastside initiative has stalled badly and the Jewellery Quarter has hiccupped along. If anything, the Convention Quarter is over-developed. It got to the stage where everyman Jack was buying land like crazy and shoeing hundreds of apartments into a small plot of land. Symphony Court is spacious and quite low density by comparison. But the development has made the area look better, because it was pretty grim before.

INT42

28<sup>th</sup> July 2011

INT42 was a senior executive with Argent PLC and had been involved in Brindleyplace throughout its history.

**1. Was Mixed Use an important part of your development strategy for this scheme and why?**

In 1993 when we stood in the middle of the site I was reminiscing a bit about the old six-lane inner ring road and how things had changed with the Convention Centre. I thought this is a big area of land. It's a little too far to the west of the city centre, but it's big and someone's spent lots of money connecting it to the city centre and it had Oozell Street school in it and a huge amount of history: not just my history going back a decade when I was at the Aston University, but the history of Birmingham, Bingley Hall and the works along the canal. We knew it had planning permission for what was in effect, mainly an office development, but we weren't quite sure whether some of the other uses were there just to get a tick in the box. But we thought 'this is pretty unique'. One ownership, seventeen acres, in a good city, pretty close to the centre and someone had just spent a couple of hundred million pounds tidying up the immediate vicinity.

Fundamentally it was and still is an office development and our whole approach has been how to compensate for the fact that, as an office location, it's probably ten minutes too far from the city centre. So putting all the things that office occupiers might want, or say they want, within the scheme and trying to make it more like a city centre, was very much our objective. Public space was what we'd all grown to love. We were lucky enough to drive around Europe and just sit in some great public spaces. As I became more involved with development I came to realise that that was where people wanted to be and if people want to be there, they're quite happy to pay to be there. Quality public space and uses you'd expect in city centres, shops and restaurants and bars. We didn't have chauffeur driven Bentleys. We walked around places and cycled around places, we sat and observed what was going on and asked ourselves 'what would we want?' We wouldn't want ten office buildings at

Brindleyplace with no decent shops or restaurants.

Having residential use in a city centre very much interested us. Clearly there were thousands of people living in the centre of Birmingham, but only because that was where the social housing was. Along with others, we were starting to think that people who had enough money to decide where they wanted to live might also want to live in city centres so they didn't have the hassle of being stuck in traffic or using pretty grim public transport as it was then. We genuinely thought Brindleyplace could deliver some high value, private residential, but we were just about alone in thinking that, outside of central London, you could build private residential and get people who want to make it a home, or a pied de tere, or a lifestyle. We always try to put ourselves in the position of our customers, whoever they are, just trying to enjoy an urban environment, just ordinary people who've lived in cities, experienced cities – we asked ourselves can we do something at Brindleyplace that moves towards what good cities mean to us. Places where people live, meet, come at weekends, sit in the evenings – stuff like that. It's not an office park. We wanted to make it a city. Where I live, I can walk to the theatre, or to the shops and the pub. Again, we put ourselves in other peoples' positions. If you feel content and relaxed with the arguments you're putting, you've probably got a business model that you believe in.

## **2. Do you feel that Mixed Use helped you to obtain planning permission?**

Yes and no. There were no absolute requirements, as there often are now, for Mixed Use. Mixed Use was something quite strange in the early 1990s. Planners were saying 'we want employment, offices means employment so that's what we want.' The world has changed a huge amount. There wasn't the huge political need to build houses wherever you could. Housing wasn't at the top of the agenda and there were no requirements to build affordable homes. It's not that long ago, but it's a huge time ago in terms of policy. I remember a bit later in the 1990s going to talk to planners about a site that we thought had Mixed Use potential and being told 'we will see you at the planning inquiry and we will win' if we did anything to change the use of the site as 100% offices.

Argent actually inherited the Brindleyplace planning permission from Rosehaugh,

who went bust. We were aware of all the visioning and the Highbury plan and the idea that the whole area had to have some kind of positive symbiosis, but we couldn't really see how the original model was going to be self-sustaining. So we set about changing the scheme to make it much more deliverable.

**3. Did the Mixed Use concept cause you any problems during the development and if so, what were they?**

There were a couple of major issues. It was impossible to borrow any money for development at that time. Money was tight and the original permission required a lot of infrastructure like underground car parks and servicing, which we thought made it like a central London scheme, but that amounted to expenditure before you could start generating income. Our main experience at the time was office development. It's much easier to grasp the economics of an office development. You still take big risks, but it's a relatively simple financial equation. Mixed Use was unusual in planning and funding terms in the early 1990s. Funders either financed offices, or shops, or apartments. This is hard to believe, but if you'd said to the top twenty commercial property investors in 1993 'would you be interested in buying this office development with a restaurant on the ground floor?' eighteen of them would have said no. And if you'd said 'can we build a multi-storey residential block next door because people are going to spend hundreds of thousands on city centre apartments?' they would have said you were completely mad. We had a number of potential financiers at Brindleyplace who said, bluntly, 'we don't want you to have a restaurant or shop within that office building' and the first couple of offices don't have any other uses. But the next ones we designed to accommodate self-contained restaurants and shops and at one office block that we financed ourselves, we put 'Bank' restaurant in. It was well managed, well designed and everyone went 'wow, this is really nice'. People realised Mixed Use didn't necessarily mean you'd have smelly bins outside and chip fat spewing into office reception areas. I'm not saying we invented the whole Mixed Use concept, but it felt as though we were pioneers at the time. We showed by example that it can work.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

Mixed Use has been around ever since people started building human settlements. It will be with us forever. Like any policy, if it becomes an absolute dogma and people aren't prepared to have a dialogue about problems and concerns, it can become a problem. In the future, I hope there's a bit more pragmatism and understanding that Mixed Use isn't a panacea everywhere. There are certain dynamics that have to be taken into account. Mixed Use can cause disruption to residents. People want a good night's sleep and to feel safe. Shops need good passing trade and sometimes parking comes into the equation. In some instances expectations of Mixed Use have gone a bit too far, but the lessons are all there in existing places.

**5. What, if any, on-going involvement will Argent have at Brindleyplace?**

We now only own one of the buildings, 11 Brindleyplace. We stop asset managing the development in September, but we don't have a huge financial interest in estate management. Ideally, we'd have sold our interest a few years ago, but some of our partners said they wanted to stay at Brindleyplace for the long-term.

**6. In retrospect, are there any aspects of the development that Argent could have done differently?**

Along the water's edge element, where it's mainly shops and restaurants on the ground floor and commercial space above, the first lettings we did were to little independent companies, doing exciting things. Two guys opened 'Brunell's' wine bar. It was well managed, heaving every night, but with nice people. Bass came along and offered them a million and a half quid for the rest of their lease. We didn't have any power to stop them. There was an independent restaurant where 'All Bar One' is now and he sold to Whitbread. Café Rouge was an independent business when they had their first outlet outside of London and Brindleyplace. They took the café in the square and called it 'Bar Rouge'. It was a terrific success, independent and original. Then the owner of Café Rouge sold to Whitbread as well. Whitbread then put another of its brands, Costa coffee, where 'Bar Rouge' used to be in the square. It's not a disaster, but I don't feel the same pride about a place that's different. Again,

we didn't have any control. What we learned was that giving people twenty-five year leases and security of tenure enabled them to sell the highest bidder if they were successful. If you're trying to manage a Mixed Use development you only need one bad shop, restaurant or night-time activity and that will spread nastiness over the whole vicinity. So, from then on and now, we don't let any units on standard twenty-five year leases unless we have an absolute right to acquire the lease back. We're not letting anyone have unrestricted assignment.

Because we don't have the same level of financial interest any more, we can't control the future of Brindleyplace, but I always remember a non-executive director of ours saying 'an office building isn't for life, it's just for Christmas.' What he meant was, you can't get sentimental about these things: it's a business. We develop to make money and you have to recognise that at some point you might need to sell in order to move on and do something else.

**7. How significant is the separation of Symphony Court from the rest of Brindleyplace?**

We'd have approached it differently if we were doing it today. We'd have had it more connected. It's just bizarre looking at it – a twee, low-density development, but it's very successful. Back in 1994 most people thought it was high-density and surrounded by dereliction: social housing, crime and grit. Shepcaote Street was completely derelict. Not a great place to hang around at night: a wasteland. To build houses where people would need to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds to live there was a pretty brave decision. It didn't take that long for the whole city centre living to take off.

**8. How do you view the area immediately around Brindleyplace, for example the council estates in Ladywood?**

We commissioned research to ask the question 'what's the ripple effect of this type of development?' particularly the social and economic effects. But it was the City Council that started the city centre redevelopment. We were the first private sector partners, but there have been lots of private apartment blocks since. You could say without us, none of it would have happened, but I'd say it wouldn't have happened

without the City Council. What always impressed us about Birmingham was that Highbury Initiative plan. Maybe that only happened because Birmingham was in such a bad way that all the politicians came together and said 'look, let's forget politics, we're in the shit. We've got to get some investment here and diversify the economy.' So we were greeted with open arms, as we were in Manchester. You get a different response in London and the South East where people may think there's too much development already.

The last time I was at Ladywood community centre, some of the audience said 'Brindleyplace is all very well, but it's not for us. There may be 8,000 people working there, but none of us do.' Then there was a voice that said 'I work there and so does my nephew. I think it's really good.' We employed over 80 security staff and over half lived in the immediate area. But a lot of the new jobs didn't go to people from Ladywood. It's one of the things we're trying to do differently at Kings Cross. There are lots of new jobs here, but at the moment they don't go to people from Sumers Town. Imagine if you're thinking of buying a million pound apartment here or a ten million pound office and you go for a walk through Sumers Town and you get your bag stolen or worse. It's in our economic interest to try to do something about that and many of the people we employ do want to make a positive difference to society as a whole.

## **British Street**

**PLA11**

**17<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

The lead planning officer for the British Street redevelopment had left Tower Hamlets Council at the time of this research and returned to Australia. Efforts were made to contact him via Facebook and email, but without success. PLA11 was able to give a more general account of the LPA's Mixed Use policy and had some knowledge of the British Street case.

**1. Was there anything specific about this scheme that made it suitable for a Mixed Use development? (What were the policy drivers?)**

The Council's working on a hierarchy of town centres based on Mixed Use 'hubs' reflecting the character of each area. British Street is very well connected to local transport links. It isn't what we call a major or district centre, but it's close to the Neighbourhood Centre around Mile End station. Our aim is to reinforce the existing activity of local areas, so having the new shops on Bow Road at British Street was part of that.

**2. Does the LPA feel that the Mixed Use aspiration for this scheme has been achieved? (Is the scheme a success?)**

We were pleased the planning permission enabled the regeneration of the estate and more new homes. We also want to see a public realm that's truly public so we're pleased with some of the environmental improvements. The Tesco Express wasn't part of the original proposal so we didn't specifically evaluate its possible contribution to the area, but the number of other Tesco stores in the borough shows the borough isn't hostile to them and in any event, we don't necessarily have the power to stop them. In general though, outcomes can vary from the intentions of written policy and sticking anything anywhere isn't going to work. Just because you say it's Mixed Use, doesn't mean it's going to work as Mixed Use.



**3. Have any problems arisen with this scheme resulting directly from the Mixed Use concept? (e.g. noise nuisance, ASB, licensing etc.)**

I don't know the detail on that, but I gather there have been some problems with deliveries that are quite common with Mixed Use.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

Yes and certainly in Tower Hamlets we're committed to it. It's central to our understanding of how the borough is changing. Ever since Docklands Tower Hamlets has become more central and more people want to come here to work and live. The Olympic Park is just up the road from British Street and that's going to have a huge effect.

**INT13**

**21<sup>st</sup> September 2010**

INT13 was a British Street resident.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I was born on Fish Island in Bow. It's industrial now, but there used to be loads of nice little terraced houses. I've lived here for about 20 years, but it's so depressing. It was much nicer back then. I know this might sound racist, but every time someone moves out we never get white people. It's always Muslims. I don't think it's fair on the people: especially my own people. There's no one here to talk to. Everybody seems dispirited. Everyone's had trouble with EastEndHomes. Stock transfer's the worst thing that's happened round here. They offered us everything, but we don't have a say in nothing. The work they've done is cheap and nasty.

**2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

Most of the old shops shut down or moved. Some of them haven't received any compensation yet. I knew all the old shop keepers, like Con, he was an Indian fella who had a nice little supermarket. A lot of the elderly people and the kids used to go there for sweets, but now they've got to go to Mile End. We've got supermarkets everywhere round here: why do you need them all? How many Tescos are there? What was originally planned (for the Tesco site) was gardens with a few chairs in it. But as soon as EastEndHomes got in, everything changed. Now everyone's moaning about the deliveries.

**3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability?**

All they've done is given all the property and all the spare land to developers. You've got loads of young children with nowhere to play. They've built new playgrounds, but they've been condemned because they're too near to people's houses. We've got

a community centre, but there's nothing there for me. Why do we need it all?

**4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

I never go to the Tesco. I hate going in there. All the jobs were handed out to Bengali people. I drive to one of the big ones so I don't have to carry it back.

**5. What about the people who've moved into the area, like those who live about the Tesco?**

It's mostly students. All of it was private. The Merchant Quarter it's called. I went to get the sales brochure and they were selling a one bedroom flat for £200,000. A property company bought most of them. I don't know anyone who lives there (the new apartment blocks). You don't hardly see anyone there, that's the trouble. It's such a divided society.

**6. One of the reasons given for the redevelopment was to improve security. Has that changed?**

I don't mind the security works they've done, but it wasn't insecure before. These new windows haven't been fitted properly.

**INT23**

**16<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

INT23 was a senior executive with EastEndHomes.

**1. Was Mixed Use an important part of your development strategy for this scheme and if so, why?**

The key driver was to improve the fabric of the existing dwellings rather than an overarching strategic plan to come up with a Mixed Use development. Because of the relatively small size of the British Street development we were 'plugging in' to the existing infrastructure. But there were some very run down shops in the middle of the estate that weren't very viable in terms of passing trade. At least one of them was no longer a shop, but running Arabic classes and we thought that was the running pattern, so we thought we had to do something with those shops. Part of the overall programme is about mixed tenure. We said to existing shop keepers that we wanted, if possible, to keep them on site, but some of them took the opportunity to move on. We built the shop on the front set out as half a dozen shops, with concrete dividers. As our negotiations (with existing shop keepers) became increasingly fraught, it became clear to us that we weren't necessarily going to be able to maintain that small shop arrangement. Bashing through the concrete cost us a lot of money and we didn't do it lightly. We did consultation on the estate as to the level of support for the existing shops, as opposed to a Tesco. Tesco has this reputation as a giant that gobbles up everything and everyone. However, in the end, we thought it was going to be better for the estate as a whole to have a Tesco there that didn't sell out of date milk and the odd bottle of twenty year old Blue Nun, so those old shopkeepers moved away. What made a difference was that we acted just before the market collapsed. We were able to transfer that land to our development partner (Telford Homes) and we got something in the region of £10 million. We will own the freehold of all the private development on the estate, including Tesco's, but the residential above is leased. We probably earn about £100,000 a year in rent from that land. We didn't do a Mixed Use appraisal. Café's would have been OK. You may not like it, but we'd have thought we'd arrived when there was a Starbucks there or a deli, as well as the pound shop. Tesco doesn't provide that level of diversity, but it is used by a broad

range of people. I went to a seminar where it was argued that the biggest contribution to financial inclusion in Tower Hamlets has been Tesco Metro. A controversial statement, but what it has meant is that everyone has a short walk to a cash point that doesn't cost £1.50. People who opposed our development are using the Tesco and the cash point.

## **2. Do you feel Mixed Use helped you to obtain planning consent?**

We've had constant delays as we've tried to negotiate the different interest groups that are around. I know the planning committee's supposed to be in some ways non-political, but we live in the real world and you need to be aware of the different alliances that you need to have before you get planning permission, whether or not it's Mixed Use. This site was interesting in planning terms because we only provided 11% social housing from the new build. 24 units in total, including five 4 bedroom houses primarily for the people who lived above the shops. They've got solar panels I'm pleased to say. But the Mixed Use issue was peripheral. We got planning permission for retail use and it made no material difference if it was six individual shops or one big one. We were very conscious of how it would look for small businesses to be swallowed up by this giant, but there's always another story.

## **3. Did the Mixed Use concept cause you any problems during the development process and if so, what were they?**

The problem was about changing the nature of the retail and we had a degree of soul-searching about Tesco. We wondered if we could give half the space to them. We were worried about the sandwich shop up the road, but in my view more people are walking passed them to go to Tesco, but getting a coffee on the way back, whereas before that footfall wasn't there. The people moving into the new development mean it's more mixed, so you are getting people with money, people who work. There's a debate about whether that's a good thing, but I think it is because you're getting the diversity. We have been in the danger of creating ghettos of poverty and lifestyle and to start to mix it up is a valuable thing. They keep their metal containers on the path and some of their delivery lorries have broken pavements on the estate and those

management problems are on-going., but rather than having an unreliable rental income, we have a tenant who pays.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

Yes. We think it's a good thing. You're back to definitions of Mixed Use and how it fits in with Mixed Tenure. We're building a new housing centre at the bottom of Emmerdale House and we have another Mixed Use site on Burdett Road. We don't have any plans for another Tesco, but now you mention it...At Wager Street we've got a couple of unused shops and we're providing a children's centre. If you're talking about trying to keep people in the area, you're trying to increase passive policing, you want to dilute the madness, particularly after dark. It can just be people going to the shop or coming home from work at various times, it can be a whole host of things. It's about pragmatically using the resources you have to improve the situation generally. I think in its broadest terms Mixed Use can be good for the environment. If you do have employment close to where people are living, it reduces the carbon footprint, not to mention the psychological benefit of not commuting from Colchester or wherever it may be, I think that's a benefit. By enabling people to live in or remain in the city you're protecting green and other land elsewhere. There is also an argument that higher density is more sustainable, particularly where you've got low income because you need more low incomes to support the shops and businesses.

**5. Why was Tesco your preferred/selected commercial partner?**

We marketed it, but they were the company who expressed the interest.

**6. Has EastEndHomes done any post-completion monitoring to assess the contribution of the retail element to the overall improvement of the estate? (e.g. employment of local people, use by local people, effect on other local businesses, problems with deliveries etc.)**

No. Only anecdotal. Tesco's ran a jobs fair and local people are working there, but it's only anecdotal.

**7. Were the Mixed Communities and or Mixed Tenure policies significant in shaping EastEndHomes' strategy for British Street and if so, in what way?**

Dealt with above.

**8. Has the increased density on British Street had any noticeable effects?**

I don't think so. Because we've been able to reinvest there's better security and with more people in the area, you dilute the cost. It's very difficult. We're being pressed to meet housing need and at the same time being told we can't lose open space. Car parking isn't a problem, at least anecdotally.

**9. Has EastEndHomes taken any specific measures to integrate 'new' residents with 'old'?**

No, I don't think we can say 'here's your welcome pack'. If there's a particular problem, we try to deal with it. But that raises the question of our role. Lots of people view us as another local authority and expect a range of services that arguably lie with other organisations. But there are salsa classes here (the community centre) now, being run as a small business. Social and tenure segregation isn't a problem I've picked up on. When I take people round the estate, they don't always know which is private and which is social. If anything, we have 'new' residents feeling aggrieved that they can't have a parking space and old residents can. There is significant sub-letting, but the agreement we have with Telfords is that they won't sell more than six properties to one investor, but the reality is that most of those new properties are bought as investments. You very rarely get someone who's buying for their home.

**10. Have the perceived problems of excessive permeability and limited tenure diversity been successfully resolved and if so, in what way?**

It's a very difficult issue. The first thing people wanted on this estate was a six foot fence round the perimeter. What we try to do is have more clearly defined routes, combined with a double-level security system. But it's very visually permeable. I'd

like to weave estates back into the fabric of the city.



**INT33**

**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2011**

INT33 was a local councilor for the British Street area and member of the Tower Hamlets planning committee.

**1. Was Mixed Use a consideration in the decision to grant planning permission?**

Mixed Use was one of the arguments used by East End Homes for the redevelopment. The Mixed Use concept is quite good in itself, but in reality it's not working at all. The reason I say that is because most of these developments, especially in Tower Hamlets, were sold in their applications as being the hub of the community, with a community mixture where you'd have someone on a hundred thousand a year and someone on benefits living side by side, with mixed ethnicity. It's a great concept, but unfortunately what happens is that developers say 'this block is for sale and this block is for shared ownership and this block is for social housing'. So yes, block by block it might be Mixed Use, but the estate as a whole isn't. When you put people from the waiting list, from other areas, into the social housing, that block becomes corrupted, or a no-go area then there's a division within the estate. The people who live on the front that have been sold don't go to the ones at the back. Mixed Use should be people living side-by-side, so the next generation engages with each other, but unfortunately, the development isn't allowing that to happen.

On Merchant Street there used to be half a dozen local shops – a pharmacy, a grocery, a newsagent and a community facility. It was a mixture of things. At that time the shops were owned by the Council, so it was affordable. They (East End Homes) said they'd bring the shops on to Bow Road so that you'd have more custom and it would be more visually attractive. But because it was new-build, there was a price premium, so the people who were paying seven or eight thousand a year in rent to the Council were suddenly asked for thirty five thousand. They were offered a ten per cent subsidy, but only for a year, so they were priced out. The existing shop holders were given first choice of the new units, but East End Homes clearly knew they couldn't afford it, so behind the scenes they were talking to Sainsbury and Tesco. When we, as Councillors questioned that, they said 'we have to keep our options open because

we need to make sure we get our rent from day one'. I don't think they ever had any genuine intention to relocate those existing small shops. While the negotiations were going on, there were no partitions, it was just one big space. They put up one partition later, for the Arabic class project, but East End Homes helped him find a better deal elsewhere in Bow, so he moved out, but he was kind of driven out.

**2. Do you feel the scheme has proved a success and if so, is Mixed Use part of the reason?**

It depends how you measure success. The local residents have lost a lot, but East End Homes have got their application through, the developers have gained and the Council has somewhat gained because they got the receipts and the section 106, but the local residents did not gain anything. They thought they were getting new houses, but that wasn't the case. Instead they lost their open space for new developments here and there. So the question of success depends on who you are. East End Homes did consultation, but it was false. The people living in the big flats on top of the shops were promised new homes with gardens and I helped them. They said 'if we don't get them, we're not moving'. East End Homes denied they'd made the promises, but I went to a meeting where I didn't say I was a councilor and the person who'd made the promises for East End Homes admitted it. After that, they gave them the new houses.

The estate looks fantastic on the outside, but it's become more problematic. People can't find their way now because where there used to be open space, there's now new blocks. Even the postmen (sic) can't find their way. I can't find my way. There's no proper signposting and it's over developed. You can see through other people's windows.

Tesco, as a giant, can get the best price and in an area like Mile End East, where lots of people are on benefit, want the best for their money. But in terms of customer service and the localness, where people used to go to the shops and say 'John, can you give this message to Jack when he passes', those things have gone. So it's mixed. Tesco is cheaper, but instead of local people knowing 'John' from the shops, today it's 'Salim' working at Tesco, but tomorrow it will be 'Ben' and then the third day it

will be 'Simon'. Their workforce is constantly changing. They have a community notice board, but it's tucked away and you don't really see it, whereas with the old shops you had six owners, plus another twelve people working and you can leave a message with them, or use their windows to put up notices. You have to get permission from Tesco. The manager has to go to the director for agreement. As a councilor, I used to put my surgery details up in the local shops, but when Tesco came along, I wanted to put something on their community notice board and it took them three months to agree.

But people do use the Tesco because it's nearest: they have no other choice. But Tesco don't cater for their needs like the old shops used to. .

**3. Have any problems arisen with the scheme resulting from the Mixed Use concept?**

Yes, when a delivery lorry comes to the front on Bow Road, it takes up the bus and cycle lane. When they go to the back they block the pavement. I used to get a lot of complaints about it.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I don't see much of a change.

**5. What do you think about the wider development of the Mile End East area?**

We always opposed the development on small plots of green space. But the planners just used to say 'so long as it's within the planning guidance, we have nothing to say'. Eventually you'll have no green space at all. The government of the time introduced the rules to protect green space, but the housing associations are rewriting them. They're taking over our properties for one pound and making a fortune. I'm not against development, but it needs to be looked at properly. .

**6. What kind of place do you think British Street will be in five or ten years?**

East End Homes are also bidding for the St Clement's site and that will be overdeveloped too. There's not going to be any harmony with people living so close to each other and tensions around community space. People are already leaving the area, but the ghetto will still be there in a single block at the far end of the estate and it's going to get worse.

**7. What contact, if any, did you have with the people who live in the flats above Tesco's?**

They were just moving in as my term as a councillor finished, but most of those flats have been sold to the kind of people who don't really need councillors to help them. They know what they're doing.

In terms of 'mixed communities' benefiting the original residents it's been a total failure. The local people are still suffering. Those people who were overcrowded are still overcrowded.

East End Homes threw a sweet in the bucket for the local Muslim community by saying they'd provide a prayer room if people supported the development application. A lot of people didn't know what they were getting into, but the developer arranged two buses to take residents to the planning committee meeting. They fed them too. They printed out banners saying 'yes', but as soon as the application had gone through, people were coming to me and saying 'can we have our new home now?' and I said 'no, what's been agreed is new homes for sale'.

**INT34**

**24<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

INT34 was a British Street resident.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

We've lived on the British Street estate, in the same flat, since long before the redevelopment began. We were council tenants and moved from E1. The area has changed: it's more than a face-life. It's unrecognizable, but there are a lot of good features. The estate is clean, it's much better than it was, but that the losses are also great. The heart has been ripped out of the community. There were shops there, with people living above the shops and a little community centre, but now nobody has a place where they can meet. There is a new community centre, but it's split into two. On one side you've got the mosque and the other side is controlled by John Smith and one side doesn't meet the other side. John uses the centre as he pleases. If you want to use it, you have to go through him. John and East End Homes wield a lot of power. On the other side you've got the mosque and that's only for one part of the community, the Bangladeshi population. So it's created separation. Also, all the shops that had a cultural element to them have gone, replaced by Tesco. The area has been cleansed of certain communities. A lot of the new people don't have linkage to the area. I don't know them. It's a great loss, a pity, a shame. Tesco has killed the community, but it's not really Tesco, it's the people who brought Tesco in – East End Homes. The other thing that's hurt the community is all the promises we were made before we signed away our tenancies. You know, that there would be new homes for the community and a community centre with multi-purpose use. Nobody told us that we'd get new kitchens and bathrooms, but as far as overcrowding, concerned, nothing would be done. There are still families living on top of families. Only 20% of the new homes were made available for bidding and then you had to bid against the whole borough and that was not explained. We were duped. There's a lot of anger that's still continuing. East End Homes treats you with contempt.

**2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

For me, there's nothing good to say about the Tesco.

**3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability?**

In Tower Hamlets you've got a lot of families with a lot of children and you need to take that into account. You have to look at it in a holistic way. If I use the 25 bus, for instance, how much shopping can I carry when I have a large family? Large families need to go to the supermarket and do bulk shopping, not pay the high prices of the local Tesco. When you live on your own, you buy one item. When you've got a large family you buy in bulk at Asda or large store Tesco because that's where the bargains are. So you're creating an environment for the few, but the majority suffers when you come up with these things like car free zones. Everywhere there's development going on, but it's not for local people, it's for the greed of East End Homes. It's got nothing to do with sustainability. If they could build on Mile End Park, they would.

**4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

Do I have a choice? My choice has been taken away. When you have a family and you run out of something, that's where you go. The Bangladeshi families used to get their fish delivered and were able to get their specialized food locally, but they can't get that from Tesco.

**5. What about the people who've moved into the area, like those who live about the Tesco?**

They're students, young professionals and professionals who don't have any affiliation to the area. They're people who can pack up their bags and go at any moment. I think it serves East End Homes well because that's the kind of people they're looking for because they want a turnover, rather than a community. You've got people moving in who've got money to spend, but local people have been priced out of using local facilities. It's not creating communities, it's creating consumerism,

animosity and friction. And a lot of people have moved out. I can afford to move out, but only if I go to Dagenham. The point I'm trying to make is that people who've lived in the area most of their lives have moved out and been replaced by people who can afford the going rate.

**6. One of the reasons given for the redevelopment was to improve security. Has that changed?**

People are missing the point. To feel safe and secure is important, but you can't just build a castle around the outside and not do anything inside. Anti-social behaviour stems from inside the home, so if you're overcrowded and children haven't got a space where they can do their homework, that is where anti-social behaviour begins.

**INT38**

**16<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

INT38 was a British Street resident.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I've been living here for 43 years, so no. There was only one high rise block built when I moved here. The first fifteen years were absolutely out of this world. It was new: old people could sit outside and have a picnic without being bothered by youths or children. It was idyllic. People thought about each other and the reason they did was that most of the people who moved in were from bombed out homes or slums, so it was marvelous. We had systems and rotas for cleaning the landings, people made sure their children didn't disturb other people. The other thing people liked was that it cost four pounds, seven and six a week all in. Then the incoming people changed and the whole concept changed. An influx of people came who weren't British and didn't really know the way of life. When we have immigrants, we should tell them what it's all about, but if they don't know, they act like they did where they came from, so it doesn't give them a fair chance. But I've managed to make friends with everyone. I've been elected to the residents' Board four times.

**2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

No. Tesco do their deliveries early, so they don't disturb anybody.

**3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability?**

I think it's improved. The biggest problem with new build is 'them and us' – tenants renting from the council and tenants renting privately. We're losing a little bit of green space, but the grassed areas where the new buildings are were never used. So this screaming about open space – they don't use it. It's a weapon to use against EastEndHomes, but they don't remember what it used to be like, how much rubbish



there was and that's improved one hundred per cent.

**4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

Yes, I do quite a bit of shopping there if I can't get to the big one. It's always crowded. The prices are a big high, but the community didn't lose anything by losing the local shops. They weren't cheap either. The old grocer's used to be more expensive than Tesco is. Plus they used to sell alcohol to the kids.

**5. What about the people who've moved into the area, like those who live above the Tesco?**

A lot of the new homes have been bought by investors, particularly from Hong Kong. So they rent it out and some of the tenants are terrible. They make noise, have parties, throw rubbish – and they're all youngsters. They're all on six month tenancies. It's the agents who do it. We let the new residents know what we're doing here at the community hall and one or two have shown an interest, but overall they know they're only here for six months and it's a problem.

**6. Do you think the redevelopment of British Street has been a success?**

I'm very happy with the outcome and with EastEndHomes. People come to me with a problem because they know I'll get on to EastEndHomes and they'll fix it right away.

We had three murders where the shops used to be and that's why we decided there wouldn't be any shops there. We don't have the problems we used to have.

**7. Do you think British Street could be described as a 'mixed community'?**

We have a very racially mixed community here. We built a cultural hall for the Asian community and anyone else who wants to use it, but as it happens it's just the Asian community that use it, as a prayer room, or for whatever they want to do. We had an election for the Mile End Board here recently and I was re-elected. The white, black and Chinese community didn't come out to vote, they're apathetic. It's the same with

council or general elections. All my votes came from the Asian community.

When we were negotiating the transfer of the estate of EastEndHomes we said we wanted to make each of the estates like a little village. People would know each other, families would be close together instead of miles apart, but it never happened because the lettings policy was still set by the Council. They don't look to see who their letting to. When I first moved here they came to see me, then they watched to see if I paid my rent regularly. They looked into all that before they made me an offer. Now there's no vetting procedure and I'd like EastEndHomes to have that power because we know who the families are. There'd be less trouble and people would know each other. If someone was causing trouble, we could go to the parents and say 'have a word'.

Virtually, we're all strangers. I know lots of people, but that's because of what I do. But the majority of people only know each other to say 'hello' in the lift. There's no friendship. I can't even organize a dance here because people won't come. I've tried to organize trips and I have to go out of the estate to get people to fill up the coach. People say 'I don't want to go, I don't know anyone'. I remember as a youngster London was one of the hardest places to make friends. You can make acquaintances, but you can't make friends. We had a great opportunity to do something that I think would have been good, but it hasn't happened and I don't think it will in my lifetime.

**INT40/41**

**22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011**

INT40 and INT41 are neighbours in the British Street area and at their request, were interviewed together.

**1. How do you feel about the arrival of Tesco as part of the British Street regeneration?**

INT40            In the beginning I was very principled. I wasn't going to go there, but one day I did and it was very handy I'm afraid. When I pick up my daughter from school it's just across the road and I can do a bit of shopping on the way home. I've been completely roped into the Tesco world!

INT41            I've been shopping there late at night, on the way home, for a couple of beers when I know the off licence is going to be closed.'

We've asked them to put up information about MERA on their community notice board, but they never have.'

**2. Do you know any of the people who have moved into the new blocks on British Street?**

INT41            I read in the paper an estate agent saying that in the new 'Merchant's Quarter, all of the new flats have been sold to institutional investors.

INT40            I know someone whose child goes to the same school as mine.'

**3. How do you feel more generally about the regeneration of the area?**

INT41            MERA's objection to the planning application was based on loss of open space, the bulk of the buildings, insufficient car parking and insufficient social housing. We're not against regeneration, but we object to the method of

consultation and the way that claims and promises are made and then broken.

INT40 It hasn't got any better. It just gets deeper and deeper. Every day they do something they shouldn't do, they omit something they should do.

INT41 There's a lack of information. People don't trust them.

**4. Some people I've spoken to have closely linked regeneration to issues of ethnicity. How do you feel about that?**

INT41 I've often said that a lot of political decisions in this borough are made in a language I don't understand in a place I never go to and I have no knowledge of them. But that's to be expected. The Bangladeshi community is more politically motivated. A lot of people have said to me 'go to the mosque' if you want to influence people.

**5. Do you identify the concept of Mixed Use with environmental issues?**

INT41 The quality of the open space was one of the main arguments used to justify the regeneration, but they're back tracking on it now. This drawing shows all the lovely stuff we were supposed to have, with trees, landscaped areas and lovely playgrounds. Now they're saying they want to make it all simple grassed areas. It could be nice, but it also looks like it might be a lot cheaper. They said they were going to spend £12 million on environmental improvements, but they only raised £8 million in section 106 contributions, so we've always asked 'where's the other £4 million going to come from?' We've suffered a loss of green space, but they say they're going to find more.

INT40 But it's just a desk job. Someone sits with a spreadsheet and says 'here's a number and there's a bit of green space.'

INT41 The most used bit of open space on the estate was never classified as open space.

INT40 One of the new playgrounds on British Street had a fence round it for ages saying 'children, no access' because it wasn't safe.

**6. Do you use the community centre on British Street?**

INT40 I have done. They run some very good children's sessions which I went to before my daughter started school. Now I might go there for a Board meeting or councillor's surgery.

**7. Are you optimistic about the future of the area, once the regeneration has finished?**

INT41 It's nice to have two community centres, but I suspect that EastEndHomes will play their normal games and keep them out of resident's control. If you want to hire the space at the British Street community centre it costs £80 an hour. The community centres become a chip, a bargaining chip between the RSL and residents. But there's no money to run them.

INT40 When I look out of my window I can see five new blocks and it saddens me. At the moment I have to live with the dust and the noise, but that doesn't really bother me, it's the next twenty years that worry me. It's the taking away of space. Hamlets Way is going to be like a tunnel, with three big blocks built right up to the pavement. It saddens me that someone would come along and do this to us. It's too much. Regeneration's fine and we need more housing, but it could be more moderate and consider the environment more and include more social housing, but most of the new homes are for private sale. It's a money-grabbing property development mentality.

**8. Do you relate to the concept of 'mixed community'?**

INT41 We're not going to get a mixed community. We're going to get an ever changing community because it's all private renting. I don't think it works because the new developments are so different to the existing surroundings.

There's one new block on Commercial Road that's being sold as a gated community with the advertising slogan 'G and T, not DLR'. You'll get people buying it as second homes. It's appealing to an upper class market of people who drink alcohol.

INT40

It's a bit different round here. Because of the location, near to Canary Wharf and Mile End tube, it's a prime 'buy to let' market. People aren't being attracted to the qualities of the area, it's about transport.

## Charter Quay

INT22

9<sup>th</sup> March 2011

INT22 was the lead planning officer for the Charter Quay development.

### **1. Was there anything specific about this scheme that made it suitable for a Mixed Use development? (What were the policy drivers?)**

Two things. First, the council had an aspiration for a theatre and secondly there was a change of policy direction whereby we wanted to bring more housing into the town centre, to make it more of a living centre where there's activity throughout the day, rather than just during business hours and to make it a safer place at night. There are quite a lot of people who like town centre living. The town centre used to be very chaotic. The relief road made it possible to pedestrianise, but there was still a feeling that a lot of the development turned its back on the river, whereas it should have been making better use of the river and pulling it into the town centre. This site offered an opportunity to rejuvenate the market place and bring some life back into the town centre. Before that the site had been through various uses – warehousing, a car park, river-trades. The earliest ideas were that the new development would be commercially based, but that fell by the wayside. Mixed Use was developing as a policy and bringing residential back into the centre seemed like a better idea and the market conditions enabled us to take that idea forward.

### **2. Does the LPA feel that the mixed use aspirations for this scheme have been achieved? (Is the scheme a 'success'?)**

I think so. Certainly St George (the developer) sees it as a flag-ship, even though it was a huge learning curve for them too. They had to put up with a lot of issues, but they've won various awards for it. It doesn't have some of the uses you might expect for a town centre site because there was this all-consuming desire for the theatre and it wasn't feasible to get a lot of other community benefits that we might have sought, although if you look at the section 106, we did get quite a lot

**3. Have any problems arisen with this scheme resulting directly from the mixed use concept? (e.g. noise nuisance, ASB, licensing etc)**

Yes, the A3 uses, but that's all died down a bit. I think people who moved into the scheme bought off plan and there was a degree of realism missing. They were expecting an idyllic riverside location within walking distance of the town centre and views of Hampton Court palace and what they got was quite a noisy environment. But I think a number of the original residents have moved on and new residents are a bit more realistic. There's still a bit of a problem in freshers week, but we tend to expect the town centre to get a bit wrecked then and it's not just Charter Quay. But we impress on residents when we meet them that they're buying into a town centre location and of course there's going to be a bit of noise. There were a lot of teething problems, but we've worked with them on things like getting bin and bottle collections at more civilised times. I think things have quietened down. We don't get as many complaints and I think it helps that we confronted it head on and tried to address the problems.

**4. Do you think mixed use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I think so.

**5. What drove the LPA's policy turn towards Mixed Use?**

It was about the early 90s that it really started to take off and I've always thought of it in a positive way. The night time economy is very beneficial to the borough.

**6. Was sustainability part of the justification, particularly as the borough as a 'green' reputation?**

Probably

**7. Was it Mixed Use or the new theatre that was the main driver for Charter Quay?**



The theatre with Mixed Use blending in as it became more of a key policy.

**8. Why was the theatre seen as so important?**

The Arts Committee had done a survey and identified a theatre as the main priority as part of making the town centre more diverse and attracting a wider range of age groups. It was getting a reputation as the preserve of the young and that it wasn't a safe place to be at night.

**9. What could the Council have done differently at Charter Quay?**

Some of the original problems are a bit historic as we've got a new use class order now. But with hindsight we'd have specified a number of different A1 and A3 uses instead of leaving it in the hope that we'd get a mix. We also found out that with St George being mostly a residential developer they didn't design in some of the potential uses like extract flues for ground floor A3 uses so we had a lot of issues about how we could deal with smell and noise. There's been some retro-fitting. We've had a lot of problems with the A3 uses. And we've had issues with the wetlands and the residential (houseboat) moorings. It was a very steep learning curve because this one application through up so many issues. Sometimes St George's employed planning consultants to say why they couldn't do things, but at the end of the day we're all on good terms.

**10. Did relaxing of drinking hours aggravate the A3 use factor?**

I'm not aware of that and there's a condition saying they can't stay open after midnight and we wouldn't extend that, bearing in mind the past history.

**11. Has Charter Quay set a precedent for development in the area?**

Nothing on the same scale. There's a Hammerson scheme being planned for the whole of the town centre that will be Mixed Use, but I'm not sure where that's going.

**12. Does the borough monitor car use or residents' travel patterns?**

No, I don't know.

**13. Why is there no affordable housing on the development?**

We looked at it, but it made the scheme unviable. It was a criticism that was leveled by a number of people at the time. The idea of mixed tenure housing didn't arise because of the theatre, otherwise we would have gone down that route, but the theatre was a £5 million package.

**INT24**

**30th March 2011**

INT24 was an executive with the developers and owners of Charter Quay, St.George PLC.

**1. Was mixed use an important part of your development strategy for this scheme and if so, why?**

At the outset it's important to understand what Charter Quay was like because that would lead you to the view that Mixed Use was the only way to approach the site. Like some of our other sites, Charter Quay is in the middle of the town centre and was surrounded by some shops that weren't really contributing to the town centre. As a result, trade was drifting away and it's a bit of spiral of decline. Once a part of a town centre starts to decline there's less incentive for people to use it and you need to stop that spiral of decline and that was the aim of Charter Quay: to stitch the urban fabric back together again. It's worked very successfully. I think it had been a purely residential scheme I don't think it would have worked. But I don't think the local authority would have been happy if it hadn't been Mixed Use because the site fronts on to the town square and the river and we want to encourage people to use them. It's not completely altruistic on our part because by creating those places we add value to the residential. You can't quantify it, but if you're selling flats in a vibrant, town centre place with a bit of life to it, rather than some potentially soulless 100% residential scheme, I think you're going to enjoy an improvement in values. So Mixed Use was an essential part of the development strategy for the scheme, as it is for a lot of our sites. It doesn't suit everyone, but we're happy to take on the different issues around Mixed Use, even the basic ones like soil and vent pipes not going through someone's living room. You learn by your mistakes, but we've tackled those issues and we've made sure we don't damage the viability of any of the uses that make up the scheme. It's easy to design a scheme that works very well for residential and the commercial on the ground floor's a bit of an after-thought. The problem with that is that you don't find users for the commercial uses and that damages the residential sales. All these things need to be seen as one.

**2. Do you feel mixed use helped you to obtain planning consent?**

At Charter Quay it was essential. Everyone was alive to the point that you needed to arrest the decline of the town centre. Even if Mixed Use hadn't become a bit of policy buzz word, as it was at the time, it would still have been the right development solution. What's the point of creating a residential enclave that doesn't generate footfall or vitality?

**3. Did the mixed use concept cause you any problems during the development process and if so, what were they?**

Mixed Use does present challenges. At Charter Quay there have been issues about how the night-time economy interacts with the residential uses. The scheme became an instant hit with the pub-going crowd, so there was noise and that was a problem for some of the residents, but it has settled down. There are other issues, like the management of service bays, keeping them looking good, issues with refuse and we've had some problems with the wetlands and moorings. So there are issues, but the proof of the pudding is probably the success of the place. If you go down there most days it's a viable place, the square is well used, the commercial units are all let and the residential units have enjoyed good growth in their values. These things are all symptomatic of a successful place. We don't have an involvement in day-to-day management, but if we saw a place was being mismanaged we'd step in because it's our reputation that's at stake. On a lot of our Mixed Use estates there needs to be a high degree of management.

**4. Do you think mixed use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

Mixed Use will always have a place. There's always been Mixed Uses – flats above shops – but it's a question of scale. It will remain an important part of planning policy because you need to create vibrancy and place making and you don't make places without a mix of uses. But I don't think you can force the market in a way it doesn't want to go. You need to be careful where planning policy requires you to develop a use that wouldn't naturally be in a particular location and the economics aren't there to support it. You end up with a void commercial unit that doesn't contribute to the place and isn't likely to for the foreseeable future. When that

happens developers tend to pay lip service to the policy and therefore you get commercial properties that are developed in an attractive way and that leads to another planning issue of how you use that space and a possible change of use. In the meantime, a boarded up shop doesn't help anyone. We built a scheme in 2004 where we sold the commercial units and they've stayed empty. In hindsight that may have been a mistake because the vacant commercial unit detracts from the vibrancy of the piazza. What we should have done is kept control of the commercial unit and find an occupier at a reduced rent because having the unit let would have had a knock-on effect in improving the value of the residential units. The whole economic picture needs to be looked at together.

**5. How do you think the Mixed Use concept relates to the 'sustainability' agenda?**

Most of our Mixed Use schemes are near a decent transport node. In fact Charter Quay is one of the furthest, but Kingston still has a reasonable railway service. But most of our Mixed Use sites are quite close to transport so are inherently sustainable from that point of view. They do give people the option to pop down stairs to do some shopping, even if it's just a pint of milk or a loaf of bread so it does change people's travel habits and we find that most of our car parks are 60% full at any one time and most of those cars just don't move. We did a 21<sup>st</sup> century London living survey which looked at the difference between car ownership and car usage and what we've found is that we didn't need the high levels of car parking that planning was looking for and we wanted empirical evidence to show to the local authority. Then things shifted a bit with PPG 13 and it's about constantly finding the balance between what members want, what officers want and what we want. At some of our schemes we're also putting in business centres and our standard specification has room for a desk for home workers. We always try to stay ahead of the policy debate and at the moment we're building in excess of the building regulations and we do monitor things like green travel plans.

**6. St George's is best known as a residential developer. Did this make developing Charter Quay more difficult in any way?**

It hasn't really raised any issues because Mixed Use has become ingrained in the

company. We have to look at what's the most economic and profitable way of developing a site, but while working within the constraints of planning policy. Sometimes we've had to address the right skills for Mixed Use and we have to keep challenging Mixed Use design, but if an architect or another developer showed us a wholly residential scheme there might be a sharp intake of breath and we'd ask 'where's the life in the area, where are the shops, how far's the station, how are people actually going to live in this scheme?' We know that adding a commercial component and creating a place will mean it's more attractive to buyers. It's not altruistic. Bear in mind, we're selling a life-style to people, so even if they're not actually going to pop downstairs to enjoy a cocktail on the drinks terrace or use the residents' gym, we want them to think they are and know that they can.

**7. Has the company's attitude to mixed use changed since Charter Quay?**

Not really. We've got numerous examples of successful Mixed Use schemes across London and we know that our residents would rather live in a place than a residential development.

**8. Was the company happier to build a theatre than affordable housing?**

Back when we got planning permission in September 1998, affordable housing was there as a policy and was probably becoming more important, but there were more examples of schemes where affordable housing wasn't such a large component. But we weren't resistant to it at Charter Quay. It was a question of what did the Council and the community want to see on the site and the answer at the time was a new theatre. It's still a bit of a hot potato. Some saw a new theatre as fantastic, but others say most of the people who use it aren't from the town and there are empty seats, but we don't have any involvement in it, we just built the shell. I'm not sure that people recognize Charter Quay's connection to the theatre because of the location. I think a lot of theatre-goers park their car opposite and then go home without going into Charter Quay.

**9. Was the mix of uses at Charter Quay taken into account in the design?**

Yes, it wasn't an after-thought and a lot of care has gone into how the mixed uses operate. We wanted life round the piazza. There are the classic issues about how you protect residential amenity from late night disturbance, but I think those issues have settled down. We sold the commercial space to a pension fund so we don't have control over it, but empty space has been re-let very quickly.

**10. Has the company used any experiences from Charter Quay at subsequent developments?**

It was a more vibrant place than even we'd expected because of the high proportion of A3 uses so we've learned about the issues around noise. So we now make it very clear to purchasers from the outset what Mixed Use might actually mean. At other places we've not had 'wet led' development. There are other little issues like materials and public art that are day-to-day micro-management, but Charter Quay is such a successful place that you're being hyper-critical if you focus on small things. We don't tend to offer the public space up for adoption by the local authority, we always retain control of it. We don't want to burden the local authority, but sometimes the reasons for the failures of Mixed Use come when a bit of paving doesn't get replaced. We say 'this is a privately owned, but publicly accessible place'. We're happy to agree that we will keep it open 24 hours a day and we won't look to exclude anyone we don't like the look of. It's a public space, but it's privately maintained because we want to make sure that if we need to paint a lamp-post we can get on do it. We don't have to wait for the local council to do it. It's important that if you're creating fabulous new areas of public realm that they're still like that in a decades' time. Charter Quay has been so successful place because the structure was set up properly at the outset, including legal issues or over-lapping leases, to make sure everyone knows who has to deal with what issue.

**GP6**

**30<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

Following protracted email communications, a group discussion was held with six Charter Quay residents.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason you moved to your home?**

We moved here in 2003. The area was determined by the job. I needed to be near the University. We wanted somewhere central and somewhere safe for our son who was 17 at the time. We rented here first. Charter Quay had become a bit of a benchmark. Other places we looked at just weren't as attractive. So it was the quality of the environment.

I lived in Wimbledon before I came here. I knew about the development and I like Kingston. I thought Charter Quay would suit my lifestyle, but Mixed Use wasn't really a factor.

I also got a job at the University. I'd been working abroad and wanted to be near work. We'd been renting a flat a bit further down the river, but Charter Quay is the development that everyone wants to be in. We've got one of the flats that over-looks the market place rather than the river. The Mixed Use was something we liked a lot. We liked the fact that the centre of Kingston has a rather Continental feel about it. You could be on the mainland of Europe, with all the restaurants, it felt like somewhere very different. On a day like today you can go out to all the lovely bars and cafes and just sit there and take it all in.

We used to live in Esher. This is our geriatric move. We wanted a house right by the river, but I saw the Mixed Use as a big downside, but there are so many upsides. I used to be a magistrate here so I know all about crime and drugs and we were moving into the middle of it.

I wanted to have the sense that I was in the centre of things.



## **2. Have any problems arisen from the Mixed Use concept?**

Many. If the planners had been a bit more intelligent and not been misled by the developers who had some very misleading information when they were selling the flats, many of these problems would have been averted. Sixty per cent of leaseholders buy to rent and they let to people who are very different to themselves, mainly younger, who couldn't care less about the long-term. They're just here for a while and then moving on. Mixed with that you've got the other forty per cent who have very different objectives and are very concerned about their property values and disorder and want peace. The sales literature suggested the commercial units would have boutiques selling Gucci handbags, without any idea of restaurants and certainly no fast food ones and they trailed this around the world to bring in a lot of people. The types of fast food restaurants we've got are out to make as quick a buck as they can. They have commission only managers and they attract a profile which is very different. So if the planners had had any intelligence they would have realised they were bringing together various socio-economic groups that won't mix.

I think there is a tension. There's quite a lot of consultation going on with the Council about licencing and Cumulative Impact Zones. The underlying tension is that you've got groups with different objectives and different styles. In a Mixed Use development you've got businesses that vary, some are more responsible than others, but some just have managers in who want to hit the bottom line, so they'll do anything to get the turnover and if that means ignoring licencing conditions they'll do that. Most of the units here aren't that responsible because they have managers, they don't have people who live here in the community. So given that, there's lots of drinking and that creates a tension with the people who live here, who like the buzz of the town, but their reaches a point when the alcohol and the shouting rises and that's where the tension arises.

I don't think you can put all the responsibility for that onto the commercial units. There are six or more nightclubs around Kingston and although this is a private development, the public can walk through it, so the disruption isn't necessarily from the commercial units here, it's from people walking through, going from one nightclub to another.

There can be 15,500 people coming into Kingston just to drink.

University's just started. Its fresher's week. Usually it's terrible on a Friday and Saturday, but for the next couple of weeks it's likely to be bad any night of the week.

The attractions where are feeder pubs where you get sozzled before you go somewhere else and the river has a magnetic attraction if you're stoned out of your mind and want to create mayhem. So you get one wave and then you get another.

Charter Quay is just a microcosm of central Kingston where over 8000 people live and almost twice as many people coming in at night. This area is the main focus for the west and south-west of London. People come to Kingston from all over the area to go clubbing.

Especially in the summer months, down by the river is such a lovely place for them to start the evening. The other thing to note is that Charter Quay is made up of a number of different buildings that have rather different profiles. In my block we don't have any river views and so property tend to be cheaper and we tend to have more letting to younger people and it can be very noisy. The other problem we have is that we have a very large commercial unit underneath us and we think they've been charging us extra in maintenance charges.

There's been a lot of skulduggery because the managing agents also own tow of the units and they've been putting some of their charges onto the residents, but we've discovered it now.

I think one of the main problems is with absentee landlords and I wonder if that's any greater here than in other places.

We're not having benches!

### **3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to environmental sustainability?**

I work sixty miles away! Where I work has never been a factor in where I live and I just drive, but at weekends I try not to. I used to live in a fantastic residential development, but there were no other services like cafes or restaurants, so I think this is a better community.

The planners need to check socio-economic groups and age groups.

When we were moving in it was very important, because of having a 17 year old, to be in the middle of everything. It's convenient

It's a question of convenience rather than the environmental benefits. It's not even the actual development itself because there are no shops you'd use and there's no commercial activity going on here that would create a sustainable community where people could go downstairs and work. It's the restaurants, the theatre and an estate agent. It's not going to sustain a community of 240 people. The people who work here wouldn't be able to afford to live here.

The theory's a nice one, where you have a community of different sorts of people and different activities. It is quite attractive. The difficulty is you've got these conflicts between different activities and different age groups.

But we do have 94% membership of our residents association because England is nest in adversity and we've had a major financial problem and everyone's talking to each other and it's made a sea of difference. In fact, it's like a village.

**4. Do you use the Mixed Use facilities where you live (including the Rose theatre)?**

(Laughter) Only some, not all of them. There's a fantastic Malay restaurant downstairs and a small café in the centre. And of course now there's the theatre.

I like to support the theatre. I'd go to things I probably wouldn't if I had to go into central London.

The theatre has changed the nature of the area tremendously.

It's not been without its problems or controversy though. Some people were worried about even more outsiders traipsing through. We hadn't realised there was a trade-off between the theatre and affordable housing, at which point, faced with the alternative, everyone who'd been complaining about it shut up.

The sort of people who come to the theatre, compared to those who come here to drink and go clubbing, aren't a problem.

#### **5. To what extent is 'ASB' a problem at Charter Quay?**

The area around Clarence Street is amongst the top ten worst in London for ASB.

If you don't drive, the walk from Kingston station at night can be very scary. Some people won't do it.

The market place is terrible for noise, until three in the morning and the police don't do anything.

There's been an improvement in policing since the riots.

They want a new nightclub now, for 2000 people.

People want to come here to start the evening off.

If you were to replace 'Slug and Lettuce' with a decent restaurant, that would pretty much deal with the Charter Quay generated problems.

If comes down to the attitude we have in this country to alcohol.

We don't really have problems within Charter Quay itself.

The main problem is with the Slug and Lettuce.

**6. How would you describe the character of the Charter Quay development?**

It really is night and day. In the daytime, it's one of the nicest places you could imagine, with the river and all the amenities you could want. Kingston is a wonderful place to live, until the sun goes down. Then you don't want to go out on the streets, you feel uncomfortable, it's noisy.

They're completely different people. You've got all the Gucci handbag people during the day and people pinching them during the evening.

We wouldn't be living here if we wanted to live in the country.

INT44

13<sup>th</sup> October 2011

INT44 was a local ward councillor for the Charter Quay area.

**1. Was Mixed Use a consideration in the decision to grant planning permission and does the LPA regard Mixed Use as a mechanism for promoting ‘sustainability’?**

There was also an aim to bring people from the town centre to the riverside, using the riverside as a destination, thereby creating a draw to Kingston for shopping and leisure. Fifteen or twenty years ago the river was more or less shunned by the town, so Charter Quay has been really positive.

My understanding of Mixed Use is primarily based on promoting efficient land use, rather than sustainability. The borough as a whole is short of available development land, brown or green field, so in order to promote growth, Mixed Use has to be part of the conversation.

**2. Do you feel the scheme has proved a success and if so, is Mixed Use part of the reason?**

I think so. It's not without its issues, but without Charter Quay I don't think we'd have such a positive riverside.

**3. Have any problems arisen with the scheme resulting from the Mixed Use concept?**

All of the ground floor uses are restaurant or bars and the licenses are fairly late so there are problems with noise and anti-social behavior for some of the Charter Quay residents, although I haven't had that many direct complaints myself. Now the riverside is a destination that attracts lots of people, there are issues around litter and whose responsibility it is to clean it up. The management company at Charter Quay is quite wary of people drinking alcohol on their land and has tried to stamp it out, which has also caused some tensions. It becomes a problem of what authority the

management company has, is it happy to delegate powers to the local authority and is it prepared to pay for that? To what extent is the management company seeking to enforce its own rules, but looking for the local authority to be involved in that? Aside from the section 106 agreement, as private landlords, they can effect rules and regulations they want, but that becomes in issue when those rules are significantly different to the local authority's. So, for example, these are no alcohol enforcement areas in central Kingston, although that might change. There's a bit of an issue at Eagle Brewery wharf, just along from Charter Quay: near Woodies bar, the Council, with TfL redeveloped the site, essentially as public realm and it's popular. A lot of young people use it in the evening, socialise, drink, but that continues into the small hours and there's a lot of residential accommodation around there.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

We're seeing quite a lot of development activity at the moment and applications for what you might call retrospective Mixed Use, with retail and office space being converted for restaurants and leisure. But we've also got a development where the commercial use on the ground floor has never been let and we're giving permission for that to be converted to residential.

**5. Is the Council still committed to promoting a nighttime economy?**

We need to develop an evening economy in the town centre because when the shops shut at 6 or 7 o'clock, so there's this big dip until people start arriving for a night out. There's also a bit of a vacuum in the middle of town. We have Charter Quay on one side of Kingston and the clubs on the other, but not much in-between. It's a bit of a dead zone. We're particularly looking at how we can attract people to the market square in the evening. We already have quite a large town centre residential population.

**6. To what extent is 'ASB' a problem at Charter Quay?**

The amount of my casework relating to ASB is relatively low. The main issue we hear in relation to Charter Quay is the public houses in the vicinity who smoking

areas that may cause disturbance to residents, rather than anything that's specific to Charter Quay. I don't see ASB as a major issue here.

There are some misunderstandings about the level of crime in Kingston town centre. There's a statistic about Grove ward being the third most dangerous ward in London. Grove ward is the only ward in London that has the whole of the town centre within its boundary. If you were to split the central area between more than one ward, it would be no more dangerous than anywhere else.

Safety often comes up as an issue in the town centre at night. I think it's a perfectly safe place to go, but there are two aspects to Kingston. The daytime shopping draw is almost regional. People come from a long way to come here and shop – from as far away as Guildford and Aldershot – which is great, People also travel a long way to get here and socialise in the evening which has economic benefits, but it does need to be managed.

Kingston may become a cumulative impact zone, meaning no more licenses to be granted for pubs and nightclubs in the town centre. At the moment Council's don't have much power to prevent the granting of licenses, unless there are specific objections.

**7. One feature of Charter Quay is that there's no affordable housing. Is that something that worries you for future Mixed Use developments?**

The theory of mixed communities is fantastic. I love the concept, if you can develop it. In Grove ward the social and council housing is almost undistinguishable from the rest of the stock. There is a danger of creating socially exclusive areas. There needs to be a very strong reason why affordable housing can't be co-located with new developments, but developers come to us pleading viability testing.



## **GMV**

**INT20**

**14<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

INT20 was a GMV resident.

### **1. Was Mixed Use part of your reason for moving here?**

No. We moved here from Plumstead about four years ago. We moved for practical, not ideological reasons. We needed a ground floor flat adapted for people with disability and we were offered this by the housing association as the first occupants in October 2006.

### **2. Have any problems arisen from the Mixed Use concept?**

There are some problems, particularly with allegations of Anti-Social Behaviour, but these are often exaggerated. The housing association haven't got a clue and that's what causes all the aggro in the Village. They're so slow to do anything.

We've also had lots of problems with our flat. We've had leaks and damp from since we moved in. The housing association has tried to solve it, but the damp is appearing again.

### **3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to environmental sustainability?**

I'm not sure, but I pay a lot in heating bills - up to £260 a quarter. They want anyone who visits here to come by public transport which causes problems with parking. I know there's been lots of problems with the CHP, but I don't know the details.

### **4. Do you use the Mixed Use services/facilities?**

Not really. The convenience store on Oval Square occasionally, but the commercial units on Osier Court have never been used and they're being converted back to

residential use. I don't have children, but the relationship between GMV and the school is negligible. Very few village residents send their kids there, but then there aren't many children living at GMV. Owners move out when their children reach school age - tenants are stuck. The school has resisted village residents using their facilities like the car park and playground.

##### **5. Do you think GMV has succeeded in creating a 'mixed community'?**

No. It's a very divided community. There's a huge division between different tenures - those who rent, those who buy and the shared ownership in the middle. You can tell who lives where by looking. Housing association blocks have carpets in the entrance lobbies, private blocks have ceramic tiles. There's segregation. There aren't any tenants in Da Vinci or Newton, but loads have been dumped in Metcalfe, including decants from the Ferrier estate. They used up their whole allocation of 'social' housing for that phase of the development in one block. There are some problems with Anti-Social Behaviour because people don't have the support they need and there aren't enough informal social controls.

There's also different treatment in housing management. Tenants weren't allowed to use the key holding service at the concierge office until recently and we're not supposed to keep pets. The idea that GMV is 'tenure blind' is a load of crap.

Tenants are also excluded from the management company. There's a day-to-day management sub-committee, but they're only interested in service charges and property values. There are four unelected resident board members. But we also have an independent residents association, with a 15-person elected committee, annual and quarterly open meetings attended by about 30 people, but it's not recognised by the management company. There's also an independent resident's website with over 600 subscribers.

The treatment of tenants undermines community cohesion, particularly as tenants are more likely to be permanent, settled residents because they have established local networks. The social tenant doesn't have freedom of movement, the leaseholder does. Leaseholders are transient and often become absentee landlords. There's a lot of

Chinese and Far East owners and flats rented out as holiday lets. At the weekends this can be something of a ghost town. Look at the demographic. How many people are Monday to Friday residents?

The attitude to disabled people stinks too, particularly on parking restrictions, which are ineffective in general and a source of tension. Blue badges aren't recognised by the management company. They claim they'd be 'abused'.

**6. Do you feel optimistic about the future phases of GMV?**

I'm not sure if they'll happen. It's being held up by a planning appeal from the aggregates company. The community centre we were promised is always deferred to the next phase. They offered us the Visitors Centre, but we held out for something bigger and purpose built. I think GMV will change when other developments on the Peninsula are completed. We plan to reach out to new residents. GMV has become used to being on its own.

**INT21**

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011**

INT21 was a senior local authority planner with long involvement in the GMV project.

**1. Was there anything specific about this scheme that made it suitable for a Mixed Use development? (What were the policy drivers?)**

The aim was always to reclaim Greenwich Peninsula as a model environmentally sustainable community. That was always the aspiration. There was a lot of support for the idea from government and English Partnerships in terms of the new planning regime that was coming in around that time, focusing in high density, the compact city and so on. Here was an opportunity to do something special and Mixed Use was a key justification for going to the higher densities that would support the local services and let people do everything they need within walking distance.

**2. Does the LPA feel that the mixed use aspirations for this scheme have been achieved? (Is the scheme a 'success'?)**

I think so. There were some things that didn't come to pass, but that's not unusual in terms of design competitions. But the masterplan was based on a lot of sound principles.

**3. Have any problems arisen with this scheme resulting directly from the mixed use concept? (e.g. noise nuisance, ASB, licensing etc)**

Having the school and the health centre in place early was a big plus, but the commercial space has struggled, what with a big Sainsbury's and an even bigger Asda just down the road. Also, because GMV is so isolated, no one's going to visit the area just to use the local shops, so it's really reliant on the critical mass on its doorstep.

**4. Do you think mixed use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I think so. I think there's a general, genuine commitment to Mixed Use, even though there are some developers who'd like to go back to single use. But in terms of place making, Mixed Use is where it's at. Look at the most valuable areas of London and they're high-density, Mixed Use. If you do it properly, it works very well. It's instinctive that you want to walk to the shops or the pub or the cinema, rather than having to jump in the car. There are concerns about some of the schemes in the Thames Gateway, but we can't do anything about that.

(Some of the following questions were initially raised through a Freedom of Information enquiry, which precipitated the interview.)

- 5. Has there been any monitoring/evaluation of targets at GMV, particularly those aimed at producing environmental and community sustainability, carried out by the LPA or any other agency?**

We were invited to comment on the later stages of the design competition for GMV, part of which concerned sustainability. We took the view that 'if this is what you say you're going to do, then we expect you to do it'. We didn't have the technical ability in house to do all of that, but we use Building Research Establishment expertise. There was a whole range of SONNS targets in the agreement with English Partnerships. I don't know what the acronym means, but I have seen reports on that and a lot of people have looked at it. The development has been overwhelmed with interest and people coming to look at it. That information wasn't formally reported to elected Members, but one of the Councillors sits on the GMVL Board so would have access to their progress reports. It's not something that is scrutinised, but the standards have been achieved.

- 6. What is the authority's current view on the timetable for the remaining phases of GMV?**

There's about 1,200 homes completed and they're going to get up to about 3,000. There's nothing on site at the moment and there's a legal dispute with the neighbouring aggregates company which adjoins a rail head and deep water terminal,

so it's a fantastic facility able to supply aggregates off-road, particularly with the Thames Gateway development in mind. The company was concerned that their activity was going to be fettered i.e. that residents would start complaining. A new design competition for the phases 3, 4 and 5 of GMV was won at the end of last year, with acoustics a vital part of that. They're looking to take up themes from the village, but there are things they're looking to do quite differently. It's the same developers, but with a new design team. The Council wasn't formally involved in the design competition. It was GMVL, CABE and HCA. We're in early discussions on the master plan, but we don't expect a new application until the summer. The assumption is that the remaining homes will be built, although at the moment there isn't much in the way of funding and the state of the market will determine how quickly the units get built. The scheme was started in 1999 – 12 years - and there's still a long way to go and it could go through more changes, so we don't really know about timetables. But the land is set aside for residential-led Mixed Use development and the park's been laid out on that assumption.

**7. What is the residential density at GMV?**

Don't know exactly, but it's relatively high. Generally, the ideas for GMV, is that it's going to be relatively dense to create that critical mass for mix of uses, vibrancy and so on. But because GMV is further from the transport interchange, it might have lower densities than other parts of the Greenwich Peninsula. Density gets higher as you move towards the O2 and along the river front.

**8. Has the Teleservices Centre described in the outline planning permission been provided?**

No, I think that idea got dropped. I'm not sure how well the concept was understood. The way I envisaged it was a place where people could homeworkers or people running their own businesses could go to get training or use more highly powered IT, or just get out of the home/office. I doubt there's the critical mass there to make it viable, but we've still got a long way to go.

**9. Has there been any monitoring of the patterns of use and occupancy of the commercial space (including Live/Work) within GMV?**

The Live/Work was never something we envisaged and partly it was a design solution to help with treatment of houses around the car park. Clearly Live/Work fits in with the ethos of the village, but it wasn't something we sought and we don't really monitor it. I think it's probably being used as residential. The commercial uses are struggling because of lack of critical mass and competition from the huge shopping centres nearby. The pace of delivery of Greenwich Peninsula has also been a problem. The community centre isn't really being used at the moment, but that's a question for the developers and they also want to know how it's going to work financially. We can't force them to open up the community centre, unless we came up with some kind of funding.

**10. Has there been any specific monitoring of the car use reduction strategy?**

It's been pretty successful, as much through changes of lifestyle as anything. It's in the section 106 agreement. The development started with a ratio of one car parking space per dwelling plus 0.25 for visitors and that's gone down to 0.7 per dwelling because there isn't really the demand. People are buying into the lifestyle and there's the cost of buying a car parking space. There are plentiful buses, even though the Mayor hasn't been too kind to Greenwich on transport projects and killed the Greenwich Waterfront Transit project.

**11. Has there been any post-construction monitoring of the sound insulation and use of/satisfaction with moveable panels for flexible living space?**

There have been issues in the past, but I'm not aware of any problems now. They used a lot of new building technologies, but the acoustics on phase 2a were hopeless. I haven't heard anything specific about the use of wall panels, but it probably isn't as easy as was made out in the competition document. But that's not a planning issue.

**12. Has there been any monitoring of levels of crime or anti-social behaviour at GMV?**

We are hearing about ASB, but we don't know the source of the problems. I think there's a whole range of wider social issues that we don't really address through planning like providing something for older kids to do. We've been trying to find a potential location for something, but it's proving difficult. I get a sense there's reasonable community there, but that's been built into the DNA of the development. I think the problems arise through bigger social problems. The social housing tenants are so far removed from some of the private residents that never the twain shall meet. A lot of the inspiration for GMV came from Sweden which is a far more equal country. I don't think we've got the upper-rich living at GMV, but some earn a lot more than others.

**13. Does the authority view the project as a success that has fulfilled its original purpose?**

I think generally we see it as a big success. It's had all this recognition from all over the world. Most of the big headline targets and objectives have been achieved. It's high density, mixed use, mixed tenure, environmentally sustainable, emphasis on community building, the ecology park, the school, but it's an unfinished piece. You won't be able to really judge it for fifty years and it needs to be connected to other development. It can't succeed in isolation.



**INT26**

**4<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

INT26 was a local ward councillor for the GMV area.

**1. Was Mixed Use a consideration in the decision to grant planning consent?**

Yes, I think it was. I wasn't here for the early stages of the process, but Mixed Use was always at the bottom of the scheme and embedded in the structure.

**2. Do you feel the scheme has proved a success and if so, is Mixed Use part of the reason?**

I think it's patchy. A lot of it is very successful. One of the problems has been the role of the housing association, but we're overcoming those difficulties gradually. Clearly there have been problems, but they've been magnified out of all proportion by some people.

**3. Have any problems arisen with this scheme resulting directly from the Mixed Use concept? (e.g. noise nuisance, ASB, licensing etc)**

There have been some problems, but they all get blamed on the social housing tenants which isn't fair. Another problem is with people who sub-let from absent landlords and hold late night parties. I'm very unhappy that we haven't seen the community facilities provided that could have given teenagers somewhere to go, but we can't find a site for it, even though we have a budget to pay for it. The developers control the use of empty commercial space and the Housing and Communities Agency haven't helped. But in general, people here get along with each other although a lot of them are only here temporarily so don't have a long term commitment to the area and don't get involved in the residents organisation.

**4. Do you think mixed use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

Yes, certainly in Greenwich we're doing it everywhere.

**5. How do you relate the concepts of Mixed Use, Mixed Tenure and Mixed Communities at GMV?**

I'm not sure.

**6. Do you feel that Mixed Use has contributed to the overall sustainability of GMV?**

Yes, although I don't know the details. I'm not sure what's happening with the CHP, but I think the residents are trying to take control of it, as they take over the management of the estate.

**7. How confident are you about the future of GMV?**

I am quite optimistic, but the big question is the development of the rest of Greenwich Peninsula and how GMV relates to that. The new Bellway scheme has been finished and the GMV residents' organisation say they want to make contact with new residents, although they'll find that difficult if all the flats are sold to investors in Hong Kong. I think the Olympics might bring some problems because there are various applications for temporary uses, like entertainment stages and a luxury camp site. We need to watch out for the yacht club, the buffer zone around the aggregates works and the travelers' site. And of course funding has been cut, so now we don't have the money for a school. The government thinks it's just an add-on, but it's really important.

**8. How confident do you feel more generally about future development in LB Greenwich in the context of Thames Gateway?**

There are a lot of developments going on and we can't control them all. Some won't be as good as others.

**9. Are there things you would like to see done differently in the next phases of GMV?**

I'd like there not to be any internal gardens in the next phases of the development. The planners like them because they imagine lots of children playing happily in them, with their parents supervising them. It's OK for under-fives, but actually it's often teenagers on bikes and of course, they do make a noise and the noise ricochets around the walls of the blocks. So I hope the designs will be different.

**INT32**

**9<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

INT32 was a GMV resident, but also a politician with a long-term interest in urban policy.

**1. What persuaded you to live at GMV?**

I was involved right from the outset, but I wouldn't live there if I didn't like it. I worked very closely with the developers to ensure that it was what it was always intended to be – an exemplary development. It's been slower than I would have hoped, but I look out of my fifth floor window over the lake and the Ecology Park and I see the for sale and for rent housing, the park with a very mixed group of people using it: I think this is on the whole a mixed community that demonstrates most of the virtues of mixed tenure and to some extent, the virtues of Mixed Use. The school and the health centre have both worked very well and have been there right from the beginning and that was extremely good planning. The retail has been much slower coming than people hoped and you could talk about the Royal Arsenal as well in that context because there are parallels. But I think it will work. As we come out of recession, as the next stage of the Village gets developed and the number increase, the retail opportunities will be taken up.

**2. How do you react to the proximity of several retail parks to GMV?**

You've got to remember that GMV is part of the Peninsula development which is going to have 13,000 residential units and will be a neighbourhood in its own right. That becomes the logic for its own Mixed Use elements, but at the moment you've only got 1,300 people living at GMV and that's it. It's critical mass. I explored this in some detail in the process of getting the pharmacy on Oval Square at GMV. The NHS refused permission for a local pharmacy. The pharmacy regulations are a bizarre hangover of old style planning and pure naked self-interest of existing pharmacists who try to block any new shops coming into the area. So if a pharmacy wants to open as an NHS outlet and their independent, they've got to get permission. Sainsbury and Tesco can open a pharmacy within their stores without permission. That in itself is a bizarre rule. All the existing pharmacists objected and the PCT

defined the area as two kilometers around GMV which takes in huge chunks of the community. One pharmacy on Charlton Hill was included any they objected. Noone's going to go there from GMV or vis versa. We only won it because I personally put in an appeal and went and spoke at the public enquiry for an hour and a half and demonstrated that this (GMV/Greenwich Peninsula) was a neighbourhood in it's own right, that wasn't yet fully developed, but would be and is physically, quite strongly divided by the A102, which is quite a formidable obstacle, from the surrounding area and amenities. I also argued that the Bugsby's Way retail park is a quite different, car-born shooing area. People don't walk there from GMV to go to the chemist.

**3. So is it too early to make judgments about the success of GMV and do you think there will be a spatial reorientation towards the Peninsula?**

Yes, I think it's inevitable. If you look at the first of the new blocks to be built to the north of GMV, a very big 240 unit Bellway tower block, I think those people will gravitate towards North Greenwich and local shops. Some of them may, on their way home from the tube, shop at the Tesco Express that's recently opened at the O2.

**4. Won't that damage the Nisa convenience store on GMV's Oval Square?**

I think they're two different groups. The bulk of the people using the Tesco work around North Greenwich station and the O2, so it's a convenience store for them, but it's quite a long walk to the Nisa. But the new Bellway development is much closer to the Nisa and I think you'll get people from there going to the Nisa, rather than walking up to North Greenwich and the Tesco.

**5. Does that example undermine in any way the Urban Renaissance idea of mixing communities, particularly through mixing tenure and uses?**

I don't think it does. The one factor that might contribute to social separation is that a significant number of people who've bought at GMV tend to come because the Jubilee line is convenient, so their life is a journey from home to North Greenwich to work and back. But there are so many other activities in the Village that bring people

together, for example the school, which has a mix of parents now, though it didn't initially, there's the health centre which provides for the whole community and there's the Pilot, the nearest pub, that people from the Village go to and they are quite mixed.

**6. Does the Residents Forum reflect that?**

As always, it's not entirely representative because it attracts the most active and committed residents.

**7. Are you generally optimistic about the future of GMV?**

Yes. The new phases are coming forward. Countryside are hoping to submit a planning application before the end of the year. The things that have delayed GMV have been partly the recession, but mainly the difficulty with the aggregate works which is now going to be screened from GMV, which might be a good thing.

**8. How do you reflect on the success of the other Millennium projects?**

I generally think GMV has been a success: some of the other projects have not. There was always a tension between the Deputy Prime Minister's aspiration to create GMV-like places throughout the country and the hard economic reality that it's a lot easier to do that in areas of growth. If you're going to do good quality, Mixed Use development, there has to be value to enable the development to fund all the necessary infrastructure. Not all of that money can come from government it's going to be a viable scheme.

**9. And how about the Urban Renaissance aspiration of reversing, or creating a counter-force to suburbanization?**

It worked to a considerable degree and one indicator is the increase in the use of brownfield land since 1997. It was getting up to 70% in 2010. It may swing back because the present government is giving the green light to luxury housing development on greenfield sites. They won't admit it, but actually their whole policy

is a massive incentive to build four-bedroom detached houses. Another aspect of the Renaissance was densification and there were too many small flats built. I think we got it broadly right at GMV, with a mixture of townhouses and apartments, but a lot of other sites had similar advantages in terms of location and didn't make the most of it.

**10. Returning to GMV, do you think the scheme has been successful in terms of the environmental sustainability agenda?**

Absolutely. My combined power bill for the last winter quarter, when it was very cold, was ninety-five quid. We had the heating on for two days and three hours. That was all. The CHP has had its problems, but it's mostly about quality of insulation which is not the same throughout the estate because technology improves. I'm in one of the blocks from the last phase. It's extraordinarily easy to keep warm.

**11. Turning to Royal Arsenal, how do you compare it with GMV?**

More problematic. First of all, it was a walled site and it's only in the last few years that the wall's come down. GMV always wanted to open up and proclaim itself. Secondly, to protect Woolwich town centre, which was incredibly fragile, the Council set its face against significant retail development inside the Arsenal, so it was purely residential and office, not genuinely Mixed Use. Now this is complex stuff, but with Tesco coming into the town centre, with a massive new store, I think it's going to be good for Woolwich and bring more people into the town centre. It then becomes easier to say we need more retail uses inside the Arsenal, so it doesn't become a gated community. I think there's a potential problem with the level of density on the later stages of Royal Arsenal because there isn't the amount of open space that you've got at GMV. So I think the jury's out at Royal Arsenal and getting the Crossrail station is crucial. If it comes that will make it a very attractive place: 7 minutes to Canary Wharf, 25 minutes to the West End, 45 minutes to Heathrow. It will be a place like GMV where people want to come and live, so the old image of Woolwich will be transformed. I think it's going to be all right, but I'm slightly less confident than I am about GMV. The developer got consent for an extra thousand homes to build the station. But we're still in a negotiation process.

**12. Some of my observations of Royal Arsenal suggest a rather sterile, inactive environment. How do you think that can be addressed?**

One thing that would change it would be if there were lots of activities around No.1 Street. If it had cafes, some retail and performance spaces the area would come alive. Whereas this weekend I was looking out over the park in GMV and see loads of people playing football, sun bathing, walking the dog.

**13. How do you account for that difference?**

Because GMV is now seen as a place, whereas Royal Arsenal is a street going to the river one way and a street going nowhere in the other. The eastern end of the Arsenal won't become an attractive place for the public. The jury's out for the western end. It can happen, but I'm not yet fully confident that it will. The density could become a problem. Some of the blocks planned could feel very, very dense.

**14. How do you respond, in general terms, to the gentrification debate that has sometimes attached itself to the Urban Renaissance?**

I cut my political teeth in Fulham in the 1970s when gentrification was an absolute threat where the middle classes were simply coming in, taking over and pushing out existing residents. The problem you've got in Woolwich is how do you create a more balanced community without the very heavy preponderance of people on low income, mainly living in social housing? The problem with the Arsenal is that it's on the other side of the road, behind a wall and although it's helped, it hasn't really integrated into the town centre. The crucial thing is how the new developments relate to the transformation of the three big estates around the town centre – Connaught, Marian Grove and Tivoli Gardens. These are very grim environments. Before the recession there had been a plan, which Greenwich Council had been reluctant to do, for redevelopment and tenure diversification on these estates and using Kidbrook/Ferrier, GMV and Royal Arsenal as decant, so you'd have the benefits of 'gentrification', but while giving existing residents an opportunity to move. But that strategy's all falling to pieces because of RSL grant cuts and 80% market rents. I want to see the



transformation of the physical environment of Woolwich through a series of developments that provide mixed tenure opportunities so that you no longer have this very heavy concentration of poor people all living in some areas and very few better off people all living in the Arsenal, which is the current presumption.

**15. Would some of the poor people go and live in the Arsenal and how would the developer feel about that?**

They've accepted the principle of mixed tenure, but they try to engineer it to maximize the amount of intermediate tenure i.e. shared ownership, but if the Council were able to insist on 25% social rented housing, it could have happened. But with the government now saying no more social rented, only 80% market rent the chances of doing it are very small. The indication is that either these 80% market homes will be targeted at wealthier people, which raises the question of where the people who would otherwise have been RSL tenants go, or if not, if it does go to poorer people, the Housing Benefit implications are huge. They haven't thought it through. There's different arms of government going off in different directions, as there is with the localism agenda at CLG against growth at the Treasury. On Housing Benefit, DWP is saying cut it, while CLG policy is forcing it up.

**INT36**

**2<sup>nd</sup> June 2011**

INT36 was a GMV resident.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of your reason for moving here?**

No. One day GMV will be the centre of population in this parish and for once the Church of England is ahead of the curve and decided to move the rector's accommodation from Westcombe Park to here. There are only eight properties this large in the village and one of them came on the market, so the Diocese of Southwark bought it as the vicarage. Most people came here because of the tube station. Any possible property investment incentive also results from the proximity to the tube station. My impression of this place is it's all about the tube station. If it wasn't here, GMV wouldn't be here. When we first arrived in Westcombe Park, a mile or two south from here, in 1996, it was a place nobody wanted to live. It was a predominantly working class area. House prices were low, but as soon as North Greenwich tube station opened, they rocketed. Even up the hill, it's had a huge effect. It's changed the population of Westcombe Park. It's been gentrified, but it's actually at least as much a mixed use (sic) area as this, but it doesn't look like it. In the late 50s and 60s, the old Greenwich borough didn't do what other boroughs did – demolish houses and build high-rise blocks – it bought private accommodation and turned it into council housing. A lot of that stock is now housing association. Also, because the stock was cheap, a lot was bought by private companies who rent it out. You have to look carefully at the door-bells and the doors and talk to people to find what the tenures are. Three houses may look exactly the same as each other, one might be owned by a private company with a Fair Rent tenant who's been there for thirty years, the next might be owned by a housing association that's turned it into flats and the next one might be owner occupied and lived in by a single family.

You can tell the tenure differences much more easily here at GMV. This block you're sitting in, when it was built, was all owner occupied. The developers wanted some money quick so they built this and sold it. All the social housing that should have

been in this block is in the next block. We've got carpet in the foyer and they haven't. They say the specification for these flats is very high, but I just think it's too clever. Our electricity bill here is twice what it was at our five bedroom, 50s house in Westcombe Park because we've got these silly, high voltage halogen lamps and nothing else will go in the fittings. In our old house we had all energy efficient bulbs. When the window fittings go wrong they have to send off to Scandinavia to replace them!

I like the ideology of mixed use (sic), but it would have been nice if it had been done properly. Everyone's to blame, including the housing association who prefer to have all the social housing in one block because it's easier to manage, but it means you don't get people mixing from different tenures. We don't know the people who live next door because it's a different lift, a different staircase. It's as if we're in different countries. We don't know if they own or rent, but most of this block is now private renting. The problem that results is that myths can circulate, like all the problems are caused by social housing tenants. Actually, you can't know that and it's perfectly possible that some of the anti-social behaviour is caused by private tenants because they're only there for six months. They have less investment in the community than the social housing tenants. We gather the same is happening at the new Bellway blocks.

I think private renting is the major factor here. We've been here two years and every other flat has changed hands in that time, some of them twice. The first shop to arrive on the Oval Square was the estate agents who manage the homes of people who've moved out and let to private tenants. People don't tend to sell. They may move to Tunbridge Wells or even elsewhere in the village, but they keep their property and rent it – and then maybe buy another one. I think we're going to see more of this process with the next phases.

It makes it very hard to encourage participation in the residents association because you don't join if you're only going to be here for six months. Why would you?

## **2. Do you use the Mixed Use facilities/services?**

Oh yes, it's nice to have some shops. That has really improved things. They were all empty until a year or so ago. We used to have to go to Sainsbury's. We hope the new blocks will be occupied and add to the vitality, but we also know that a lot of the flats have been sold in the Far East. We're not sure if they'll be let out until the market improves.

### **3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability?**

The Ecology Park's great and we hope the open space remains protected, but the parks are owned by the HCA and could be sold. At one point Blackheath Cricket Club wanted to buy it, but they were fought off.

### **4. Are you optimistic about the next phases of the development?**

Yes. It's got more of a streetscape and it's lower rise and I think they've tried hard to put right some of the mistakes made here. There are more town houses and so I hope there will be a more settled residential pattern and that families won't leave when their children reach school age.

People are very positive and optimistic about more residents coming to live here. It's essential really. This community's too small. There's only 2000 people, which isn't enough. It's a good place to live and I think it could be even better in the future, when it matures. You need to give it time.

Some of the problems could have been avoided and some of them still need tackling, like entry phones. But that's another example of the whole place being a bit too clever and complicated. But people don't want to feel that anyone can get to their front door without them knowing.

Mixed Use (sic) should also mean people without children living next door to people with children and people of different ages living in the same area. GMV is not a child-friendly place, nor are there enough elderly people living here. There's never been a decent children's playground here. What kind of a welcome is that to children? Even where you've got communal gardens, they're not supposed to play

ball games in them and people moan if they do. What does that say to children and families with children? It says 'you're not wanted here.' The next phase is going to have more children's facilities, but there are lots of things that aren't here that should have been, like the community centre.

**INT43**

**20<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

INT43 was a senior planner with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), one of the GMV development partners.

**1. Was Mixed Use an important part of the strategy for GMV and if so, why?  
What were the policy drivers?**

Absolutely. There's a base line position that we wanted Mixed Use, but that was primarily to create a path of least resistance from planners to whatever we were putting forward. There's an absolute commitment to have a lively, animated space. The images the architects use to sell their schemes always have loads of people in them, but that's not necessarily what happens in reality. We've had a lot of discussion about land uses and where they should be.

**2. Has the Mixed Use concept caused any problems during the development process to date and if so, what were they?**

The issues the previous phases had with letting commercial space have really focussed the minds. On future phases we want the square and the shops to be a success. The current shop-owners have been involved in the consultation process with us and they're very nervous because apparently they're struggling at the moment and we want to protect that existing space and make it viable, but also to think really hard about the commercial space on the next phases.

There's also been a massive over supply of car parking space on the first phases: probably 50% isn't used. There's an overwhelming case for reducing the amount of car parking space on future phases.

**3. Does the HCA think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

It will certainly remain important for the HCA in London, but the Localism Bill may

mean things are different elsewhere.

**4. Does the HCA feel that the application of Mixed Use policy at GMV has been a success and if so, what are the indicators of this success?**

It's a really difficult issue. We all know from an urban design point of view that ideally you'd have lots of shops and other uses, but it doesn't always work. But you've got to think about the Oval Square in terms of the future development of the Peninsula. When the new blocks are occupied, the Oval Square could become quite a vibrant place. It's a chicken and egg type of problem. We want to protect commercial space, but do you build it and just hope they'll come? GMV also has to cope with the competition from nearby retail parks. So it's a tricky one.

**5. What is the HCA's current view on the timetable for the remaining phases of the project?**

There are two phases completed and three left to be developed. A lot of money was spent on getting a detailed planning consent for the next phases two or three years ago, but there was a threat of judicial review from the owners of the neighbouring wharf and rail-head where there's an important aggregates works. They said there wasn't enough mitigation against possible dust from the plant. For the last few months I've been working on this aspect with the designers, as well as on noise attenuation from an urban design, quality of place perspective. We've worked with CABE, Design for London and decided on holding a design competition and selected Jestico and Whiles who've been working on a new detailed planning application which they're hoping to submit within the next month or two. So it's a bit back to the drawing board.

In terms of uses in the next phases, there'll be a nursery, which is probably one of the highest priorities for the LPA and we appreciate that it needs to come in the first phase of the next development. There's an energy centre to help with the sustainability strategy, there's a community centre and then a distribution of commercial space, including, we hope, retail space with active frontages. There will also be some light industrial, B1 use that will probably go on Busby's Way.

Realistically and depending on what happens with the market, this is probably another 10 – 15 years of development, maybe more. From an urban design point of view, this new square is where you'd have the cafes and shops, but we're asking ourselves if there's going to be sufficient demand to sustain those uses. So we may bring that element into the scheme later or use flexible space, maybe residential in the first phase that becomes commercial as demand increases. It's sensible, but planners may not be so keen on such uncertainty.

We want there to be lots of high quality space, but made up of smaller squares, perhaps with one or two cafes and flexible space, but more active, traditional streets and shared space, rather than the type of big open public realm in the first phases.

**6. Will there be more family housing in future phases?**

GMV was always intended to be the more family-oriented part of the Peninsula, which is generally quite high density. In future phases, we want to see a more traditional housing typology – a traditional street pattern with apartment blocks at both ends and courtyards where cars will be able to go, but people will feel uncomfortable driving in them. The design is important for bringing families into the scheme. We're targeting about 35% family housing, but we want quite a wide range of typologies and a range of products to bring to the market.

**7. Is Mixed Use still thought of as being part of the strategy for sustainable lifestyles?**

Yes. In London there's now an agreed set of design and sustainability standards that we have to adhere to. So we say that all new developments should meet Code for Sustainable Homes level 4 and Building for Life standards. Mixed Use is all wrapped up in that, in terms of access to goods and services. We've tried to simplify things and agree on a set of standards for sustainability. It's different outside of London.



## Royal Arsenal Riverside

INT17 and INT18

1<sup>st</sup> December 2010

INT17 and INT18 were senior planners with the London Development Agency (LDA), one of the key partners in the redevelopment of Royal Arsenal Riverside (RAR). At their request, they were interviewed together and unrecorded.

**1. Was Mixed Use an important part of your development strategy for this scheme and if so, why?**

When the LDA took over the project in 2000 we inherited 106 million pounds worth of problems on the site. There's been significant policy shifts over the years and to some extent the project has run ahead of the transport infrastructure. While integrating different uses has been one of the key drivers, it's been made very difficult by the number of listed buildings. But the over-riding imperative remained to address the decline of the area, symbolised by the collar of social housing surrounding Woolwich town centre. Nobody was coming to Woolwich. We had to do something. But it's been a moving policy target.

**2. Do you feel Mixed Use helped you to obtain planning consent?**

From the time the LDA became involved, it was fundamental.

**3. Did the Mixed Use concept cause you any problems during the development phase and if so, what were they?**

As well as the listed buildings, during the development process we've lost some of the uses that were originally envisaged, particularly leisure. There was supposed to be a 'leisure zone', with a cinema and perhaps a bowling alley, but that's been dropped.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

Certainly at Royal Arsenal and probably in London and the UK, but we're less sure about the future of the LDA.

**5. How important is the Crossrail station to the future of the scheme?**

Crossrail has completely changed the planning and policy dynamic. Given the current uncertainty, we'll need to wait and see.

**6. How happy to you feel about the integration of the site with Woolwich town centre?**

One of the main aims was to pull the town centre towards the river. That hasn't been fully achieved, but we're taking the long view. Full completion isn't expected until 2020, so we should reserve judgment.

**7. How confident are you about increasing the proportion and quality of non-residential uses?**

Generating new housing has become more and more important over the life of the project and the number of homes envisaged for the site has doubled since our involvement, from 1,600 to 3,000, but there's still a lot to do in terms of attracting other uses. Despite the gated accommodation blocks, the public space is reasonably permeable and accessible, but is often undermined by commercial interests. The Fire Power museum hasn't produced the amount of footfall that was hoped. Up to 180,000 visitors a year was envisaged. But there's more retail in the future phases, which in turn should generate more animation around the site, particularly if the Crossrail station comes off.

**INT27**

**8<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

INT27 was a senior executive with the RAR development company, Berkeley Homes.

**1. Was Mixed Use an important part of your development strategy for this scheme and if so, why?**

When it first started in the mid-1990s, the Masterplan proposal was for a number of alternative uses to residential, mainly because the local authority wanted to retain employment uses. The Chief Planner at the time said ‘over my dead body’ will there be more than 595 homes, which was the original planning consent, because this area couldn’t take it and it wasn’t sustainable. Since those days we’ve been through probably four new Masterplans and what we’ve learned from the experience is that to make a development successful it needs to have a heart and you need to create a sense of place. What that means is another question, but what we think it means and what it means to residents is that there should be facilities that are their own, for this particular area – decent shopping, bars and restaurants, a health facility, an education facility and some cultural uses. A scheme of the size that the Royal Arsenal has become and as an adjunct to a town of this size, it’s difficult to sustain the non-residential uses until you get to the critical mass and here we think that’s a thousand units. The Heritage Centre and the Firepower museum were here early and have struggled because they just haven’t got the footfall, but when the Youngs pub opened it was successful straightaway. Firepower is still struggling. One of my roles within the company is sitting on local boards and stake-holder groups and at Firepower, it’s a hand to mouth existence. We’re encouraging new residents to become Friends of the museum, so that our residents feel it’s ‘their’ facility, their cultural centre and link that to some of the other heritage places in the town.

The biggest difficulty with Mixed Use policy, whether it’s local or national government, is that people think that if you put a sign on a plan that says ‘shop’, ‘bar’, ‘restaurant’, then as soon you build it someone will want to come. The biggest problem we have on all of our schemes is that we cannot make companies come to a development. We can give them all kinds of incentives, but we can’t make them sign

the lease. Their profit comes from trading. We put one shop in here and they're rent free, but they're still struggling like mad as are some of the other commercial uses here.

**2. Do you feel Mixed Use helped you to obtain planning consent?**

Yes and I think that means Mixed Tenure as well as Mixed Use. But the group believes you need non-residential uses to make a place and that enhances both our sales rate and sales revenue.

**3. Did the Mixed Use concept cause you any problems during the development phase and if so, what were they?**

We've had a major issue that's gone on for years in trying to put a health centre on the site. The local authority was very keen and we set aside 10,000 square feet of space at ground floor level and another 5,000 square feet adjacent for a nursery, but the PCT couldn't get their act together and we've had an empty unit for the best part of two years. But when we're doing our marketing we put these facilities in our brochures and it's very bad PR when they don't appear. Thankfully, we've just signed up the doctors' surgery that should open in November and we're marketing the nursery. People buy into the dream that you're trying to sell and it's very frustrating when you can't deliver the things you promise. We've even talked about running shops ourselves because that's how important we think it is, but that's not our business. We're developing our relationship with Youngs and Tesco and we'll give them all sorts of incentives to come in early. We're hoping to have a Tesco Express at Woolwich Arsenal.

The other thing that caught us out was the changes in the design of the Crossrail station. The areas where we wanted to put in commercial uses were blighted because of the uncertainty. But the plan now is that most of the Mixed Use will be around and on top of the Crossrail station and we're also talking to a hotel developer.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I think it will, but planners have to think carefully about what Mixed Use really means. You cannot have commercial spaces just dispersed throughout a scheme, it needs to be focused in a particular area. We've had some disagreement with planners who seem to suggest that at almost every corner you put a bar or restaurant and that doesn't work. I think they've seen sense. Those things work when they're congregated in a particular area. There's a strong argument in terms of sustainability, for having the corner shop, providing it's going to be successful.

## **5. What do you call the development?**

I use one title personally and that's Royal Arsenal. We have a marketing name of Royal Arsenal Riverside, but that was really just trying to badge 'riverside' as part of marketing. This site was given the title 'Royal' back in 1806 and I think we should keep it.

## **6. How important is the Crossrail station to the future of the scheme?**

I think it's tremendously important for Woolwich, South East London and the whole hinterland to Woolwich. For the town itself, it will be a catastrophe if it doesn't come. For our development it will be a great shame if Crossrail doesn't happen. My frustration in regeneration terms is that fifteen years into this project, when God knows how many millions of pounds have been spent, the impact of the development of Royal Arsenal on Woolwich itself is still minimal. Crossrail is the impetus the area needs. There's always been a difference in sales values between north and south of the river and a lot of that's to do with transport. DLR is quite a slow system. It takes quite a lot of time to get to central London. Crossrail will get you to the west end so quickly and across to Heathrow. We hope that will break down the difference in values between north and south and east and west. What we could do with here is some additional land and house values which would then possibly change the social dynamic of the area. When I came here 90% of the population was social renting. That has a number of impacts economically and socially. Tremendous demand on local infrastructure and local authority services, lack of impact on the High Street because of lack of spending capacity and does create social tensions: crime rates are higher, a lot more problems.

**7. How happy to you feel about the integration of the site with Woolwich town centre?**

There was always a separation between Woolwich and the Arsenal site. This was a military establishment, with a high wall and no one was allowed in. It's been like that since the 1600s. If you go back to the maps of the 1950s and 60s, this was just one big blocked out area. The mistake was made in putting a dual carriageway between the Arsenal and the town centre, creating a major barrier. We've worked hard with the local authority and in our masterplan to improve linkage. Part of the aim of the Mixed Use scheme is to lead to integration and key linkages from whatever facilities you've got to the area that's around you. Because the offer in the town centre isn't that great, whether it be the restaurants, shops or bars, there's not a lot to encourage people to cross the road to go there. Equally because there's nothing much to offer people on the site here, there's not much to encourage people from the town centre to come across. So there's both a barrier in the road and a barrier in perception, with people asking why do I need to go into the town centre, other than to use the railway station?

It was a massive leap of faith for a company to come here, to a site with a negative land value of £43 million and think we could build houses. If you go back to 1999 when the tendering all started, Woolwich was in the doldrums.

We've got a long way to go. There's a lot of work going on in Woolwich, particularly the squares. What we'd like to encourage is some more tenants in the commercial properties of the town centre. There's a lot of poor use of retail space. I'm a great supporter of tenure blind, mixed tenure development, but you have to have that on both sides. It's not just the new private development that needs to have 35% affordable homes: the existing blocks and estates that are 100% social rented need to be broken up.

**8. How confident are you about increasing the proportion of non-residential uses?**

There's a direct link to Crossrail. With Crossrail, I think we'll have about 60,000

square feet of retail and bar/restaurant uses. Without Crossrail, I think we'll struggle to get those people in. Crossrail is not a done deal. There will be a box and there will be trains running through the box. Whether there's an actual station or not is still in the hands of others, particularly TfL.

**9. Would you describe the schemas forming a 'vibrant, sustainable community' and if so, why and how would it be recognized as such?**

We do see Royal Arsenal as being all of those things. The sustainable part we now take for granted here, from the way we've designed the buildings, to the CHP, a successful streetcar scheme, electric car recharging points, we encourage the use of bicycles, energy and water saving initiatives. And within the Mixed Use we're encouraging people to be able to live, work and play in the same location. We've got 350,000 square feet of employment use, space for 500 – 600 jobs. Vibrancy is one of the most difficult things to make work. Creating a new community is very difficult, but I think we're just beginning to see signs of it. A lot of that is to do with the pub on site, we have a gym, a little shop and the new uses will help. We're also aiming to have a community within one of the Firepower buildings, a leisure based centre, with children's play areas and meeting rooms. We have a residents management group and the residents organise social activities. It's probably not as strong as we'd like it to be. We can only encourage people. We've learned a lot in the last eleven years. There used to be a big problem with vandalism to cars, but then we put up surveillance cameras and quite high visibility on site. We're now a no crime area. I suppose that's because potential perpetrators know there's activity and surveillance here, but not as intrusive as what you get in Woolwich town centre. We also keep very high standards within the development. We employ people to litter pick. And we've worked with local youngsters to try to get them to have ownership of the space that here and that seems to work. It's not that you don't get problems here, but you get problems everywhere.

INT31

6<sup>th</sup> May 2011

INT31 was a local authority planner with direct involvement in the RAR case.

**1. Was there anything specific about this scheme that made it suitable for a Mixed Use development? (What were the policy drivers?)**

Someone from policy would be better able to answer that question. I'm a development control planner. The aspirations of the Masterplan, which doesn't really come from the Council, responds to the idea that this is a Mixed Use area and we would only have entertained Mixed Use applications. The rationale is that the site can best contribute to the regeneration of Woolwich as a whole, separated as it is by a main road, if there are mixed uses which, for example, enhance the night-time economy which is very limited in Woolwich at the moment and develop the heritage aspect and make it more of a destination for tourists. The 2005 Masterplan, which has recently been superseded by the 2008 version, included a cinema and other leisure uses. There are leisure uses in the 2008 plan, but the cinema has gone, partly because of the amount of parking that would be required. Phase 3, the latest to be brought to planning, was originally supposed to focus on the museum and heritage uses, but in fact, there's been a reduction by half of the D1 use. The Royal Laboratory buildings that were going to be restored and used as museum space are now going to be residential and the D1 use will be new build. The space between these two buildings was going to be open space for leisure use, but they haven't found an operator, so the developers are arguing that there should be more retail and office use.

**2. Does the LPA feel that the Mixed Use aspiration for this scheme has been achieved? (Is the scheme a success?)**

I'm not sure. How would you determine what the LPA's view is? It's on the website and shown as something positive so outwardly, it's presented as a success.

**3. Have any problems arisen with this scheme resulting directly from the Mixed Use concept? (e.g. noise nuisance, ASB, licensing etc.)**



I think that question might be better directed at officers who've dealt with the light-industrial uses at the eastern end of the site. You've got light-industrial uses very close to residential. I'm not sure if it's presented as a positive feature of the scheme. I don't think the Council keeps records of how many people are employed there, but Members definitely see employment creation as one of the main drivers. There is affordable housing, but the effect of Crossrail has been to reduce the amount from 35% in 2005 to 25% in 2008 in order to pay for Crossrail, so the priority is jobs and regeneration. But the amount of housing in the next phases to be developed has increased, from 2000 in 2005 to 3,711 in 2008. That increase is again, to pay for the Crossrail infrastructure. There have been a lot of objections.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I don't think the Council's policy will change, but the Council's obviously reliant on the direction the government wants to go in, but also on the economic cycle because it's often more profitable to put more residential into schemes.

**5. How happy is the LPA with the integration of the site with Woolwich town centre?**

It depends on there being a reason for people from Woolwich to go to the Arsenal and visa versa. At the moment there's a pub, but it's very expensive so the majority of people who live in Woolwich are unlikely to go there. There's going to be a Tesco Express, but that's most likely to only serve the Arsenal residents because there are other supermarkets in the town and there's going to be another big Tesco in the town centre. So again, I think it depends on Crossrail, but we don't know exactly what kind of night-time offer there will be. The plans do have a tendency to change in detailed design, for example the Verbrugen's House was designated as a restaurant in the Masterplan, but it's recently had approval for change of use to B2 (office). So just because the Masterplan says there will be particular uses, doesn't mean it will be that way when the detailed application is submitted. It's the same with the reduced D1 use. The developers want to have the flexibility to respond to the market. The Tesco Express was originally going to be a restaurant; there are other areas where the

developers want to change from residential to commercial use. To a certain extent that's inevitable with a Masterplan that's been around for twenty years, but it does mean the end product won't look much like the original plan.

**INT30**

**6<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

INT30 was a long-standing local councillor.

**1. Was Mixed Use a consideration in the decision to grant planning permission?**

Yes and had been a consideration since the first Masterplan we worked on with English Partnerships and then the London Development Agency. The rationale in the first instance was that we were acutely conscious in the 80s and 90s of the challenges within the town of Woolwich which has a huge concentration of social housing and the challenges that gave us in terms of economic sustainability of the town centre and the fact that what was then the Arsenal ward had the highest male unemployment (62%) anywhere in the UK, outside of Northern Ireland. In the 90s Greenwich lost more jobs than anywhere else in London and the Arsenal was the last significant industry that Woolwich had. It's a town that has been hit hard and lost about 20,000 jobs every 20 years, so It's a bit like a colliery closing in a pit village four times over. There isn't a town anywhere in the country that's suffered like that. It's only been saved by its proximity to central London. What we saw in Woolwich was just a huge benefit ghetto. So we started to think about Mixed Use at the Royal Arsenal as a means of economic sustainability. We came under pressure to make the whole place private housing, to off-set what we had elsewhere in Woolwich. We resisted that because of the potential severance of the Arsenal from Woolwich town centre by the Plumstead Road and we didn't want a walled community. We also resisted retail because we didn't want to undermine shops in the town centre. We were very conscious of what was going on in Canary Wharf. We wanted employment, so there are light industrial units towards the east of the site and we wanted mixed housing tenure. We also had various conversations about leisure use which have ebbed and flowed as the market and the complications of the project have progressed. But we wanted Mixed Use, notwithstanding the preponderance of social housing in the area, to avoid the potential of the Arsenal turning its back on the town centre.

Sustainability has also been important. We're finding that people are less reliant on cars at this type of development, particularly when there's good public transport, so

the DLR extension has helped, but obviously Crossrail would as well. As each block comes forward and we move from outline planning permission to detailed we're asking how we can improve environmental sustainability. On all developments of this kind we deal with these issues as each plot comes forward because obviously the technology gets better, so it's not fossilized. We're also asking if the design allows us to retrofit.

**2. Do you feel the scheme has proved a success and if so, is Mixed Use part of the reason?**

So far it's a success, but it's a bit too soon to tell. There's still another decade or more of the development to take place that will proceed westwards towards the Woolwich Ferry. So there will be more development taking place and I guess it's only in twenty years time that we'll know if it's really been a success, but there are other things riding on it, particularly the Crossrail station that will be located in the Arsenal. So there's a lot more to be done and it would be premature to say it will all be hunky dory in twenty years time.

**3. Have any problems arisen with the scheme resulting from the Mixed Use concept?**

No, I think thus far it's been well managed and I don't see or hear of problems about different uses. I don't hear complaints about the light industrial at the eastern end, or about the first licensed premises, nor the issue of different tenures. In fact, where we're moving people due to estate renewal elsewhere, the Arsenal is one of the places people are saying they'd like to live.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I think it should, but whether it will is up to others. But what we know is that it's a better option than the 1960s when we entrenched communities that were over-loaded with poverty. That has all sorts of other consequences, like balanced intake to schools, a balance of aspirational parents. We can see huge differences in how parents engage in schools. So I do think the balanced approach to communities gives

us a more coherent sense of development across a whole series of policy drivers.

**5. How important is the Crossrail station for Royal Arsenal?**

I think the Arsenal will be a success come what may. What Crossrail's critical to is the town – in a huge number of ways. The world's perception of the town will change. It will be fourteen minutes away from Tottenham Court Road, six trains an hour, not quite at tube frequency, but almost. So it will change Woolwich. It will become more of a dormitory town in some cases, but it will connect people to job markets in the capital. But I think the Arsenal will be a success without it, but Crossrail will make it more successful. We've got to a position where the hole will be dug by Berkeley Homes, we need to work out how to get it fitted out and whether one place on the line has to pay for its own station. So that's very complicated and the question is overwhelmingly financial: who's going to pay for it?

**6. How happy do you feel about the integration of the site with Woolwich town centre?**

It's operating as well as it can do at the moment. There's been a deliberate policy not to allow major retail development on the Arsenal so that people who live there are in a sense forced into the town to do their shopping, or go elsewhere. But the idea is to ensure that there have to be reasons for people to integrate across that road. The reason why Crossrail will drive greater integration is because it will change the socio-economic mix of the town. It will bring more people with more disposable income to the town and that will raise the quality of the shopping experience. We'll attract a better quality of retail outlet and give more reasons why people will integrate from the Arsenal into the rest of the town and it will probably spawn a series of other developments that were ready to go before the recession, but have been stalled as a result. The idea is that this all happens in the high street. It would have been the easiest thing in the world to create a mini shopping high street inside the Arsenal, but the idea is that with Crossrail it will produce a ripple effect.

**GP4**

**7<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

Having made contact via Facebook, I met six residents at the Dial Arch pub. They had lived at Royal Arsenal for between 3 and 8 years, the latter being one of the first residents to move in. None worked in the immediate area, either commuting to Canary Wharf, the City or West End.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of your reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I wanted to live in London, but not pay high rent, so decided to buy somewhere. I'd never been here before, but I loved the combination of the old buildings and the modern amenities. Then I heard the DLR would be coming, so I bought one right away.

I originally fell in love with Greenwich and this part of London. I did some investigation and Woolwich came up as a good place to invest and I realised I couldn't afford Greenwich. I fell in love with the view, the river, the old historic place and the potential of the future of the development.

It was advertised in the Evening Standard and it looked like a really interesting development. I was one of the ones who queued up for a week, staying in the car. I was number seven in the queue. I love it. There's a really diverse community that has got stronger and stronger. It's so diverse, people from all kinds of different backgrounds and places.

**2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any downsides?)**

Because we have Mixed Use housing, we have every type of person. When we have parties or gatherings, you get people from the age of 20 to 70, from all over the world,

from different classes, socialising in the same room and it's quite frequent. This is a place where people really get together and mix.

The new shops are going to be great assets and enhance the quality of life here because it is a little bit isolated here. The shops in Woolwich don't stay open late, so by the time you get back from work, they're shut. So we're looking forward to the Tesco Express.

Many of us are here building a community. We're mostly singles or childless couples and we're trying to build a community together and we want the amenities – shops, a doctor's surgery, restaurants – to be here, on site.

### **3. Do you think that Mixed Use contributes to sustainability?**

I got rid of my car when I moved here.

I don't have a car.

I have a car, but it does five hundred miles a year.

I won't replace my car while I live here.

A lot of people are using Street Car.

If you watch the number of supermarket deliveries in the evening you can see that lots of people don't drive to the shops.

### **4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

We use the Dial Arch for our monthly book club. It's brilliant. People are joining all the time through Facebook.

This (the Dial Arch) is a place where women feel totally comfortable. It's completely safe. I may come here on my own and inevitably I'll bump into some people I already know.

This is the village pub. It's a magnet for our social activities, a place where you'll always find a friendly place. It's like you're coming to your living room.

We've been talking to the pub owners and they're beginning to see it much more as a

community amenity and not just a pub.

**5. How do you perceive the relationship between Royal Arsenal and Woolwich town centre?**

People outside say 'it's a walled city' and my answer is 'the walls are open'. Anyone can come in. There are lots of people here who have middle class values, but if you're prepared to behave in a way that's reasonable, you can come here. We're a very open, sociable community.

I don't really think about it. To be honest, we do usually think of ourselves as within the walls. But at the weekend there was a parade that started at General Gordon square and came into the Arsenal down No.1 Street and there were thousands of people.

When I first came it was appalling over there. It was a really depressed area and for some time I didn't even go to explore what was there, it was so horrible. But it's gradually coming up and now there's a Costa and a Starbucks and more of us go there to do our shopping. So it's started to break down our fears and I think the same thing's happening on the other side. I talk a lot to my shoe mender and got to know people over there. They were really suspicious because it had been a close community and all of a sudden there were all these different people, more affluent, but that's gradually breaking down and people are coming down here to catch the boat (the Thames Clipper service). I see more and more people on the boat who don't live in the Arsenal. They come and use the pub, especially on a nice day.

It may be a bit unpopular to say this, but I think everyone on this side of the road is incredibly happy for anybody to come into the community, as long as they're prepared to live and socialise by the standards of the community – and we're not that fussy. But we don't want the same actions and attitudes that happen in the pubs that we can see when we come from the station. The police are there, there are people being glassed in the face: we don't want that here. The prices in this pub are higher and there's no desire to make them lower because if you want to drink here, you have to pay the extra price because we want it to be safe for everyone to come here and not



feel intimidated. I'm not a shrinking violet, but there's no way I'd go to any of those pubs across the road on my own, but here I feel completely safe and locked within my community. I don't have a prejudice against people who come from Woolwich, as long as you're prepared to operate by the reasonable standards of our community and abide by the same level of tolerance and respect and calmness that everyone else operates by, nobody cares.

## **6. Do you feel optimistic about the future of Royal Arsenal?**

We recognised that we were buying into a development that was work in progress and were prepared to make that investment. We do want to see the amenities come here for us to enjoy. I think it will happen, but it's happening more slowly than I want and part of the problem is that Woolwich is defined as a deprived area when in fact there's a huge middle class population, an affluent population, with money to dispose of. We need restaurants and shops and if they were here, we'd go to them.

I have serious concerns about the much higher density. They're not necessarily going to provide the same amenities and the same care and consideration for how the community operates. Putting up massive towers is a serious danger. The council agreed with us, but said the advantages of having Crossrail here were too great. I have huge concerns that the cohesiveness of this community will be screwed up by giant tower blocks and all the problems that that kind of building creates. It could destroy this brilliant vibrant community.

They'll put those things up, they won't be great quality and you won't get the middle class that you're trying to attract into this area. You need the middle class to help regenerate the area and therefore allow a mixed housing community to develop. The people who live in the non-social rented homes make sure that people maintain social standards. If you have a mixed group of people, everybody benefits because neighbours who are used to a better quality of life and standards make sure that everyone follows the same rules and make sure the social landlords keep maintenance up.

## **Watney/Tarling**

**PLA11**

**13<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

The lead planning officer for the project had retired by the time of the research and efforts to make contact were unsuccessful. An interview was carried out with PLA11, a senior planning officer at Tower Hamlets Council who addressed general issues in relation to Mixed Use, but also had some knowledge of the Watney/Tarling scheme.

**1. Was there anything specific about this scheme that made it suitable for a Mixed Use development? (What were the policy drivers?)**

The project formed part of a wider regeneration of the area, both in terms of the housing stock and improving the connectivity of the area around Watney Street. Obviously that's been helped by the opening of the Shadwell Overground station, so we're seeing much more activity, but our aim is to link the 'hard' plan in the Core Strategy to the 'soft' plan in the Community Plan. We use Mixed Use to reinforce what we call Town Centres like Watney Street and make sure we don't distort movement patterns away from them. We particularly welcome Mixed Use in the City Fringe, which is also part of GLA planning policy.

**2. Does the LPA feel that the Mixed Use aspiration for this scheme has been achieved? (Is the scheme a success?)**

I don't know the detail, but we do think that if we build in a certain way, it will have certain social and economic outcomes. We've seen more people moving to the area and a more diverse population which we welcome. After a slow start, some of the new retail space is being let and the plaza works well, so it's looking OK.

**3. Have any problems arisen with this scheme resulting directly from the Mixed Use concept? (e.g. noise nuisance, ASB, licensing etc.)**

I don't know specifically about Watney/Tarling, but I know mixed tenure within Mixed Use can be problematic, but what's important is that public space is fully accessible. What goes on beyond the entrance lobby is not the point.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

Yes, it's central to our understanding, but you have to take a long-term view because within every policy cycle there will also be a development or economic cycle. Our main priority is to optimise land use and more intensive land use makes infrastructure and Mixed Use more viable. We respond to what the market needs.

**INT1**

**21<sup>st</sup> January 2010**

INT1 was a Watney Street resident.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I was born just down the road at Goodmans Field, but I've lived in Shadwell since I was 14 and in this flat for 21 years.

**2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

I think the new block's an eye-sore. I don't think it adds anything to this area. I'd say it's made things worse.

**3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability or community cohesion?**

It hasn't done any of that. In fact where they wanted integration, it's caused segregation. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not racist, but the Asian community get all these new builds. They're making communities of Asians who want to be on their own. They don't want to mix with us. If you look at the new development, it's all Asians. I can't say about the tower, but at the end of us here, where they've built and blocked out the sun, it's all Asians. The Jewish community somehow automatically integrated with us and we did with them. We all got on as one. The Jewish community's culture is quite similar to ours, but the Asian community's culture is completely different to ours. It's nothing to do with colour, race or language, it's this cultural thing. They're closing all our pubs, all our clubs. It's our way of life. This is what's causing a lot of this racism. The people who are doing it are the planners and developers who don't even live in this area. They were very arrogant saying 'it will do this' and 'it will do that'. I get very uptight about it. All they're interested in is pound signs. They couldn't care less about the people.

The buildings create barriers because of the way it's being done. They said it was going to be affordable housing, but not everyone can afford to buy, especially in this area. You need more housing for rent. I don't know what they mean by 'affordable'.

This area's over-developed. Every little bit of green they've taken away from us. Where are children supposed to play? There's nowhere. The developer's said there's Shadwell Park, but you've got to cross two main roads to get to it.

**4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

No not really. They're all selling the same thing. The only place I use locally is the paper shop and Iceland if I want something quick like bread or milk, but for doing a proper shop I go to the Isle of Dogs or Chrisp Street. They're not catering for us.

**5. Do you remember the old Tarling estate before two blocks were demolished to make way for the new Mixed Use development?**

Yes, they were built just after the war. The block we moved into at Shadwell Gardens was very similar. They all had bathrooms which was considered a great thing. I wasn't in agreement with the demolition. We were told in the first place that those two blocks were going to stay there and they were going to bring back all the shops that used to be along Watney Street. Shops with flats above, but then they changed their mind. We went to see the plans, but when they started building we said 'where's the shops?': they said 'oh, it's changed'. We were told there were going to be shops like there used to be. We used to have butchers, bakers and little supermarkets like Caters. You had everything you needed in one spot.

**6. Do you know any of the people who've moved into the new development?**

Nobody at all, well one person who used to go to the club. A policeman. He said you couldn't swing a cat in those places. They try to cram so much into a small space.

**7. Have you noticed the improvements to the public realm?**

You're joking aren't you? Of a night you've just got crowds of Asian boys gather there. The gangs. There's no way I'd go and sit there. During the day I might sit there for five minutes, but not at night. Me as a white person, I'd be told 'this is our territory'. There's no way I'd go to the bottom of Watney Street at night.

**INT2**

**4<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

INT2 was a Tarling Estate resident.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I was born just down the road in Belgrave Street when it was part of the old borough of Stepney, then when I was 16 we got rehoused under slum-clearance to Poplar, but I've been living and working in Shadwell for about ten years.

**2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

The concept is good, but the vitality hasn't happened. It's a good example where you don't theorise about it, you should watch things grow organically and develop as you go. Then you get the buzz. Of course the planners hate it.

**3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability or community cohesion?**

It's not happened at all. We used to develop in a way that wasn't just about bricks and mortar, it was about a whole way of life. You could walk to the pub, walk to the school, walk to the market – do all those things and have a bit of breathing space, but slowly that's all gone. Now they try to coerce you. I went along to the planning committee and questioned why there were only 50% parking spaces on the new development and they replied this would deter people from having cars. I said 'we're not living in the same world'. Most of the planners live outside the borough, in nice country areas with lots of space. They've all got cars. They all drive to work. Why should local people have to pay to park their car outside their house? It's forcing people into a way of life they don't particularly want. People need to be encouraged, not coerced.

But it's not just the new development: there's been a real shift in the culture of the area. It is predominantly Muslim and I'm not trying to be racist, but the number of activities that non-Muslims used to have here like pubs and the old market, it has changed. I'm not saying it's better or worse, but they're always trying to take it further. There are always people looking out for opportunities and they look after their own.

**4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

I go to the convenience store occasionally. Their prices are higher than most, but they're open longer. I think they're struggling.

**5. Do you remember the old Tarling estate before two blocks were demolished to make way for the new Mixed Use development?**

Personally, I always wanted to see the refurbishment of the blocks because the cost would probably have been about the same as demolishing them. Then the open space around them could have been landscaped and I'm always looking for ways of creating green spaces. It doesn't have to be big. There was an original low-density proposal for the site that people didn't object to too much, but that got amended. I think Toynebee came under lots of pressures. They realised land values were going up, there was pressure for high-rise, the Council's attitude was changing and they were pushing the buttons of the local authority in a way they hadn't in the past. The local authority was getting far too commercially minded and had this obsession with numbers of properties going up. They just get carried away with it. By then, local councillors were more and more full time and professional and weren't listening to advice. Officers were learning to give the advice they thought was acceptable, rather than what they thought as professionals in order that they could keep their jobs and get promotion.

**6. Do you know any of the people who've moved into the new development?**



I've made friends with one person in that development. You don't see them. I knew one other person, but she was going off to work very early in the morning, coming home later and later and just came here to sleep, so I don't see her any more.

**7. Have you noticed the improvements to the public realm?**

It's the best feature of the whole development, but it doesn't work because there's nothing to hold people there. I remember the old Whitechapel Road where you'd always see groups of Jewish people there talking, arguing – there was a reason for being there. Here they've tried to manufacture it and you can't do that. It's typical planners. They've laid down a set of rules and we've got to conform to them.

## **GPI**

**25th February 2010**

This group discussion took place as part of a regular 'Golden Time' session organised by the local authority library service, held in Watney Street library. It was attended by 6 – 8 local residents, mostly pensioners, who meet to reminisce and socialise. On this occasion, the session was structured around a discussion of changes in Watney Street, particularly the new Tarling/Kelday development. Memories were prompted by photographs, both of the new development and older images of Watney Street during the 30s, 50s and 70s. The nature of the event meant that it was sometimes difficult to control the discussion and also to distinguish what was being said as several conversations would take place at once, people would talk over each other and individuals would join and leave the group intermittently.

The session was also interrupted by someone who was not part of the group, but wanted to start a discussion about the provision of 'social' housing for particular ethnic groups. It was explained that this issue was not relevant to the research, however, the incident does reflect findings within this case study whereby interviewees strongly associated changes in the physical environment to demographic changes and particularly, ethnicity.

### **1. What are your feelings about the new development in Watney Street?**

They named them after the two firemen who got killed in Bethnal Green.

It doesn't bother me. It hasn't changed my feelings about living here, but I don't know anyone who lives there.

My old school was knocked down.

How can an ordinary person, with an ordinary job afford a flat for 250,000?

### **2. How do you compare Watney Street as it is today to how it used to be before redevelopment?**

We don't have the shops and stalls we used to have. These stalls aren't the same. Years ago the street traders had their own language

There are no shops. We used to have a Woolworths, a Joe Lyons, Caters, a Dewhurst.

We all liked it when we had all little houses here. We knew everybody who lived along the street, but now we all live in flats, people might know their neighbours, but don't know the people who live in the rest of the block. The problem is it's such an Asian population and they don't mix to get to know you, like you would if you were English people.

Putting that aside, I don't think you get to know people like you did when they were little houses.

**3. Do you feel any safer because of the new development?**

No, people can hide round the corners. I watch out.

I'm round this area every day of the week and I feel very safe. I've lived here all my life and seen all the changes. Nothing bothers me.

**4. Do you use the new benches that have been provided as part of the 'public realm'?**

What benches? Oh, you mean those little stone things? I don't think people are going to sit there. They don't even look like benches.

**5. Do any of you remember the council blocks that were demolished to make way for the new development?**

The dumps that used to be down the road?

INT3

4<sup>th</sup> March 2010

INT3 was a Tarling estate resident.

- 1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I was born in Shadwell and I've lived there all my life.

- 2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

It's quite vibrant around the shops, but apart from that, there isn't actually that much to do. For some people it's just abstract, or virtual, whereas others are more organically rooted in the area. It doesn't take account of the reality of social space and how people really relate to each other, in terms of identity and culture, your history in the area - lots of things. It's like the planning in the 60s when they didn't look at people's wider connections to the economy and power.

- 3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability or community cohesion?**

I feel that people generally aren't as friendly as they used to be. I don't know if that's to do with modern life, or the housing or people just being much more private. Shadwell has very high density and people are packed together. There's nothing for young people to do, it's claustrophobic. The area's over developed and Kelday Heights represents a group that are just different. It has changed it, but It's become more socially fragmented, even though it's more socially mixed. The architecture and planning doesn't encourage mixing. But to be honest, what does a financier have in common with a young Bengali boy who's got no money? The new development makes the division much more symbolically apparent and people with not very much get resentful and that resentment becomes embodied.

**4. Do you remember the old Tarling estate before two blocks were demolished to make way for the new Mixed Use development?**

It was a really run down estate so although politically I was opposed to the demolition, I have to acknowledge that what they were offering was enticing. People wanted something to happen and the fact that money's been invested has been good, but it has been at the expense of the estate being semi-privatised.

**5. Do you know any of the people who've moved into the new development?**

No, not off the top of my head. They don't seem to be part of the texture of the area. They go to work, they come back and they have a circle of friends that might be from all over London. It's almost irrelevant where they are. They could be somewhere else doing the same things. Their relationship to the area is very thin.

**6. Have you noticed the improvements to the public realm?**

Nobody hangs around there or sits around there. It's a horrible area. It seems really naïve to expect that people from different backgrounds are going to just sit there and start talking to each other. There's a lot of competition for space and a lot of it's been blocked off. But I don't think you can separate issues of public space and usage from people's economic and social power.

INT4

9<sup>th</sup> March 2010

INT4 was a Tarling Estate resident.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I've always lived here. I was born here in an old house where my grandmother lived on Spencer Street, near where the tower is now. But this is where I want to be. I think the changes in the area have been brilliant. I was one of those who didn't mind about Canary Wharf. I like things new and I think it's been good for the borough, but I don't think local people have benefited very much.

**2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

I don't think there is a good mix. Compare this area with the Brunswick Centre in the West End, where they have designer shops and nice pubs and places to go. All we have are cheap discount shops and grocers. All the shops are too small and half of them are empty. I'd like to see one big supermarket. I was hoping there'd be one at the new development, but they don't want it under residential and there aren't any delivery facilities. This area's always been neglected. Most of my social life is out of this area. The things I'm interested in aren't happening round here.

**3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability or community cohesion?**

There's been all these changes over the years, predominantly the influx of Bangladeshi residents. Being on top of the docks, we've always had different nationalities here and welcomed them. But I blame the Council for not having a mix. I fully approve of the new development, but I don't see much of a mix out on the street. There's nowhere for them to go. They'd rather shop where they work, or go to Canary Wharf or St Katherine's Dock.

When you cross over into that bit of Watney Street it gets all trendy. The new development doesn't blend in and it's bitty. They were trying to get some more green space, but when you look at the amount, was it worth it? There isn't enough play space.

**4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

I hardly shop here. There are lots of Bangladeshi fruits and vegetables and shops selling the same stuff, but you can't do a proper shop. Where can I buy my clothes? All we've got is Peacocks and Primark. I'd have liked to see it back to how it used to be, with shops on both sides of Watney Street, all the way down. I do use the pay-point in the new convenience store, but apart from that no.

**5. Do you remember the old Tarling estate before two blocks were demolished to make way for the new Mixed Use development?**

It became very run-down and ended up as a predominantly Bangladeshi estate. It was very sad that the two blocks were pulled down. They could have been refurbished, the same as the rest of the estate. It was a shame that people lost their homes. Where they went to, God alone knows, but I would have been very upset if I'd had to move.

**6. Do you know any of the people who've moved into the new development?**

No. I don't know who they are or where they've come from.

**INT5a**

**30<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

INT5a was a senior manager with responsibility for the Watney/Tarling site. However, he did not have direct involvement in the development phase of the project and his knowledge of this aspect was limited. Multiple attempts to contact the RSL's development manager proved unsuccessful.

**1. Was Mixed Use an important part of your development strategy for this scheme and if so, why?**

I know it's something the Council was committed to and to some extent the RSL tailors its development proposals to what the planners want. I know it was a complicated site, with several different proposals and RSLs involved.

**2. Do you feel Mixed Use helped you to obtain planning consent?**

Probably. Where we're sitting (a Toynbee area office in Tower Hamlets) is part of another Mixed Use development so it's obviously something that's favoured. Mind you, we've had lots of problems with this scheme too.

**3. Did the Mixed Use concept cause you any problems during the development phase and if so, what were they?**

I'm not sure about the actual development phase, but I do know the finances were complex and in the end most of the units in Kelday Heights were sold 'off plan' to institutional investors and that effectively financed the rest of the scheme. That's created some differences between people. Most of the issues I have to deal with come from unhappy leaseholders complaining about service charges and caretaking. The Residents' Association is quite active and they've also had some concerns about Anti-Social Behaviour.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**



Yes.

INT5b was a long-standing local councillor with close involvement in the Watney/Tarling redevelopment.

**1. Was Mixed Use a consideration in the decision to grant planning permission?**

Different disciplines and people have different sets of glasses through which they see that space. You have people who are selling land and property developers concerned with market values; land use planners have a fairly technocratic understanding of how that space fits into the world outside; you have local government bureaucrats who are governing the area; you have people who live in that area. All of those people have a rhetorical commitment to something that is supposedly value free whereas in reality (it) is contested. The contest is what we call politics, whether it's visible or not. So what was going on there was that there was a whole area defined in certain ways, with a big expanse of social housing that emerges in a very specific post-war context, in which the class and ethnic composition has changed significantly. So there were various contests between largely white and Bangladeshi groups that are common to most parts of London. But you also get a gradual nuancing of class from the post-war period and particularly the influence of the Right to Buy which became very important with the growth, by default, of mixed forms of tenure on the estates. So by the time we got to the start of the development we have different, but simultaneous trajectories. You had old white tenants who've been around a long time, then you had a growing majority of Bangladeshis, but within that you had differences between tenants and leaseholders. So overall there's been a shift, in class terms, from simplicity to complexity.

The history of the development is a mess. We had a strip of land that people thought was publicly owned, but was in fact private. There were contested issues around a day care centre for Bangladeshi elders, partly paid for by a land-swap involving the Watney/Tarling site. The chronology is important. There were about six different proposals for the site. The big question became how the site was configured and that related to the different land values. The options involved various degrees of scale of

redevelopment.

**2. Do you feel the scheme has proved a success and if so, is Mixed Use part of the reason?**

It's created a gated community in the tower, but there are other elements to the development, partly related to its history. We're talking about the allocation of scarce resources and different feelings of entitlement and need. But I don't see it as a Mixed Use development in a meaningful way because I think it's polarising. The rhetoric of Mixed Use suggests it should be an alternative to what has been almost an apartheid system where developers pay to have social housing 'off site', or create a little ghetto. It's meant to be integrated. I think it's an awful development, but you have to unpick how it's come to be so. You have to unpick what 'mixing' really means. But the outcome here is not what the rhetoric suggests. These great architectural ideas always work better on a tabula rasa, but that's not what we had.

**3. Have any problems arisen with the scheme resulting from the Mixed Use concept?**

There's a problem when technocrats try to produce functionally optimal solutions that become social disasters because they're premised on completely erasing history, geography and reality on the ground.

What's lacking at Watney/Tarling is any sense of comprehensive development, so you end up with this polarised, land-market logic that says you have to extract the maximum value from each separate space. So Kelday Heights has become the site that generates all the private value. But the leaseholder interest and politics became very parochial and some people got stuffed. The people in power weren't able to pull together a coalition.

I'm not implying some 1960s model where you take a bulldozer and create an ideal Mixed Use area. I'm talking about how you understand the interface between community power, local interests, land use planning, and policies that privilege some forms of housing over others. This diversity of interests has to be taken into account.

**4. Do you think Mixed Use will remain an important part of planning policy?**

I agree with some of the Richard Rogers rhetoric, particularly 'tenure blind' housing and completely democratic public spaces and development that relates to the wider area.

**INT6**

**4<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

INT6 was a resident of the new Watney/Tarling development.

**1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I used to live in Islington. I bought 'off plan' through shared ownership so I've been here since the block was completed. I also work from home, but Mixed Use wasn't a particular reason for moving here.

**2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

Not particularly.

**3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability or community cohesion?**

Not really. Some of the people in this block have very negative attitudes to the locals. I think I'm unusual because I engage with the local community.

As a designer, I'd tell the architects "there is no public space here". All there is are some concrete planters and benches. It could have been much more carefully designed.

**4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

I sometimes shop locally, but not much of my social life takes place in the area. I would use the communal space that was supposed to be provided in the block, but it's never materialised.

**INT8**

**4<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

INT8 was a resident of the new Watney/Tarling development.

- 1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I was the first owner of my flat after the block was completed. I used to live in Wapping, but I stayed in the area because it's close to the City where I work and because I thought it had some investment potential.

- 2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

Yes, I like having everything right there. I think new development will put Shadwell on the map. I dream of Watney Street becoming like the Brunswick Centre, but we need more car parking space.

- 3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability or community cohesion?**

I don't notice any social differences in Shadwell. I do sometimes feel a bit unsafe after dark, but it's OK going from the DLR station to my flat.

- 4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

Yes. I use the local shops and socialise in the area, but not usually in Shadwell itself.

**INT9**

**4<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

INT9 was a resident of the new Watney/Tarling development.

- 1. Was Mixed Use part of the reason for choosing your home and if not, what were the reasons?**

I was the first owner of my flat and it was the flat that was my main reason for moving here. I used to live in west London, but this is an up and coming area.

- 2. Is Mixed Use something you value about where you live? (Are there any drawbacks?)**

Yes. I like the diversity and it's also great to be able to walk to work.

- 3. Do you think Mixed Use contributes to sustainability or community cohesion?**

I'm not sure, but although I'm involved in the Residents' Association, I haven't made that many friends, apart from the people on the same floor of my block. There's also a bit of a problem with the Resident's Association representing all residents, not just private owners.

- 4. Do you use the Mixed Use services?**

I really like the local shops and the market. You can buy anything. I also do quite a lot of socialising in the area. I'd like it if there was more communal and open space, but I do go to local parks.

**INT10**

**11<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

INT10 had held a long-term interest in and knowledge of the sites that eventually constituted the Watney/Tarling development and had been involved in previous proposals, but was not directly involved in the final scheme.

**1. Was Mixed Use an important part of your development strategy for this scheme and if so, why?**

It was more complicated than that. We owned various parcels of land on and around the final development. Some of it was just wasteland. We wanted to try to reinstate Watney Street by extending the market south. But we sold the sites to a speculator who then tried to sell it on to another developer, but they pulled out. It got sold on to Toynbee in about 1998 and then the local authority got interested in refurbishing three blocks of council housing, but because Toynbee owned some of the land, they became key to the whole process. The area around the site used to be like a bomb site and we originally wanted to bring back some of the market stalls – Mixed Use if you like – and restore some of the old streetscape. Then as the housing market started changing and things started looking a bit sexier in terms of Shadwell prices, they ditched our low density project and moved to a high-density, high-rise scheme. I think the earlier project would have had a greater regenerative effect. The final project was just cramming people into boxes, but the planners aren't regenerators.

**2. Do you feel Mixed Use helped you to obtain planning consent?**

Yes. I took the original scheme through the planning process with the aim of then selling it on. We weren't too concerned who to and certainly providing affordable housing wasn't a big deal back then. But getting it through planning took a hell of a long time and it was to Toynbee's benefit because by then the whole area was being looked at as part of a masterplan. In the end, the scheme got through planning because there were so many others like it and the planners knew they'd lose if it went to appeal. Once a precedent had been established, Mixed Use projects like this became the norm.



### **3. What do you think of the Mixed Use concept in general?**

Contrary to what some people say, Mixed Use is not an artificial method of getting planning permission. Mixed Use has been around for hundreds of years and it works. But I think the concept's been foisted upon developers by planners and it's just become a box to tick, rather than looking at the reality of what's going to result. In some areas it's irrelevant, but the Mixed Use gets added as a sop to the planners. Mixed Use has tended to become a one size fits all policy and Tarling/Watney Street is a classic example. When we were discussing the earlier scheme with planners they insisted on commercial frontages, while there were three or four empty shops in Watney Street, but can you don't only get activity from shops.

### **4. Did the Mixed Use concept cause you any problems during the development phase and if so, what were they?**

The whole Mixed Use concept became distorted by changes in the development cycle. You get periods when everyone forgets everything and goes crazy. They think that numbers means more money. They don't go beyond 'let's just get some units on there'. Then you have a conflict between design and commercial interests, even if they're part of the same entity. When the market went out of control there were so many applications that planners lost the plot and things were getting pushed through that weren't being scrutinised enough.

### **5. Do you think the Watney/Tarling scheme is a success?**

I think it's rubbish and it's the result of Ken Livingstone ripping up the rule book on densities and saying 'I want houses built' and it's the fault of the public sector. The earlier scheme was better, would probably have made more money, was more accessible and it came from the private sector. It would have been a bloomin' good scheme.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Case Study Observation Results**

#### **Brindleyplace**

As at other Mixed Use developments, improving the public realm has been identified as a key objective of Brindleyplace, providing an accessible, permeable, pleasant, well-landscaped, pedestrian friendly environment that nurtures vitality and in the words of one of the project's chief designers:

‘...so that the main public spaces will be safe and lively well into the evening and throughout the weekend.’ (Chatwin 1997)

The original masterplan makes clear the importance of the public realm at Brindleyplace, its relationship to the surrounding area and the linkages to the adjacent canal-side, ICC and NIA (Brindleyplace PLC 1991).

‘The design of the squares, open spaces and linking roads and pedestrian routes should be such as to encourage and assist the flow of people between the different parts of the development and opportunities for the provision of public art seized. Design of these spaces, particularly the central square, should encourage and facilitate the contribution of ‘street theatre’ and activities in the open spaces to reinforce the atmosphere of Mixed Use and public enjoyment.’ (Brindleyplace PLC 1991, p2, para. d)

While it should be recalled that these design principles related to a scheme that had significant differences to the eventual Brindleyplace development, the fundamentals of the public realm have remained intact, in particular, the hierarchy and roles of the public spaces.

‘There should be created a central square in two parts; the larger part being the more urban in character and providing the centre point of both the development and its pedestrian routes...(Brindleyplace PLC 1991, p3, para. e)

It is this Central Square that was the focus for the observation exercise.

## Observation times and locations

The observations were carried out on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> and Monday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2011.

Four observation points were selected around the Central Square in order to gain an overall view of the area, as follows:



Fig. 48 Location 1: facing south-east across the Central Square, with the oval shaped coffee bar at right (photo by author 13<sup>th</sup> August 2011).



Fig. 49 Location 2: facing south-west across the Central Square (photo by author 13<sup>th</sup> August 2011).



Fig. 50 Location 3: facing north-west across the Central Square (photo by author 13<sup>th</sup> August 2011).



Fig. 51 Location 4: facing north-east across the Central Square (photo by author 13<sup>th</sup> August 2013).



## **Methodological Issues**

The Brindleyplace observations raised a number of methodological issues. The focal point of the Central Square is the strikingly designed Costa coffee bar (see fig. 13) that acts as a magnet for a significant number of the people using the public realm. While this Mixed Use facility is successful in generating activity within the public realm, a decision was made not to count people entering the Costa as customers, partly because this was visually difficult, but also because the coffee bar is not, strictly speaking, part of the public realm. However, as discussed further below, Costa also provides the only clearly recognisable outdoor seating in the Central Square. Therefore, it was decided to include people sitting outside the Costa within the overall totals of people using the public realm at the beginning and end of each ten-minute observation period.

The data for people sitting in the Central Square was counted as the number of people entering the study area during a ten minute period and then choosing to sit down. This was not always an easy assessment to make because people may sit for a range of reasons and periods, for example, a number of people chose to sit in the Central Square to have their photo taken or sit momentarily to tie their shoe-lace or rearrange their bag. Such activities were not included in the data. The purpose of the enquiry was to observe how many people chose to use the public realm as a place to relax or socialise.

An effort was made in recording the observation data to avoid double counting. Given the nature of such an exercise, it is inevitable that people step 'in and out' of the study area, for example a parent may chase their child back into the Central Square multiple times, particularly given the attraction of the fountains at Brindleyplace. Wherever possible, each pedestrian 'journey' across the public realm was recorded only once.

Some difficulty was also experienced in distinguishing singles from groups. When observing a small group of people, it is not always apparent if they are together or not. For example, a pair of people, followed by a third individual may, in fact, be together as a group of three, but their body language may belie this. Every effort was made to record the correct classification, but this may not always have been accurate.

## **1. Total number of people in the Central Square.**

This figure provides a 'snap shot' of the volume of use of the public realm, based on a head-count of the number of people within the study area at the start and finish of each ten minute observation period. Based on this, across the total eight hours of observation, the average number of people in the Central Square at any time was 19.2, with a high of 53 at 1.45pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> and a low of five at 6.55pm on the same day.

Across the observation period, the highest average number of people counted in the square was on Monday (24.7), followed by Sunday (19.5) and Saturday (13.6). This finding is predictable, given that 8,500 people work at Brindleyplace and therefore, more people are likely to be in the study area on a working day than at the weekend.

## **2. Total number of pedestrian movements (footfall) through the square.**

This figure gives an 'extended snap shot' of the pedestrian movements through the square during a ten minute period. Across the whole study period, the average number of pedestrian journeys using the Central Square in a ten minute period was 77.2, with a high of 116 (1.15pm – 1.25pm Monday 15<sup>th</sup>) and a low of 36 (7.00pm – 7.10pm Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>). The following chart shows the footfall figures for the three days, during the observation periods.



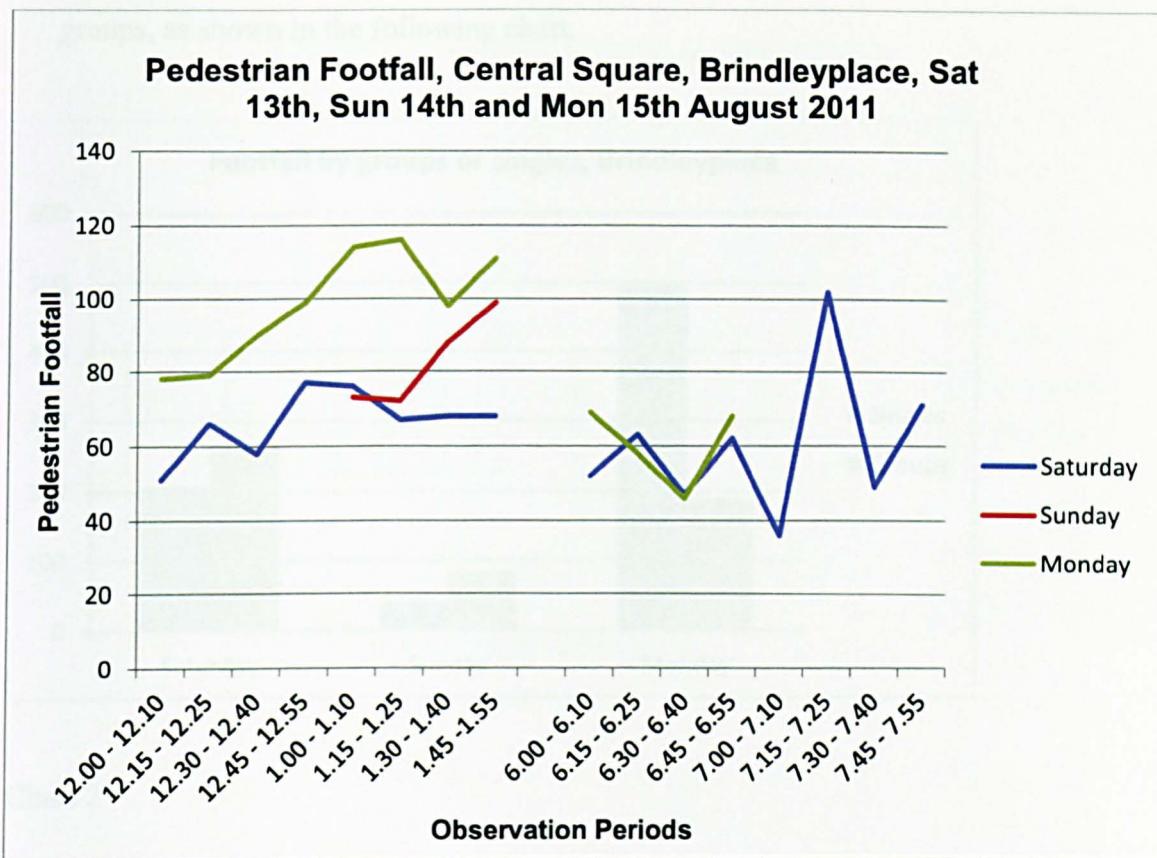


Chart 1

**3. The number of people sitting in the square.**

An average of 3.4 people per ten minute observation period entered the Central Square to sit down, with a high of 10 (1.15pm to 1.25pm, Monday 15<sup>th</sup>). This peak coincided with a brief burst of sustained sun shine, but in general, the weather during the study period was not particularly warm or sunny, although some other possible factors in people’s decision to use the square for this purpose are discussed below.

**4. Whether pedestrians were single or in groups.**

In a total of 2,371 pedestrian movements observed, 749 were of individuals and 538 were of groups of two or more, with the size of the groups varying considerably and including some large parties. There was a significant, if predicable, shift in the ratio of individual:group movements between the weekend and weekday, with twice as many ‘single’ journeys on a workday than at the weekend and approximately a third fewer

groups, as shown in the following chart.

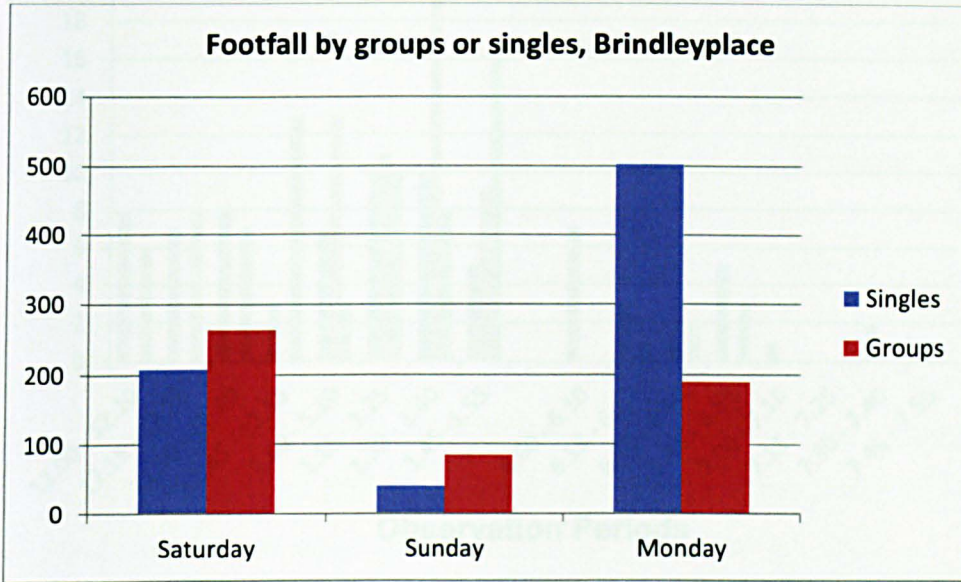


Chart 2

### 5. The number of children.

Brindleyplace is largely an adult-oriented environment dominated by offices, restaurants and bars. However, part of the project's rationale is to create a 'family friendly' place and aspiring to encourage usage outside of working hours implies appealing to constituencies other than those who work at Brindleyplace. The Sea Life centre, at the north-east corner of the site appears to be responsible for a significant number of visits by families with children to the complex. There are no specific child-friendly facilities, such as playgrounds or play equipment within Brindleyplace, but the observations confirmed that the fountains/water feature do appeal to younger children. It should be noted that the study period took place in the school summer holidays and this probably increased the number of children at Brindleyplace on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> August.

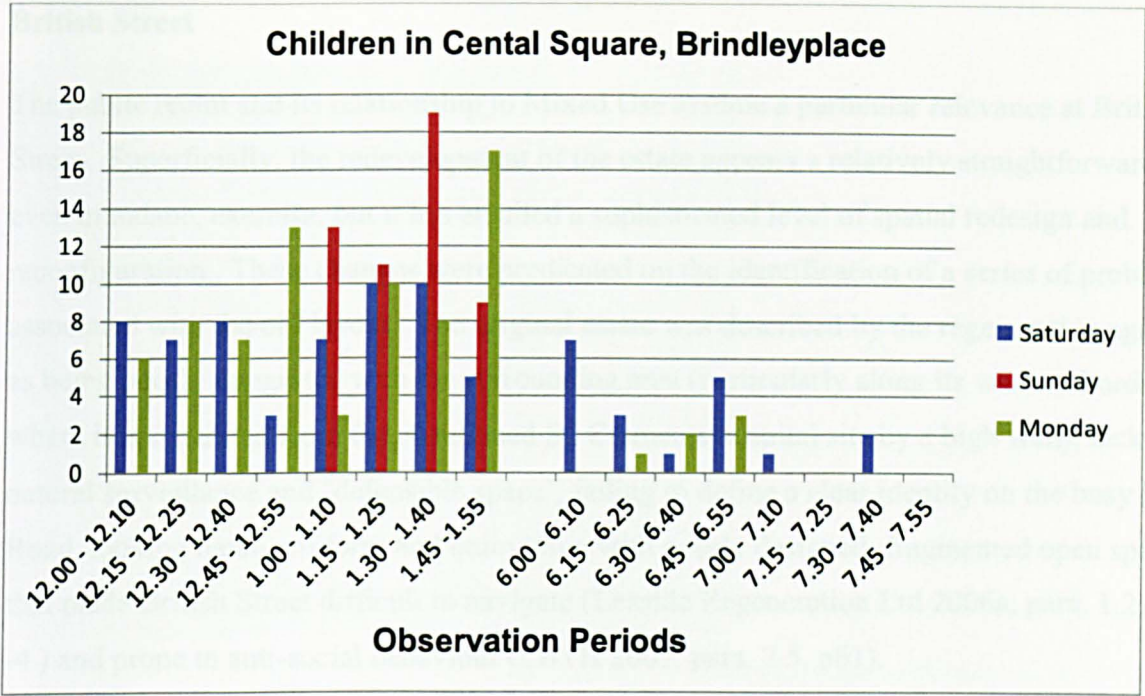


Chart 3

**6. The number of baby-buggies and wheelchair users.**

As a further indicator of the wider community usage of Brindleyplace, the observations recorded the number of baby buggies and wheelchairs within the study area. As discussed in the commentary, there may be some design issues that militate against these uses of the public realm at Brindleyplace. However, there was a consistent number of baby buggies in the Central Square during the study period (20 on Saturday and Sunday, 28 on Monday), but only two wheelchair users.

## **British Street**

The public realm and its relationship to Mixed Use assume a particular relevance at British Street. Superficially, the redevelopment of the estate appears a relatively straightforward, even mundane, exercise, but it has entailed a sophisticated level of spatial redesign and reconfiguration. These changes were predicated on the identification of a series of problems associated with the old layout. The original estate was described by the regeneration agency as being poorly integrated with the surrounding area (particularly along its western border where it is separated from the abandoned St. Clements hospital site by a high wall), lacking natural surveillance and ‘defensible space’, failing to define a clear identity on the busy Bow Road, looking harsh, uniform and uninviting, with poorly designed, fragmented open space that made British Street difficult to navigate (Leaside Regeneration Ltd 2006a, para. 1.2 pp 3 -4 ) and prone to anti-social behaviour (LBTH 2007. para. 7.5, p61).

In response to this litany of problems, the redevelopment proposed to make the British Street estate more legible, with a better distribution and delineation of public and private space, increased residential density and improved services, facilities and landscaping, within which:

‘Public spaces are better defined, overlooked, safe and inclusive...a place that is genuinely vibrant and sustainable.’ (Leaside Regeneration 2006a para. 1.3 p4)

Meeting these objectives entailed the relocation of six shops from Merchant Street to Bow Road, where they would ‘reinforce’ the Bow Road/Merchant Street junction, while remaining an identifiable part of the British Street estate and act as a focus for pedestrian access into and through it, via a new ‘linear park’.

### **Observation times and locations**

The observations took place on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> and Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

Four locations, all part of the redesign strategy, were selected in order to give an overall view of the area. These separate locations were evaluated as contributing to a public realm ‘whole’ because this is the specific objective set out in the planning rationale. The four locations were as follows:



Fig. 52 Location 1: the western end of the Tesco Express on Bow Road, adjacent to the cash-point, where there is pedestrian access to and from British Street (photo by author 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 2011).



Fig. 53 Location 2: grassed area in front of St Clair House with a view of the children's play area and 'linear park' (photo by author 24<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



Fig. 54 Location 3: the eastern end of the Tesco Express, at the junction of Bow Road and Merchant Street (photo by author 24<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



Fig. 55 Location 4: in front of new build block (Clematis Apartments) and Whippingham House off Merchant Street and adjacent to new community centre and grassed area between Winchester House and Columbia House (photo by author 24<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



## Methodological Issues

Notwithstanding the stated design goals, there remains some ambiguity about the identity and function of the British Street public realm. The wide pedestrian footpath in front of the Tesco Express on Bow Road is clearly public in character, but is not clearly recognisable as part of the British Street estate. Inevitably, the convenience store generates a significant amount of footfall, as does the Bow Road itself, with British Street sitting almost equidistant between Mile End and Bow Road Underground stations. However, it is very difficult to determine how much of this animation of the public realm 'belongs' to British Street and can be attributed to its redesigned public realm.

A related issue concerns the use of Merchant Street, which runs in a zigzag through the British Street estate linking Bow Road with Wellington Way. Although it could be characterised as a back-street, Merchant Street still has a relatively high pedestrian and vehicle traffic flow, but this is not generated solely by British Street residents.

By contrast, there are clearly recognisable areas of the public realm within the estate, but these are substantially less animated than the area around the Tesco Express and also have some peculiar qualities. The areas at Locations 2 and 3 form part of what was referred to as the 'linear park' through the low rise blocks, but its visual character does not reflect this description and there appears to be some ambivalence as to whether the area is designated as a Home Zone, as suggested in the planning proposals and the extent to which use is encouraged by children. Consequently, there is some methodological difficulty in describing these areas as part of the public realm with the associations that term implies, or merely a pedestrian walkway linking different parts of the estate. Finally, these problems of defining the British Street public realm are compounded by the areas around each of the low rise residential blocks which are surrounded by security fences and appear to form a 'buffer zone' between the public and private realms, but are not clearly part of either. Several groups of children were observed playing within these areas, but they were not counted as being within the public realm.



## **1. Average number of people in the British Street public realm**

This figure provides a ‘snap shot’ of the volume of use of the British Street public realm, defined by the four locations detailed above, based on a head-count of the number of people recorded at the start and finish of each ten minute observation period. Based on this, across the total eight hours of observation, the average number of people in the British Street public realm at any time was 3.9 with a high of 16 at Location 1 at 12.00pm on Saturday. This was the lowest average figure for the six case studies in the research, but this reflects the relative size and character of the British Street area. There were fifteen occasions when there was nobody recorded in the public realm and 82.5% of the total head-count were observed in the vicinity of the Tesco Express.

## **2. Total number of pedestrian movements (footfall) through the British Street public realm**

This figure gives an ‘extended snap shot’ of the pedestrian movements through the British Street public realm specified above during a ten minute period. Across the whole study period, the average number of pedestrian journeys through the study area in a ten minute period was 14.3 with a high of 32 (Location 3, 12.30pm – 12.40pm and 1.30pm – 1.40pm Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>) and a low of 3 (Location 4, 6.45pm – 6.55pm, Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> and 1.45pm – 1.55pm Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>). The following chart shows the footfall figures for the three days, during the observation periods.

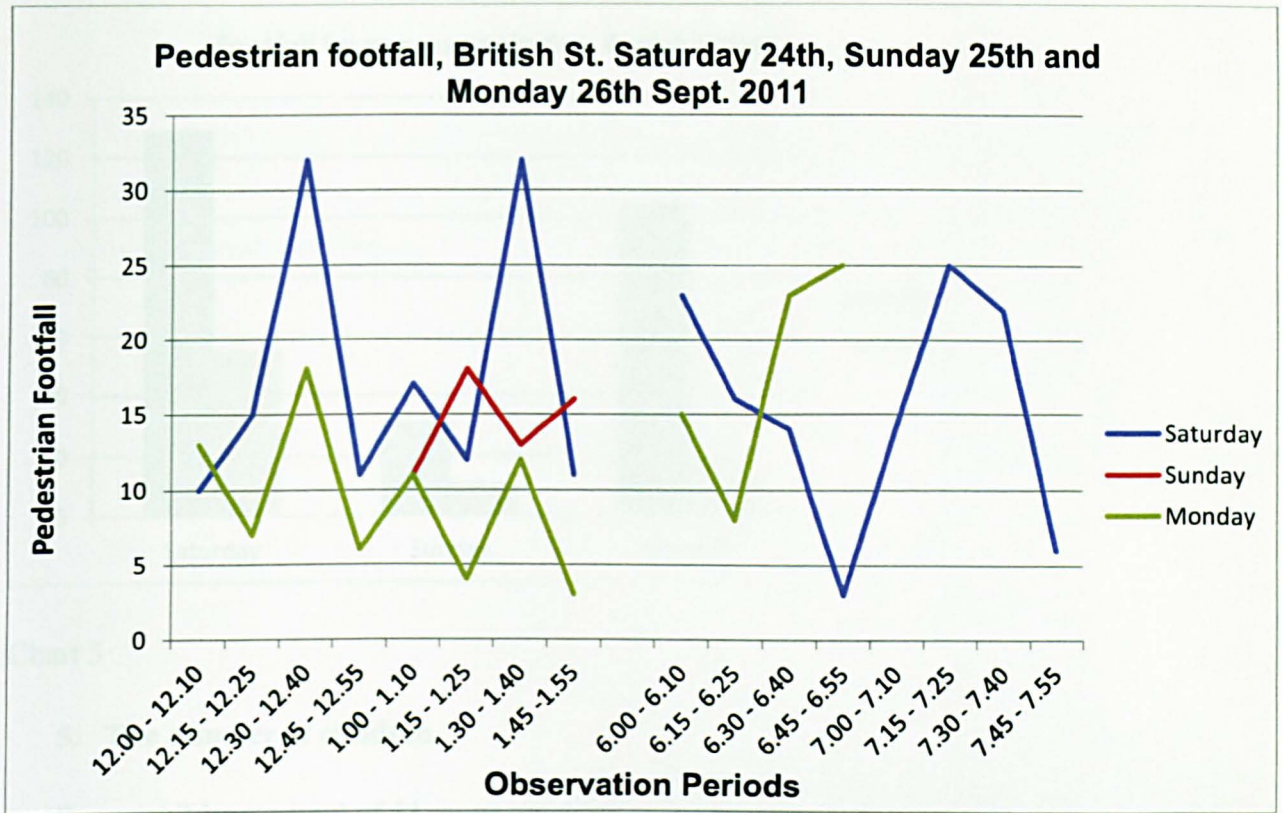


Chart 4

**3. The number of people sitting in the British Street public realm**

Nobody was recorded sitting in the British Street public realm at any point during the eight hour observation period. The possible reasons for this finding, which is unlike any of the other case studies, are discussed in the commentary, but one obvious possible explanation is the absence of any public benches.

**4. Whether pedestrians were single or in groups**

In a total of 466 recorded pedestrian movements observed, 264 were of individuals and 83 were of groups of two or more. As the following chart shows, singles consistently outnumbered groups throughout the study period.

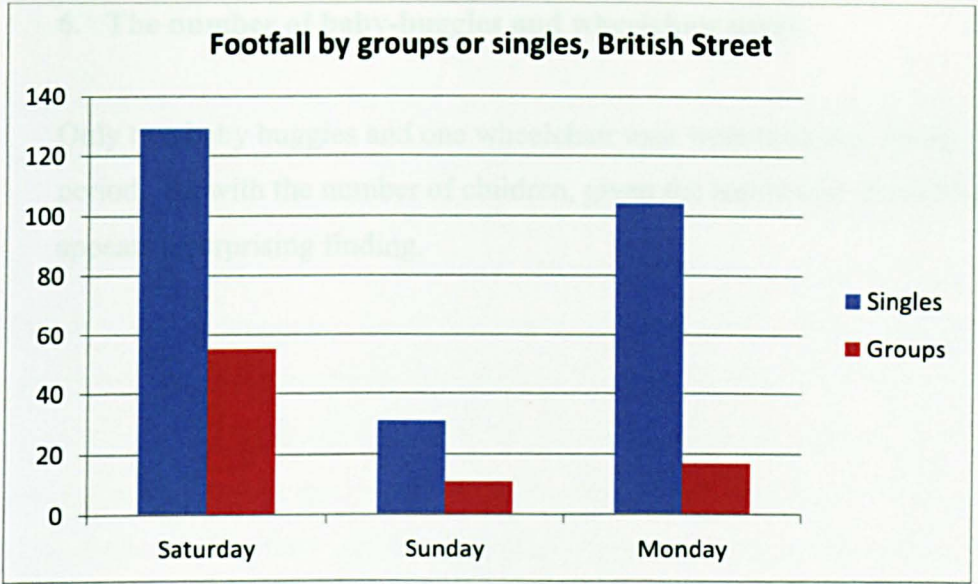


Chart 5

**5. The number of children**

Fewer children, a total of 53, were recorded using the British Street public realm than any of the other case studies. Again, this may partly reflect the comparative size and character of the study area, but it is a surprising finding, given that British Street is essentially a residential area, populated by a significant number of families.

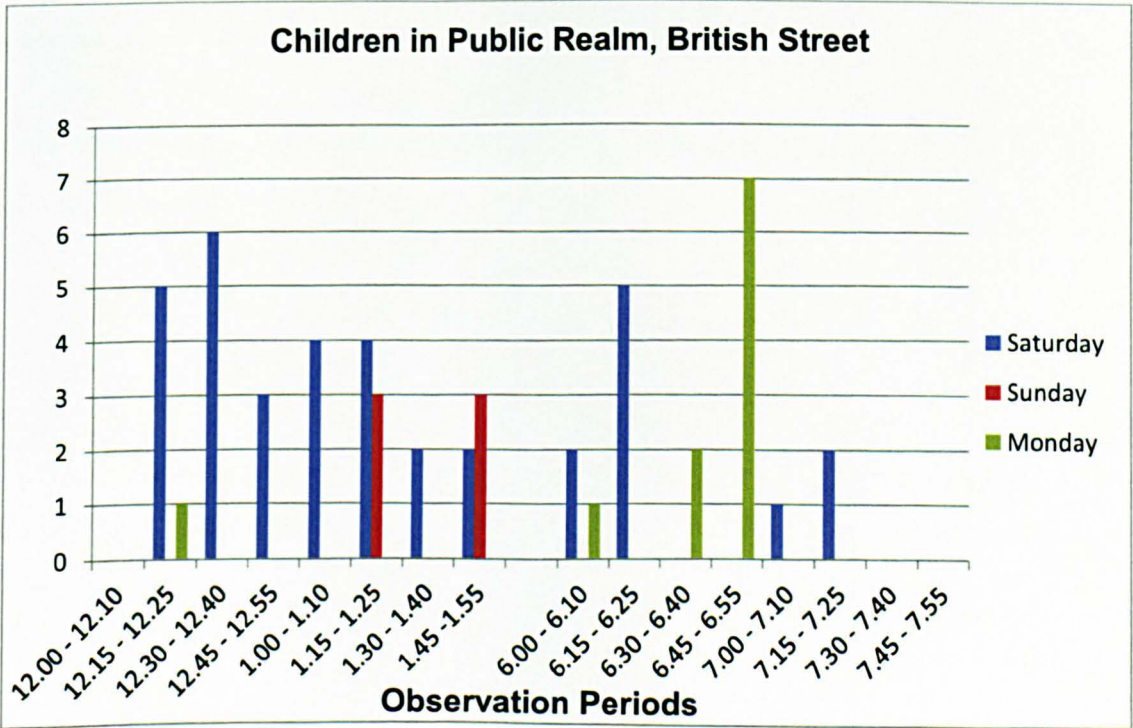


Chart 6

## **6. The number of baby-buggies and wheelchair users.**

Only two baby buggies and one wheelchair user were recorded during the observation period. As with the number of children, given the residential character of the estate, this appears a surprising finding.

## **Charter Quay**

The planning application for the Charter Quay development (RBK 1998a) pre-dates the widespread adoption of Mixed Use polices and some of the terminology that has become associated with the concept. However, while the term ‘public realm’ is not explicitly used in the planning documentation, there is a clear expectation on the part of the planning authority that the new development would open up a previously restricted area by improving pedestrian access both to and through the site and also by creating a link between Kingston town centre and the riverside walkway (RBK 1998a, para. 37 pA50). The provision of public open space and pedestrian access throughout the site was also described as a ‘community benefit’ arising from the redevelopment and stipulated accordingly in the legal planning conditions (RBK 1998b). The provision of a new public realm also complimented the planning authority’s broader objectives of regenerating Kingston town centre in favour of Mixed Use, whereby more leisure activities and housing would be encouraged as a mechanism for stimulating activities that would avoid the area becoming a ‘dead zone’ outside of working/retail hours (RBK planning note 1, undated).

### **Observation times and locations**

The observations were carried out on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> and Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2011.

Four locations were selected around the Charter Quay plaza (Jerome Place) as follows:



Fig. 56 Location 1: entrance to plaza via Shrubsole Passage from High Street and Market Place (photo by author 20<sup>th</sup> August 2011).



Fig. 57 Location 2: plaza facing north, from corner with 'Slug and Lettuce' (photo by author 20<sup>th</sup> August 2011).



Fig. 58 Location 3: from bridge across Hogsmill River creek, facing north-east (photo by author 20<sup>th</sup> August 2011).



Fig 59 Location 4: facing plaza facing east, at junction with 'Browns' bar/restaurant (photo by author 20<sup>th</sup> August 2011).





## **Methodological Issues**

The Charter Quay plaza features ground floor commercial activities along its northern and eastern elevations, in the form of four bar/restaurants, 'Brown's', 'Byron's', 'Carluccios' and 'Slug and Lettuce'. In addition, there is a small café/coffee bar within the plaza, at its south-eastern corner. Each of these outlets has a seated area, offering customers an opportunity to eat and drink outside. These outlets attract a significant clientele and observations confirm that they account for a noticeable proportion of the footfall through Charter Quay. However, a methodological distinction needs to be made between the public realm and private commercial space. A decision was made not to count people entering the bars/restaurants around Charter Quay, but to include those who chose to sit outside as part of the total of people within the public realm because, even though these people occupy an area that is not, strictly speaking, public, their presence does contribute to the overall level of animation and activity within the plaza. Furthermore, there are no other clearly designated seated areas within the Charter Quay public realm, meaning that those wishing to use the public realm for a sustained period and in comfort become obliged to use one of the commercial outlets that provide seating.

An effort was made in recording the observation data to avoid double counting. Wherever possible, each pedestrian 'journey' across the public realm was recorded only once.

Some difficulty was also experienced in distinguishing singles from groups. When observing a small group of people, it is not always apparent if they are together or not. For example, a pair of people, followed by a third individual may, in fact, be together as a group of three, but their body language may belie this. Every effort was made to record the correct classification, but this may not always have been accurate.

### **1. Total number of people in the Charter Quay plaza.**

This figure provides a 'snap shot' of the volume of use of the public realm, based on a head-count of the number of people within the study area at the start and finish of each ten minute observation period. Based on this, across the total eight hours of observation, the average number of people in the Charter Quay plaza at any time was 104.4, with a high of 158 at 1.10pm on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August and a low of 40 at 12.00pm on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

Across the observation period, the highest average number of people counted in the square was on Sunday (144.8), followed by Saturday (86.2) and Monday (82.2). These findings suggest that the Charter Quay plaza maintains a high-level of usage, but that it is particularly popular at weekends

## 2. Total number of pedestrian movements (footfall) through the plaza.

This figure gives an ‘extended snap shot’ of the pedestrian movements through the square during a ten minute period. Across the whole study period, the average number of pedestrian journeys using the Charter Quay plaza in a ten minute period was 80.1, with a high of 120 (1.15pm – 1.25pm Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>) and a low of 28 (7.30pm – 7.40pm Monday 20<sup>th</sup>). The following chart shows the footfall figures for the three days, during the observation periods.

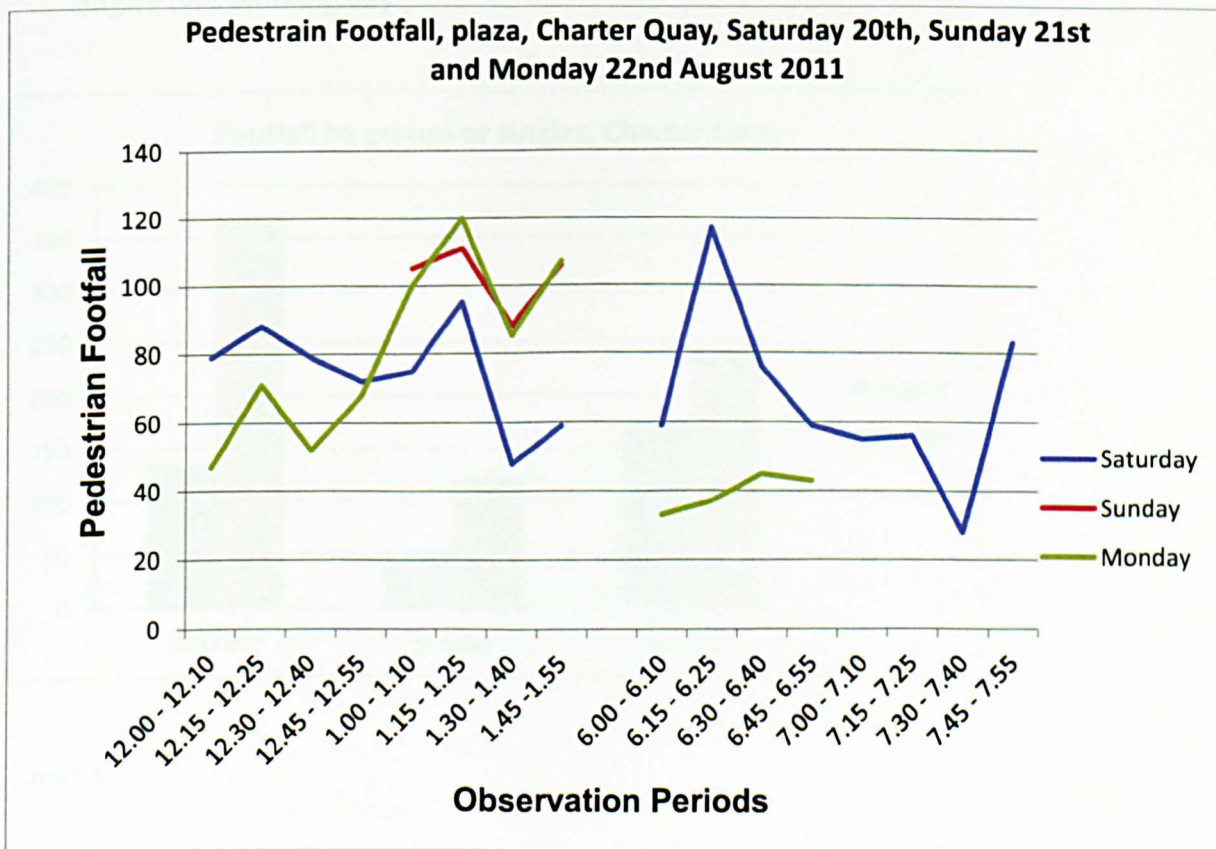


Chart 7

### 3. The number of people sitting in the plaza.

An average of only 0.7 people per ten minute observation period entered the observation area to sit down, with a high of 4 (6.15pm to 6.25pm, Saturday 20th), reflecting the fact that there is are no public benches/seats within the plaza.

### 4. Whether pedestrians were single or in groups.

In a total of 2,346 pedestrian movements observed, 360 were of individuals and 735 were of groups of two or more. Across all three days and at all times, groups of pedestrians were consistently and significantly more likely to use the Charter Square public realm than individuals. This is likely to reflect the character of the plaza as a venue for socialising and dining, rather than an office or retail space that may attract more solitary activities. However, there is a noticeable narrowing of the gap between groups and singles on a working day.

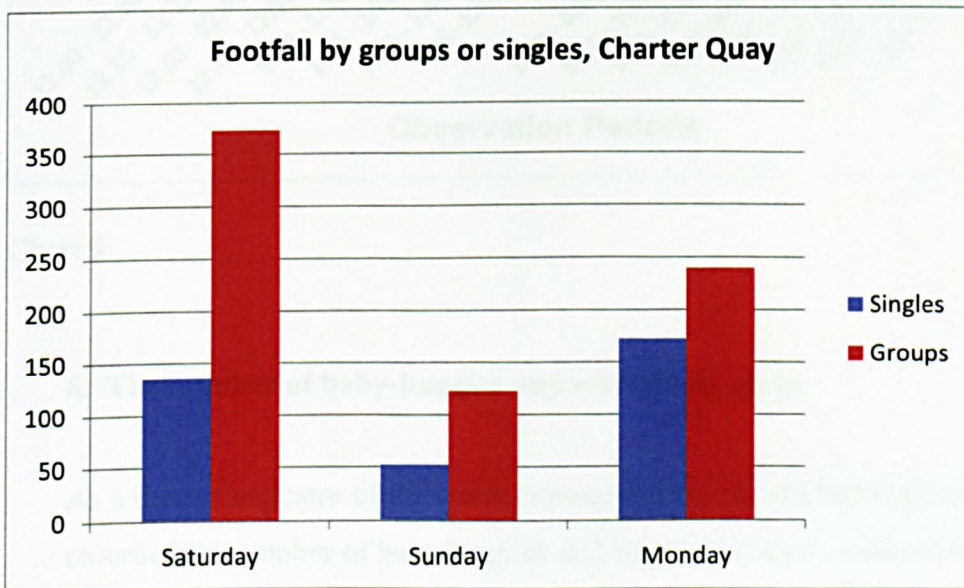


Chart 8

### 5. The number of children

Charter Quay does not have any specific attractions for children e.g. a playground and there is nothing in the planning documentation to indicate that a child friendly place was

one of the LPA's or developer's objectives. That said, as noted above, Charter Quay is a place favoured by groups, a significant proportion of which appear to be families with children, as reflected in the following table. Although four out of the five commercial outlets on the plaza are licenced premises, they all appear to welcome children as part of a family-oriented environment, at least during day-light hours. It should be noted that the observation period took place within the summer holidays.

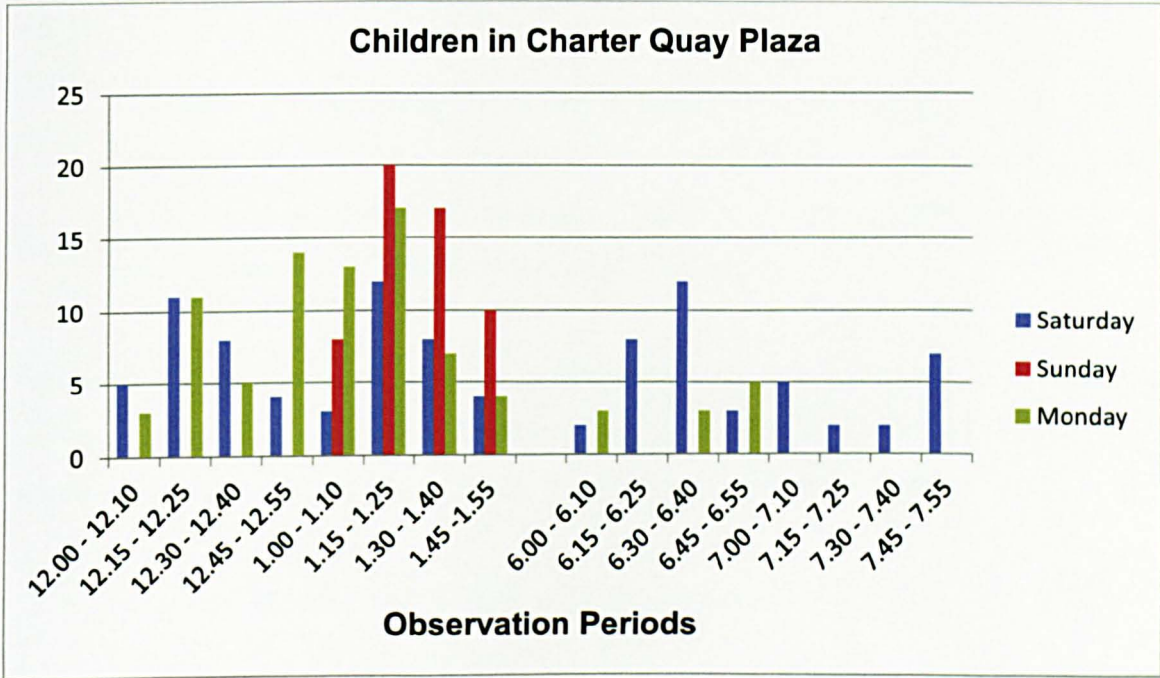


Chart 9

### 6. The number of baby-buggies and wheelchair users.

As a further indicator of the wider community appeal of Charter Quay, the observations recorded the number of baby buggies and wheelchair users within the study area. In keeping with the family/group character of the plaza, there was a steady flow of baby buggies observed – 145 in total, an average of 18 an hour across the eight hours of observation. However, during the same period, only 8 journeys by wheelchair users were recorded, six of which were in a half hour period on Monday afternoon, suggesting the possibility of a nearby group or activity for disabled people. As observed in relation to other public spaces in this research, there may be some design issues that militate against these uses at Charter Quay. Although most of the plaza is on one level, access

from the western side is via a short flight of steps. There is also ramped access from the southern side, but this is partially concealed by the café and may, therefore, not appear to be an easy route to navigate, particularly for a wheelchair user.

## GMV

The concept of the public realm is intrinsic to the entire GMV project. The design, layout and connectivity of the development is predicated on an ambition to create a built environment that fosters a sense of community, encourages pedestrian movement and generates a sense of animation and vitality. The selection of Swedish architect Ralph Erskine as the lead designer for the first phases of GMV under-scores these objectives because of his reputation in creating ‘people places’ through.

‘...organic town planning – with the tight-knit medieval town as a model....Erskine hopes that the tightly-knit communal houses and communal squares will engender social cohesion...(because) the biggest challenge of a large housing scheme is how to make it human...’ (‘Building’ magazine, 24.04.98)

Reflecting this approach, the planning documents refer to the importance of the provision of a variety of private, semi-private and public open spaces with a strong and coherent relationship between them (GLA 2007). The original Masterplan for GMV sets out,

‘...to reinvent the London Square to create streets and public spaces which are human, lively, intimate and secure.’ (LBG 1998, p16)

This network of streets, designed to be largely car-free, is linked to other public spaces within GMV, in particular the central Oval Square, the focus for retail, commercial and social activities and the Ecology Park to the south-east which is,

‘...an integral part of the concept of the Millennium Village...The provision of these features gives true meaning to the term ‘Village’, as they reflect core aspects of village life, as it is typically conceived. Therefore, the Millennium Village application and that for the Ecology Park should be considered as a meaningful whole. One without the other would represent an incomplete development.’ (LBG 1998, p21)

The purpose of this research exercise is to observe the volume and patterns of pedestrian activity around GMV in order to assess the development’s success in meeting these aims.

## Observation times and locations

Observations were carried out on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> and Bank Holiday Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2011.

The overall planning rationale for GMV establishes the principle that the public realm is not a singular entity, but an inter-related and inter-connected network of places creating a coherent whole. Therefore, both static and mobile observations were carried out to record the level of activity not just in the central Oval Square, but also in the surrounding streets, as follows:

**Static Locations 1 and 3:** The Oval Square is the hub of the GMV public realm network and is analogous to other public realms in Mixed Use developments, for example the Central Square at Brindleyplace or the Plaza of Charter Quay. Two locations at the north (fig. 60) and south (fig. 61) of the Oval Square were used to observe movements through the square.



Fig. 60 Static location 1: Oval Square facing south (photo by author 27<sup>th</sup> August 2011).



Fig. 61 Static location 3: Oval Square facing north from Café Pura (photo by author 27<sup>th</sup> August 2011).

**Mobile Location 2:** A ten minute walk was taken, leaving the Oval Square due east on John Harrison Way, south into Teal Street, west into Renaissance Walk, south of Da Vinci Lodge, into the Ecology Park, along the Boardwalk, north on to the Thames path and returning due west to Oval Square via John Harrison Way.

**Mobile Location 4:** A ten-minute walk taken, leaving Oval Square due west along John Harrison Way, south along Greenroof Way (past the GMV School, medical centre and a small play area), east into Osier Lane and returning to Oval Square via West Parkside.



Fig. 62 GMV public realm and Mixed Uses, as envisaged by architect Ralph Erskine (Greenwich Millennium Village Limited 2006, p11).

Fig. 63 GMV public realm as envisaged by developers (Greenwich Millennium Village Ltd 2006, front cover).



## **Methodological Issues**

The overall volume of pedestrian activity at GMV was significantly lower than at other case studies for this research. The possible reasons for this are discussed in detail elsewhere in this chapter, but may include the difficulties GMV has experienced in letting commercial space, although this is perhaps a circular argument because lack of pedestrian footfall will act as a disincentive to potential retail and other commercial uses. At the time that the observations were carried out, there were only four commercial units in operation within GMV, all based on the Oval Square, namely an estate agent, a convenience store, a dry-cleaners and a coffee bar/health spa. Of these, only the convenience store was open throughout all eight hours of the observation period. The estate agent was open on Saturday afternoon, but closed on Sunday and Monday, the dry-cleaners stayed open until 7pm on Saturday, but was closed on Sunday and Monday, the coffee bar/health spa was open until 7pm on Saturday, open on Sunday, but closed early on Monday, although this was a Bank Holiday.

When open, all the commercial outlets on the Oval Square generated a noticeable level of usage, but the convenience store was clearly responsible for a significant proportion of the recorded pedestrian journeys to and from the observation area. As in other case studies, no effort was made to interpret the reasons why people had chosen to use the public realm, but the inconsistent availability and limited range of local shops should be taken into account when evaluating the findings. Account should also be taken of the fact that Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August was a Bank Holiday and this did appear to stimulate use of the public realm, with two 'spikes' in activity during that evening.

An effort was made in recording the observation data to avoid double counting. Wherever possible, each pedestrian 'journey' across the public realm was recorded only once.

Some difficulty was also experienced in distinguishing singles from groups. When observing a small group of people, it is not always apparent if they are together or not. For example, a pair of people, followed by a third individual may, in fact, be together as a group of three, but their body language may belie this. Every effort was made to record the correct classification, but this may not always have been accurate.

## **1. Average number of people in the Oval Square**

This figure provides a ‘snap shot’ of the volume of use of the central public realm, based on a head-count of the number of people within the Oval Square at the start and finish of each ten minute observation period. Based on this, across the total eight hours of observation, the average number of people in the Oval Square at any time was 5, with a high of 15 at 1.55pm on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August. For fourteen separate recordings there were no people in the study area. There was very little difference in the average number of people in the Oval Square across the three days (Saturday 5.3, Sunday 4.2, Monday 5.7).

## **2. Total number of pedestrian movements (footfall) through the Oval Square and surrounding area**

This figure gives an ‘extended snap shot’ of the pedestrian movements through the Oval Square and surrounding areas described above during a ten minute period. Across the whole study period, the average number of pedestrian journeys using the extended GMV public realm in a ten minute period was 24.4, with a high of 61 (6.30pm – 6.40pm Monday 29<sup>th</sup>) and a low of 8 (6.15pm – 6.25pm Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>). The following chart shows the footfall figures for the three days, during the observation periods.

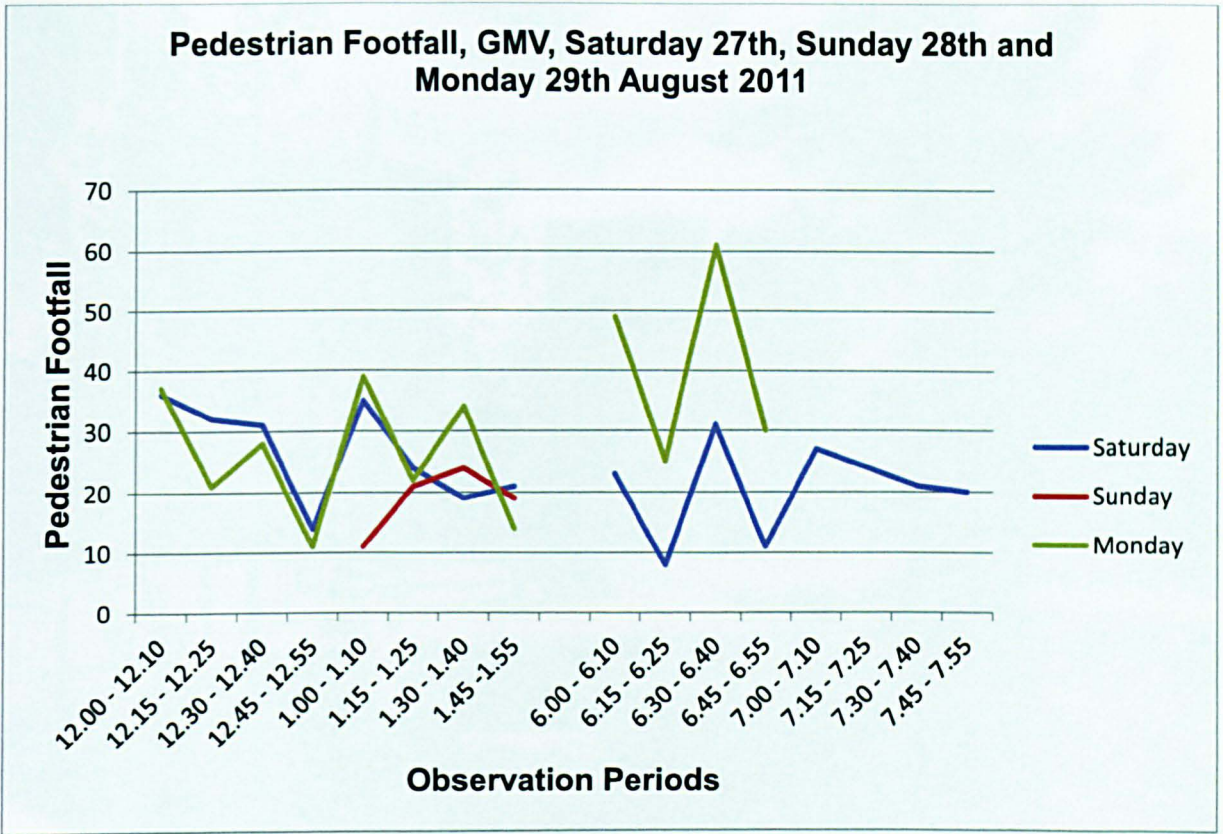


Chart 10

### 3. The number of people sitting in the Oval Square and surrounding area

Consistent with the objective of encouraging use of the public realm, the northern end of Oval Square features a landscaped grassed and planted area with nine benches (fig. 64). There are also benches distributed around the surrounding network of streets, including alongside a small play area on Greenroof Way (fig. 65). Despite this provision, an average of only 0.3 people per ten minute period was observed using the seating around the extended GMV public realm.



Fig. 64 Benches in landscaped public realm, Oval Square, GMV (photo by author 29<sup>th</sup> August 2011).



Fig. 65 Seating area next to children's playground, adjacent to GMV school (photo by author 8<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2010).

#### 4. Whether pedestrians were single or in groups

In a total of 823 recorded pedestrian movements observed, 339 were of individuals and 183 were of groups of two or more. Across all three days and at all times, individuals were consistently and significantly more likely to use the GMV public realm than groups, as shown in the following table.

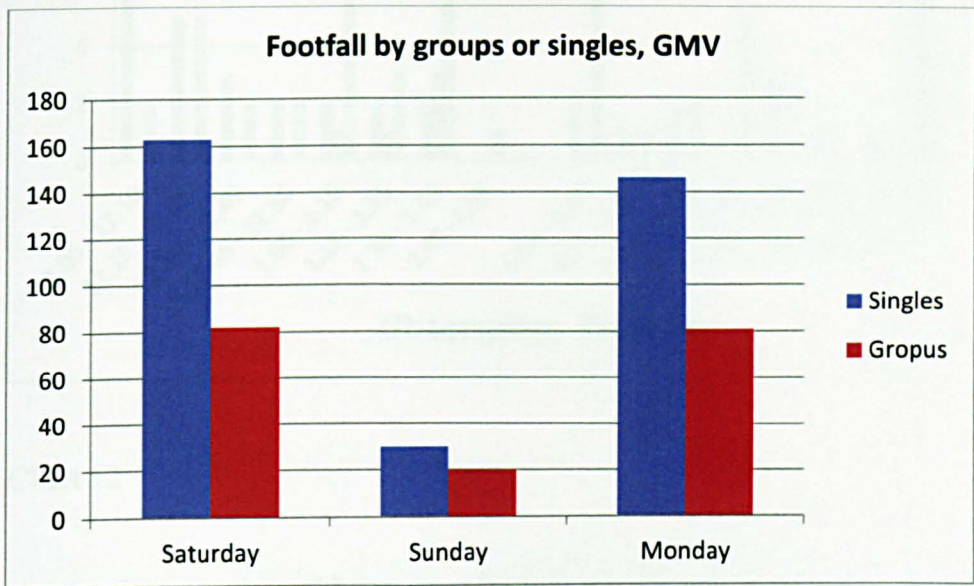


Chart 11

### 5. The number of children

GMV is a predominantly residential development that includes a significant proportion of family-sized housing and facilities for children are specifically identified within the planning documentation as outcomes of the project (GLA 2007, p6), although not all of these have been delivered in the phases of GMV completed at the time of the research. In particular, there is only one, small play area within the public realm. It should be noted that the study period took place within the school holidays.

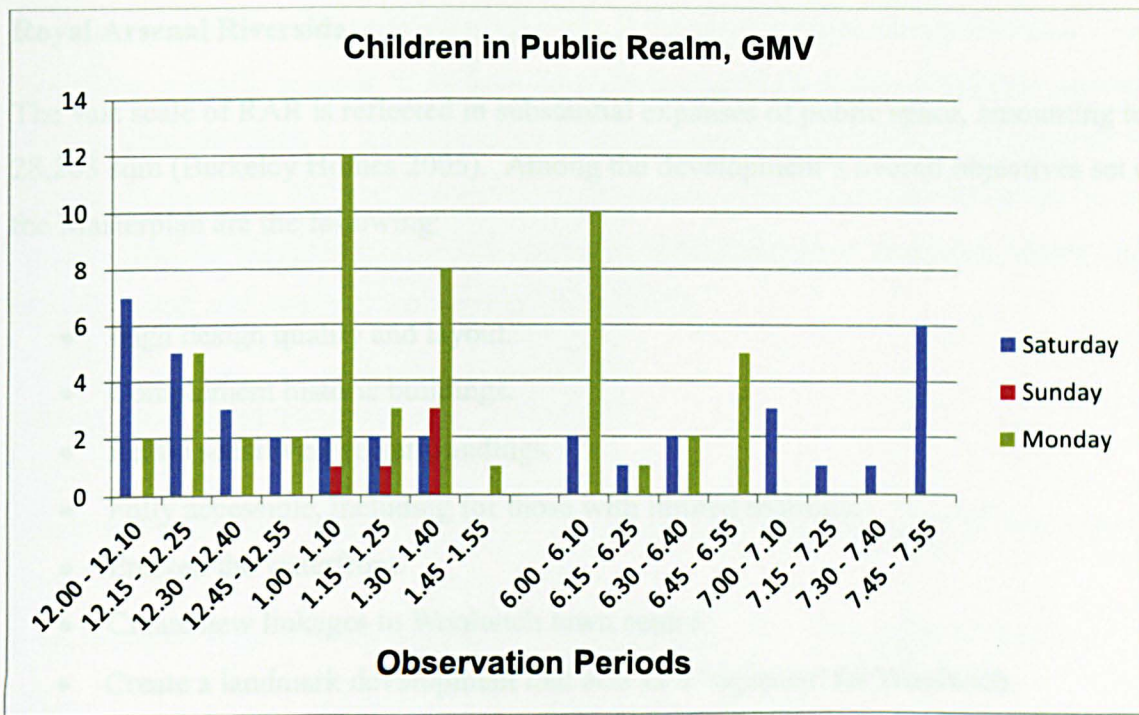


Chart 12

**6. The number of baby-buggies and wheelchair users.**

24 baby-buggies, an average of 3 an hour across the eight hour observation period and 2 wheelchair users were recorded using the GMV public realm.



## **Royal Arsenal Riverside**

The vast scale of RAR is reflected in substantial expanses of public space, amounting to 28,263 sqm (Berkeley Homes 2005). Among the development's overall objectives set out in the Masterplan are the following:

- High design quality and layout.
- Complement historic buildings.
- Relate sensitively to surroundings.
- Fully accessible, including for those with limited mobility.
- Enliven the waterfront.
- Create new linkages to Woolwich town centre.
- Create a landmark development that acts as a 'signpost' for Woolwich.

(Berkeley Homes 2005, para. 4.9, p11)

The voluminous planning documentation for RAR emphasises its compliance with national, regional and local planning policy and its treatment of the public realm is closely related to wider regeneration objectives both for the site itself and for the surrounding area and particularly relates these aims to the requirements for creating Sustainable Communities, as set out by the New Labour government (ODPM 2003):

'A network of open spaces and play spaces are provided linking the site with the Town Centre and the Waterfront. These open spaces play a key role in the overall design of the scheme, creating and maximising the permeability of the site and how it connects with its surroundings.' (Berkeley Homes 2005, para. 5.4 pp12 - 15).

The LPA summarises the public realm strategy for RAR as follows:

'An integrated public realm strategy comprising squares, avenues, streets and courtyards are proposed to create new linkages through to the Town Centre. A hierarchy of public and private open spaces will be used to enhance the permeability of the scheme. Most public spaces and routes are to be car free...' (LBG 2008 p44)

The public realm strategy within the RAR site is also taking shape alongside a major re-modelling of public space in Woolwich town centre, particularly Beresford and General Gordon Squares which lie adjacent to RAR, though separated by the A206 Plumstead Road. This is a response to the ‘unprecedented’ regeneration of Woolwich driven by the opening of the DLR and the anticipated Crossrail stations and the building of thousands of new homes, a new town hall and a major supermarket (LBG 2007).

### **Observation times and locations**

The observations took place on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> and Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

Four locations were selected in order to give an overall view of the area, as follows:



Fig. 66 Location 1: entrance to site via southern entrance, at head of No.1 Street and a path that leads to Major Draper Street. This is the main entrance/exit to and from RAR, connecting the site to Woolwich town centre and transport links. Major Draper Street is the most direct route to the completed residential blocks. The Dial Arch pub is at the rear of the grassed area (photo by author 10<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



Fig. 67 Location 2: crossroads of No.1 Street and Cornwallis Road/Duke of Wellington Avenue. This point affords a view along the two major pedestrian arteries at RAR, as well as the public space around the 'Firepower' museum (including seating areas outside its café) and the Greenwich Heritage Centre (photo by author 10<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



Fig. 68 Location 3: northern end of No.1 Street adjacent to Royal Arsenal Woolwich Pier served by the Thames Clipper passenger riverboat service, the Thames Path and a landscaped area with soft and hard surfaces, public art and military/heritage relics (photo by author 10<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



Fig. 69 Location 4: Wellington Park, a raised, landscaped grassed area above an underground car park, surrounded by housing blocks (photo by author 11<sup>th</sup> Sept 2011).

Each location was used in rotation, with observations recorded for ten minutes, allowing five minutes for movement between locations and note taking. During each ten-minute period, the following information was recorded:



## **Methodological Issues**

The four observation locations are in close proximity to each other, but they have very different characters and functions as public space and this is reflected in the different patterns of use recorded below. Locations 1 and 3 are entrance/exit points for the site and have access to transport services as well as leisure/recreational uses, Location 2 features cultural/heritage uses and Location 4 is purely a recreational park, albeit one surrounded by housing. It could be argued that these differences make the four locations incomparable, but the Masterplan and other planning documents for RAR make it clear that inter-connection between complimentary elements of the public realm is a design goal and so the areas are evaluated accordingly, although some figures are also disaggregated to show the extent of the different patterns of use.

Despite the large scale of these observation areas, no difficulty was experienced in accurately counting the pedestrian movements, however, a hand tally counter was needed during the peak periods when there was significant footfall in a short period of time, apparently coinciding with public transport and commuting flows.

Consistent with the other case studies in this research, people working at RAR (identified by wearing uniform or carrying out grounds maintenance activities) were not included in footfall counts because they cannot necessarily be regarded as voluntary users of the public realm. However, during the observation period at RAR there were a substantial number of construction workers on-site. When their status was obvious (hard hat, high-visibility clothing) they were excluded from the count. It is possible that the on-going construction activity has inflated the pedestrian movements recorded, though not significantly.

The data was also affected by some large groups, including one coach-party coming to RAR to view the collection of historic buildings (1pm – 1.10 pm Monday 12<sup>th</sup>). However, given that RAR is deliberately exploiting heritage as part of its Mixed Use strategy, this is not felt to be an invalid inclusion in the data.

## 1. Average number of people in the RAR public realm

This figure provides a 'snap shot' of the volume of use of the RAR public realm, defined by the four locations detailed above, based on a head-count of the number of people recorded at the start and finish of each ten minute observation period,. Based on this, across the total eight hours of observation, the average number of people in the RAR public realm at any time was 9, with a high of 53 at location 1 at 6.10pm on Saturday. There was a significant variation between the four locations, as shown in the following table and discussed in the commentary.

RAR	'Snap shot' average of people in RAR public realm
Location 1	26.3
Location 2	5.5
Location 3	4.3
Location 4	2.4

Table 11: People in public realm, RAR

## 2. Total number of pedestrian movements (footfall) through the RAR public realm

This figure gives an 'extended snap shot' of the pedestrian movements through the RAR public realm specified above during a ten minute period. Across the whole study period, the average number of pedestrian journeys using the RAR public realm in a ten minute period was 39.3, with a high of 121 (1.00pm – 1.10pm Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>) and two periods when only one person was recorded (6.45pm – 6.55pm Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and 1.45pm – 1.55 Sunday 11<sup>th</sup>). The following chart shows the footfall figures for the three days, during the observation periods.

**Pedestrian footfall, Royal Arsenal Riverside, Saturday 10th, Sunday 11th and Monday 12th September 2011**

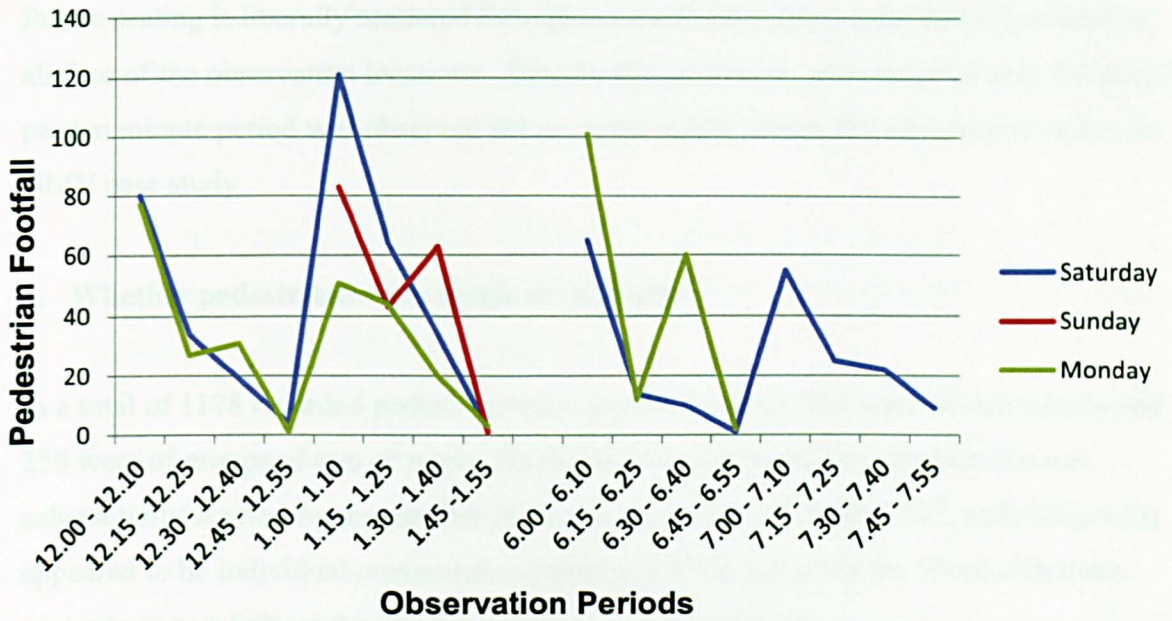


Chart 13

This erratic pattern is explained by disaggregating the figures to show the footfall for each of the four locations separately, as shown below.

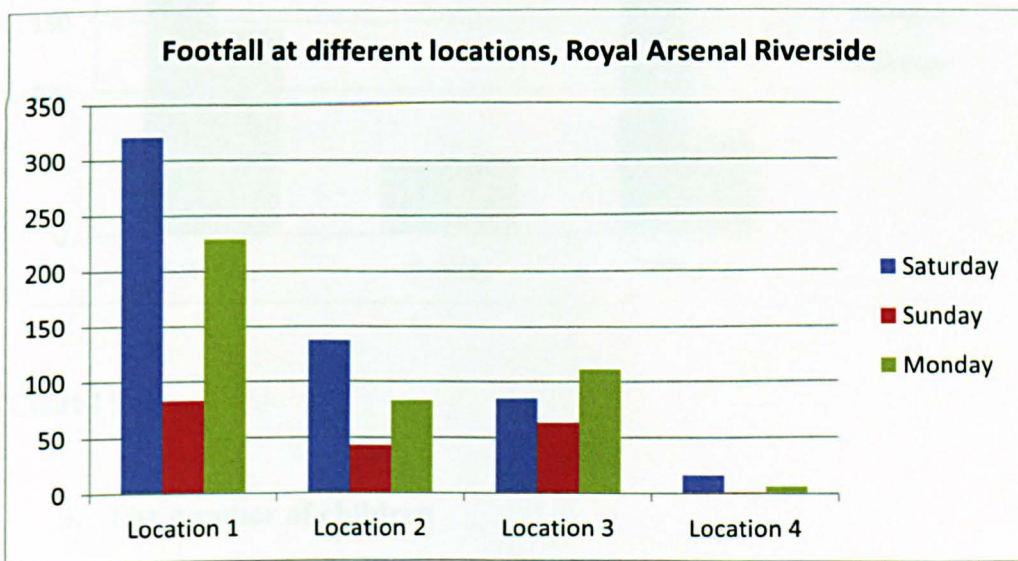


Chart 14



### 3. The number of people sitting in the RAR public realm

Public seating is liberally scattered throughout the RAR public realm and is available at all four of the observation locations. Despite this provision, an average of only 0.3 people per ten minute period was observed sitting in the public realm, the same figure as for the GMV case study.

### 4. Whether pedestrians were single or in groups

In a total of 1178 recorded pedestrian movements observed, 525 were of individuals and 259 were of groups of two or more. As the following table shows, the balance was substantially skewed by the number of singles recorded on Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, reflecting what appeared to be individual commuters returning to RAR either via the Woolwich town centre transport hub, or the Thames Clipper river-bus service.

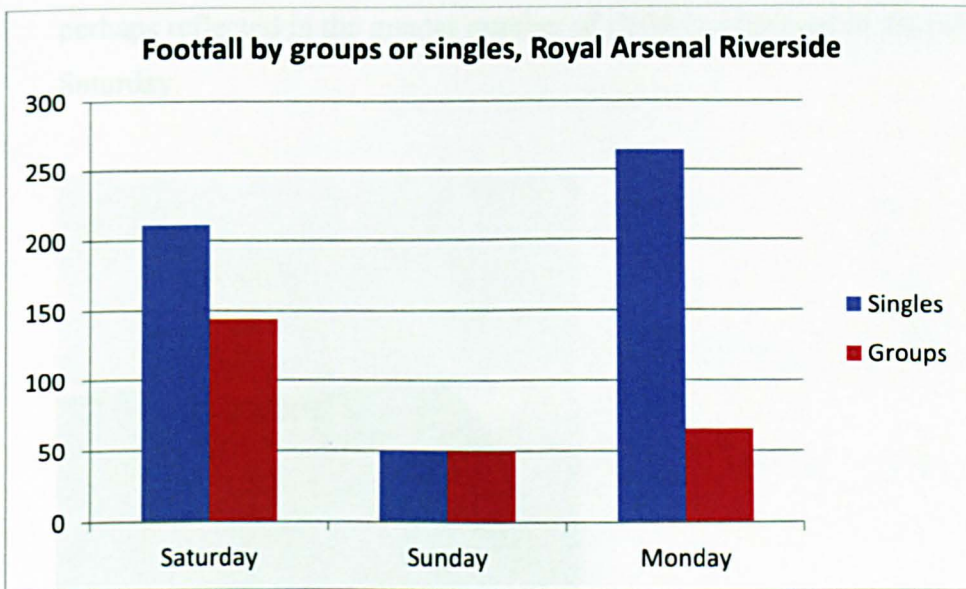


Chart 15

### 5. The number of children

RAR is a predominantly residential development, but there appears to be some ambivalence in the extent to which it is anticipated as a place that will accommodate a

significant number of children. The planning literature for RAR states that the LPA will require provision of family sized accommodation to provide ‘a mixed and balanced sustainable development’ (LBG 2008a, para 2.10, p3). The exact proportion of family sized homes is not specified, but described as conditional on changing patterns of housing need over the projected twenty year life of the RAR project. However, the developers’ planning statement states that:

‘Due to the urban location of the site and therefore the flatted nature of the scheme, it is considered the provision of a substantial amount of family housing is not deemed appropriate.’ (Berkeley Homes 2008, p16)

Despite this, the planning permission for RAR specifies the requirement for a nursery, although at the time of writing this has yet to materialise. At a Planning Board meeting Councillors were informed that there were no plans for a primary school (LBG 2008b, p3). There is a children’s playground at the south-eastern corner of Wellington Park and the ‘Firepower’ museum is another potential attraction for children at RAR (see fig 65), perhaps reflected in the greater number of children observed in the public realm on Saturday.



Fig. 70 Children’s event organised by ‘Firepower’ museum (photo by author 10<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).

The number of children recorded using the RAR public realm is recorded below. As with the other data for this case study, the results are uneven. Overall, more children were observed in locations 1 and 2, while for five separate occasions there were no children in Wellington Park, despite it being a large open green space with an adjoining playground.

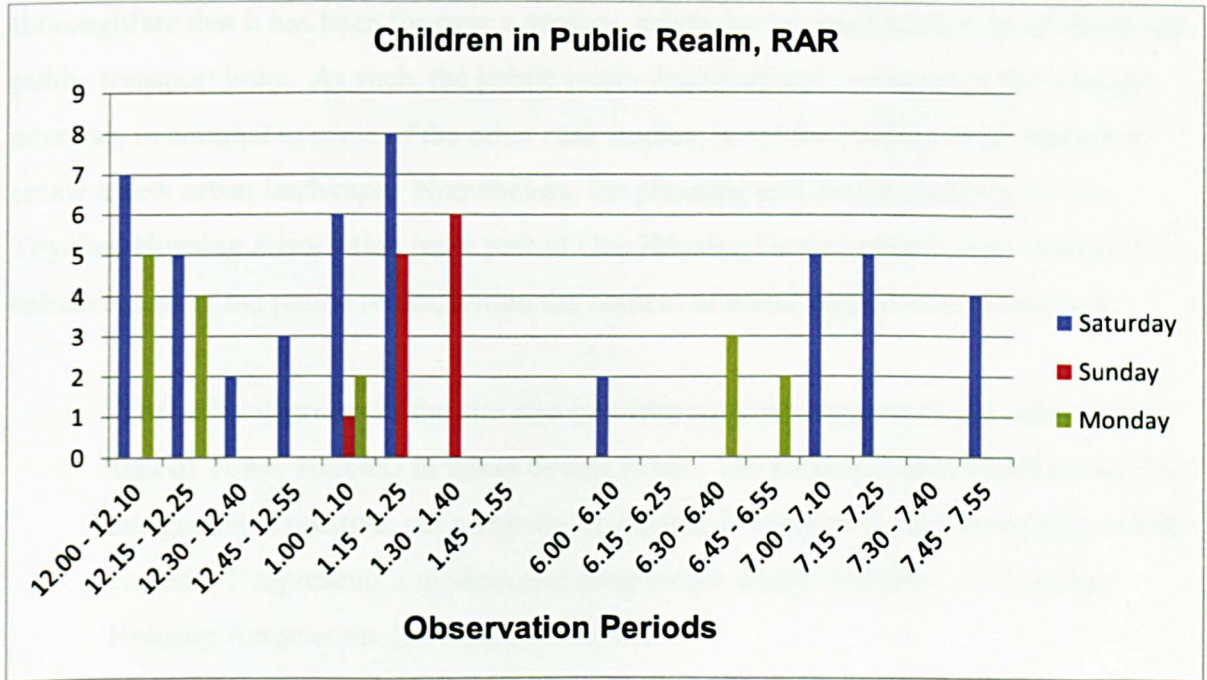


Chart 16

## 6. The number of baby-buggies and wheelchair users.

49 baby-buggies, an average of 6 an hour, were recorded in the RAR public realm, with the biggest number (23) recorded on Monday. Five wheelchair users were recorded using the RAR public realm.

## **Watney/Tarling**

The Watney Street/Tarling Estate case study is classified within the typology for this thesis as an ‘urban improvement project’. This description refers to the fact that the Mixed Use development completed in 2008 took place within the context of a strong and long established existing urban morphology. Despite the many physical and social changes that have taken place in the Shadwell area, Watney Street has remained the prominent pedestrian thoroughfare that it has been for over a century, driven by its street market, local shops and public transport links. As such, the public realm described and evaluated in this research exercise, in contrast to some of the other case studies, is not the product of an attempt to create a new urban landscape. Nonetheless, the planning and design rationale for the Toynbee Housing Association (now part of One Housing Group) project does foresee the enhancement of the public realm, within the context of wider regeneration objectives:

‘The redevelopment of the site also provides a distinct opportunity to enhance this area of Tower Hamlets in urban design terms. The proposed development has been designed in a positive, yet sympathetic manner in relation to the surrounding urban context. It represents a modern and progressive design solution...’ (Toynbee Housing Association 2004, para. 8.4, p33)

For the LPA, the creation of new public space in the form of a landscaped piazza linking Watney Street market to the north to the remainder of Watney Street to the south, thus extending the ‘high street’ and increasing activity, was a planning goal (LBTH 2000, para. 6.4).

Reflecting on the scheme’s objectives, the developer comments:

‘The area lacked vibrancy and quality, despite being in a prime inner city location...The objectives of the regeneration development were to create new public open spaces and shops, extend and reinforce the identity of the area...(and) create a high quality, safe and cared for living environment.’ (One Housing Group 2009)

To achieve these goals, the Watney/Tarling development provides a combination of public, private and semi-public amenity space, combined with active street frontage for residential

and commercial use. This research exercise seeks to evaluate the success of these spaces in nurturing the type and volume of activity that is consistent both with the aspirations of the scheme and its application of the Mixed Use concept.

### **Observation times and locations**

The observations took place on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> and Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

Four locations, all part of the redevelopment programme, were selected in order to give an overall view of the area, as follows:



Fig. 71 Location 1: the southern entrance to Watney Street Market (referred to by the developers as 'Watney Plaza') at the junction with Dunch Street, leading to Bigland Street (photo by author 17<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



Fig. 72 Location 2: the northern end of Watney Plaza, where it connects, via a short flight of steps, with Tarling Street (photo by author 17<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



Fig. 73 Location 3: southern end of James Voller Way, junction with Martha Street (photo by author 17<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).



Fig. 74 Location 4: the newly created public space and seated area set back from the western side of Watney Street, opposite Spencer Way and the Watney/Tarling Mixed Use development (photo by author 17<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2011).





## **Methodological Issues**

The level of pedestrian activity in and around the Watney/Tarling public realm was substantially greater than for any of the other case studies. The volume of activity presented some difficulties and required the use of a hand tally counter. However, as with some other case studies, there was some inconsistency in the level of use between different locations of the public realm.

Given the complex spatial context of the study area, it is particularly difficult to ascribe, from observation, the reasons for pedestrian use of the public realm because there are a host of possible explanations, including key transport links, use of local shops and/or street market, the pub, journeys to and from school and Islamic cultural centres and use of other public services in the Watney Street area, including a library and housing office. What is far less apparent in this case study than in others is the use of the public realm purely for leisure or relaxation.

The four locations are physically and spatially connected, in as much as they constitute a public realm 'whole' that has resulted directly from the One Housing redevelopment. Locations 1, 2 and 4 are on significant pedestrian routes, driven by residential, commercial and transport uses, but location 3 is on a newly created road that, while it does feature commercial uses, is less well established and has the character of a 'back street'. This is reflected in the significantly lower recorded levels of pedestrian footfall.

### **1. Average number of people in the Watney/Tarling public realm**

This figure provides a 'snap shot' of the volume of use of the Watney/Tarling public realm, defined by the four locations detailed above, based on a head-count of the number of people recorded at the start and finish of each ten minute observation period. Based on this, across the total eight hours of observation, the average number of people in the Watney/Tarling public realm at any time was 8.3, with a high of 22 at location 2 at 12.15pm on Saturday. This figure was significantly reduced by the significant variation in the volume of observed use at Location 3, where the average was 3. Given the volume of recorded footfall in the study area (see below), this average appears low, but may

reflect the character of the Watney/Tarling public realm as a pedestrian thoroughfare, rather than a place to linger.

## 2. Total number of pedestrian movements (footfall) through the RAR public realm

*This figure gives an 'extended snap shot' of the pedestrian movements through the Watney/Tarling public realm specified above during a ten minute period. Across the whole study period, the average number of pedestrian journeys through the study area in a ten minute period was 131.6, with a high of 241 (Location 2, 1.15pm – 1.25pm Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>) and a low of 17 (Location 3, 6.30 – 6.40pm, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>). There were three other periods when the footfall exceeded 200. The following chart shows the footfall figures for the three days, during the observation periods.*

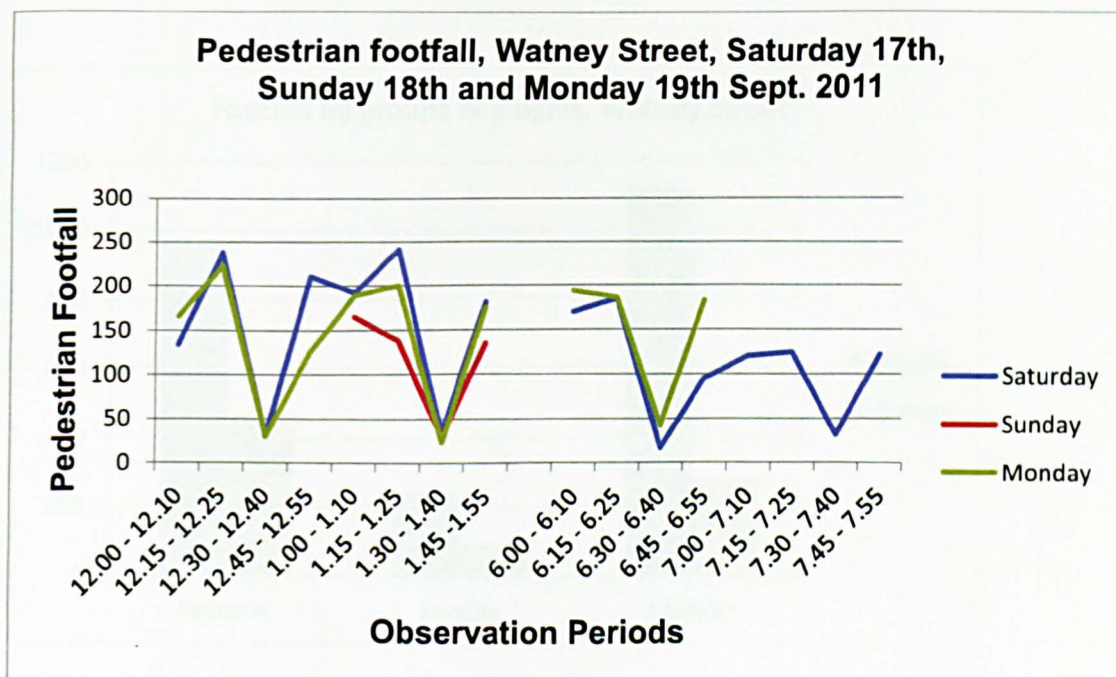


Chart 17

The consistency, as well as the volume of use of the Watney/Tarling public realm is indicated by the close similarities of these lines.

### 3. The number of people sitting in the Watney/Tarling public realm

Public seating is available at all four of the observation locations. A total of 65 people were recorded sitting in the public realm during the study period, significantly more than for the other case studies, with the exception of Brindleyplace.

### 4. Whether pedestrians were single or in groups

In a total of 4,334 recorded pedestrian movements observed, 2,340 were of individuals and 845 were of groups of two or more. While singles out-numbered groups throughout the observation period, this became pronounced on Monday, which was a school day when, as the following section shows, there were substantially fewer children in the Watney/Tarling public realm and far fewer groups.

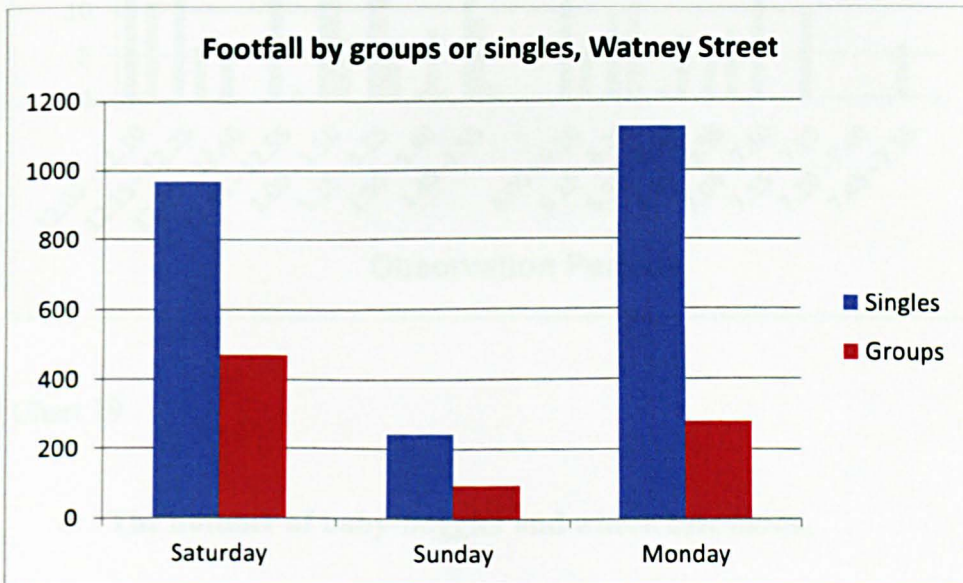


Chart 18

### 5. The number of children

Far more children were recorded in the Watney/Tarling public realm than in any of the other case study areas, although there were significant differences between the observation locations and at different times. As suggested above, a significant proportion of children were observed in groups using the public realm and the number of groups fell

substantially on Monday, as did the number of children. Despite the high number of children recorded, there are no obvious attractions within the Watney/Tarling aimed specifically at young people, although facilities such as the local library in the market precinct and the Islamic centre in Bigland Street are heavily used by children. There are no play facilities in the public realm designed and developed by One Housing, although there is a pre-existing playground in Bigland Street.

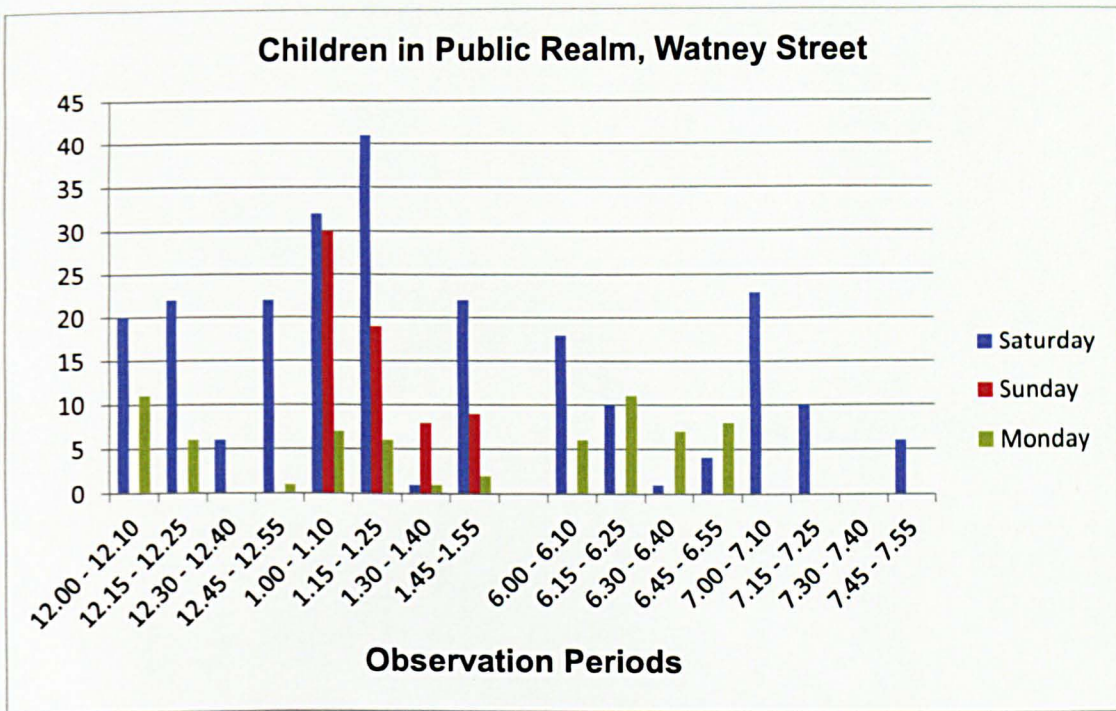


Chart 19

## 6. The number of baby-buggies and wheelchair users.

166 baby-buggies were recorded, an average of 20.7 an hour across the eight hour observation period, more than for any of the other case studies. 12 wheelchair users were recorded, again more than in other places observed for this research.