

## **Speech Notes for 9 July 2008**

**Tom Russell, Group Director, Olympic Legacy Directorate, London Development Agency**

### **The Foundation for Science and Technology “What will be the Legacy of the 2012 Olympics?”**

Legacy is much over-used word, as inescapable as it is ubiquitous.

Means many different things in many different contexts.

#### **Olympic Park Context**

Reclamation and development of 500 acres of under-used or vacant, contaminated post-industrial land.

Most important context in that without the Olympics and development it brings, difficult to envisage success for other aspects of Legacy.

#### **East London Context**

Comprehensive, physical, social, economic renewal of one of the most impoverished and deprived parts of UK.

Also most important in that this is the core of London’s vision for Legacy – transformation of people’s lives, social conditions, economic prospects as well as physical transformation.

#### **London and National Context**

Olympics as tool for delivering other policy objectives e.g.

- improving participation in sport
- youth issues etc.
- business competitiveness – CompeteFor programme.

Important because Games are a project of national scale and significance, and nation needs to see benefits from an enormous investment.

#### **My Role**

My own role and my interest is primarily focussed on the first two – Olympics Park and wider East London area – which are inextricably linked.

Currently in the middle of a process which, by the middle of next year, will see the completion/publication of a strategic plan for East London. Can’t tell you precisely what it will look like, but it will be:

- comprehensive: physical/social/economic
- long term: decades not months or years
- clear/legible

- viable – deliverable financially and operationally
- framework not blueprint

Concurrently also thinking through delivery structures which will need to address three interlocking imperatives

- developing the Olympic Park – homes, business space, jobs, leisure facilities, schools, shops, sustainable communities – and securing economic benefits from the development
- management regime for park and venues
- tackling quality of life issues in wider area

This needs a focussed/dedicated structure. These imperatives can't be part of the organisational brief, have to be its totality

Structures no guarantee of success, but can seriously impede/jeopardise prospects

Major risks and challenges are too numerous to mention, but key for me are:-

- maintaining ambition and holding our nerve in the face of intense media and political scrutiny. It is easy to be diverted and accept quick fixes but need to hold to long-term strategy
- must take a hugely complex array of stakeholders/interested parties organisations and people with us
- will need clear, comprehensive and robust strategic plan
- will also need genuine engagement with community and institutions in development of plan

But very confident in ability to deliver:

- underlying development proposition very strong
- -500 acres on edge of successful world city
- with unparalleled transport connections
- and strong direct legacy of Olympics to add distinctiveness, unique sense of place
- strong collective sense of purpose / will to make it happen
- underlying prognosis for London is for continuing business and population growth – where else will it go?
- regeneration is not just about need but opportunity
- East London's needs undeniable, have been for decades, what has been lacking is opportunity on scale to make difference
- Games have provided that
- conditions now right for genuine and genuinely historic reversal in fortunes of this part of London.

- will happen, how well it happens is down to us all.

Tom Russell  
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