



London, 30th September 2016

For immediate release (*including video, links below*)

Labour Mayor asks Conservatives to help fund infrastructure for Isle of Dogs housing boom

John Biggs, the Labour Mayor of Tower Hamlets, is taking part in a video presentation at the Conservative party conference on Monday 3rd October organised by the Isle of Dogs Neighbourhood Planning Forum and supported by the Canary Wharf Group. He will call for major Government investment to support the most intensive house-building boom in Western Europe, which his Labour Council is overseeing.

Supporting the Forum's aim of preventing the solution to today's housing crisis becoming tomorrow's infrastructure crisis, he will say that Tower Hamlets needs central Government investment to provide the services needed to support such intense housing growth.

Developers understandably prefer to build in valuable locations like the Isle of Dogs around London's prestigious Canary Wharf business district. But building huge, closely packed residential skyscrapers of up to 75 storeys – each housing over 1,000 people – risks an infrastructure crisis that will affect not just the quality of life for current and future residents, but its ability to function as a residential neighbourhood, let alone support the economic growth of Canary Wharf.

The population of the Isle of Dogs is expected to grow from its present 40,000 residents to over 100,000 in the next decade – the fastest growing area in the country, with the GLA expecting another 30,000 apartments to be built in the area. The sheer numbers packed into such a densely packed area threaten to overwhelm the local infrastructure, already overstretched in terms of services like roads, parking, schools, GP and dentist surgeries, public transport, water supply and sewage.

Richard Horwood, Chair of the Isle of Dogs Forum, added: "Assuming that critical infrastructure will somehow be sorted out on a wing and a prayer is just not good enough. Developments exceeding the maximum densities recommended in the GLA's London Plan should only be approved after the infrastructure needed to support them, and other existing and approved developments, has actually been identified and guaranteed. Sounds obvious doesn't it, but it's not what happens at the moment."

The session will also include a panel discussion on the value of neighbourhood forums in empowering local communities to develop policies reflecting their unique neighbourhoods.

Ends.

Video links:

1. Mayor Biggs's statement (runtime 39') (format Quicktime .mov MP4) `<iframe width="560" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/riQFECuWJ1Q" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>`

2. Video explaining the infrastructure challenges facing the Isle of Dogs (runtime 3'31"). (format Quicktime .mov MP4) `<iframe width="560" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/JH57RTK-esk" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>`

or links can be found on our website here; <http://www.isleofdogsforum.org.uk/press-release.html>

Broadcast quality versions can be supplied. Contact Danny Brainin, t: 0203 856 8500, e: danny@localdigital.co.uk

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For further information:

<http://www.isleofdogsforum.org.uk> and <http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=1790094>

A 3D model of what the area might look like if all known developments complete is here;

<http://www.isleofdogsforum.org.uk/3d-model-pictures.html>

Andrew Wood (Councillor for the Canary Wharf Ward, London Borough of Tower Hamlets): 07710 486 873

Richard Horwood (Chair, Isle of Dogs Neighbourhood Planning Forum): 07778 463 868

Notes for editors:

The Isle of Dogs Neighbourhood Planning Forum was fully recognised by Mayor John Biggs in Cabinet on 5th April 2016 and is the largest Forum of its kind in the UK. The Forum aims to be an active partner in solving London's current housing crisis without creating tomorrow's infrastructure crisis. This means smart and sustainable, community-led development.

The Isle of Dogs, being adjacent to Canary Wharf, has been subject to a large number of planning applications for huge and very dense residential developments for sale to mainly foreign property speculators, which have typically been nodded through by Tower Hamlets Council despite all exceeding the density limits specified in the GLA's London Plan: often several times the limit.

A Neighbourhood Planning Forum is a formally constituted, local community association, empowered by the Localism Act 2011 to write Neighbourhood Plans. Once approved by a public referendum, the requirements of Neighbourhood Plans must be taken into account by Council planning committees when assessing planning applications. The Isle of Dogs Forum is writing its own plan and is working towards a referendum in early 2017.



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