



FUTURE CITIES FORUM 17

**Transport, station planning and place,
building beautiful**

**Report from our 18th September 2019
forum**

North Greenwich

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Introduction

Our September forum was held next to the O2, London, which sits at the centre of an expanding area of new housing, education and transport. It is connected to the Jubilee Line described by London Mayor Sadiq Khan as 'nationally important infrastructure' with stations at Stratford, Canary Wharf, Bond Street and Westminster.

This was an important forum for looking at the 'connectivity' within cities, the role of smart mobility and the government's continued push towards electric vehicles to ease city pollution. However, there were concerns raised during our debates about the advent of congestion charging on city streets due to overwhelming cost.

The government has just released league tables of UK regions where charging points are available for EV drivers – this on the back of £5 million for local authorities to create new charge points. The tables show perhaps not surprisingly that London has the most charging points while Yorkshire is the worst off. Barrow-in-Furness along with Scilly have none.

With consideration to the current 'Building Beautiful' campaign it might be asked whether there is a role for transport innovation and mobility in reducing the ugliness of over-crowded and poorly functioning roads and transport systems. How does the UK streamline its mobility and create more space for walking, cycling and enjoying green space?

Streamlining transport seems more urgent than ever as new districts emerge in many towns and cities. Extensive development is taking place on the Greenwich Peninsula and this part of London faces the emerging and internationally important cultural hub of East Bank across the Thames. This 'fresh new London district' will comprise seven emerging neighbourhoods spread over 150 acres with 15,000 homes.

Our forum looked at the following:

- ‘Building better, building beautiful’ – a new initiative that under the pressure of building homes for the UK, ensures that high quality design and place-making are not forgotten, especially across new districts
- ‘Station and transport hub-led development’ – how do we emulate the success of King’s Cross St Pancras as an exemplar of regeneration for workspace, retail and residential around a major transport hub? What planning, leasing and design approaches are required to make the most of our heritage and modern station assets? What is the role of a ‘creative district’?
- How do we move forward with connecting places and homes through autonomous transport systems, extended rail and improved cycling infrastructure for health. How will the plans for autonomous vehicles prevent city congestion and is data the new ‘gold’ for mobility planning?



Jubilee Line image supplied courtesy Stuart Robinson/TfL



Left to Right: Dominic Curran (British Retail Consortium), Stuart Robinson (TfL), Heather Fearfield (Future Cities Forum), Adrian Lee (LCR Property) and Ivan Harbour (Rogers Stirk Harbour)

Transport hubs as anchors for development

As the forum took place meters from the river boat pier, the Emirates cable car and North Greenwich station on the Jubilee line, we discussed the interest in using transport hubs and stations, both current and disused, as anchors and sites for urban development that blend new office / workspace provision with housing, health centres, education and restaurants. This was in response also to the growing interest and necessity of using every available space in cities but also due to the quality benchmark set at King's Cross St Pancras.

Public realm design was paramount in the success of this project – begun by the Kings Cross Central Partnership alongside Camden Council in the 1990s -

and while investment has gone into new housing and apartments, retail and restaurants on the old coal yards, it was a leading art and design college – Central Saint Martins that became the first major tenant of Granary Square. As a huge attractor of international talent, the college has created a hub of activity in the newly formed and accessible area of Kings Cross. This university attracted restaurants, cafes, Google HQ and other cutting-edge businesses.

The former Eurostar terminal at Waterloo Station is also being redeveloped in a retail and restaurant offer and is the work of LCR, the UK government's place-making agency, which is also responsible for retail at St Pancras Station. One hundred million passengers move through the station every year and there has been strong interest in office development around this new retail development. The project is due to open in spring 2021 with 17 restaurants allowing for 500 seats over two floors. Shops numbering forty across three floors and a new pedestrianised street the 'Waterloo Curve' are currently being built.

In Manchester on the site of the disused Mayfield station next to Manchester Piccadilly station, detailed planning is underway for a major mixed-use scheme involving LCR, U+ I, Transport for Greater Manchester and the City Council. These make up the Mayfield Partnership, which is aiming to create 10,000 new jobs, 1,400 homes and community space, with 75,000 square metres of offices all pulled together to make a vibrant new district. The Mayfield Depot has already established a reputation as club and venue destination, after the site has been derelict for over 30 years.

We opened our discussion panel talking about 'the controlled staging of cities', the special challenges of transport hubs, the sustainability of out of town retail parks and the future of shopping tied to 'culture'.

Ivan Harbour, Senior Partner at Rogers Stirk Harbour (pictured on the far right of the picture above) spoke about his experience of working on the Barangaroo district master-plan, with its 'controlled city staging' of the regeneration of the Sydney Harbour inner suburb, the transforming of the 'out of fashion' bullring in Barcelona into a new mixed use development, the highly successful Ashford out of town retail park, that attracts not only domestic shoppers but also European visitors, and the Montparnasse masterplan which is re-shaping a 1970's neighbourhood around contemporary climate change concerns.

'Down on the ground the mixed use Barangaroo is highly successful, not just for those working and living there but for tourists and visitors. It's highly choreographed - which prevents a drop to the lowest common denominator.'

The architect also talked about the challenge of persuading the city authorities in Madrid out of their car obsession. Ivan explained why the future for the Distrito Castellana Norte project - where the British practice is knitting together existing neighbourhoods divided by the 'gash' of a railway line - is not the car. 'It's as well connected as King's Cross in London with access to several metro stations and excellent bus services. But the plan is for much enhanced walking and cycling routes and spaces in the area around the Chamartín railway station.'

'At Montparnasse in Paris our master-plan is 'bottom up' Haussmann where we will cut through the retail centre, to re-use all the structures that exist by adding timber structures to concrete, cutting and adding but not demolishing. We are planting 2,500 trees to combat the 'heat island' effect.'

The practice is working directly for the Ville de Paris and the project aim is to 'open the existing but out-dated and introverted Maine-Montparnasse Tour Real Estate Development of the 1950s and 1970s, rendering it more permeable.' The nine hectares site is a transport and cultural hub but needs to be reshaped to deliver more natural routes across the city and to make it liveable and lively, while adapting it to modern climate commitments.

LCR Property's Development Director Adrian Lee followed Ivan's talk by continuing with themes around 'connectivity' and the issue of strong place-making at stations. He said 'Stations often create severance and anti-social behaviour but Network Rail has recognised this. These locations are not always places of wonder and joy. We need the operational elements in place but it is the retail, social, business and 'place' parts that bring the joy. They can be forgotten. Why? Engineers deliver the station projects, doing an amazing job but what they don't create is urban integration. 'We are learning lessons that infrastructure is not enough by itself, and we can't expect the local authorities with slashed budgets to do the regeneration for cities' he explained.

Adrian, is also overseeing the current Waterloo.London project and he pointed out that: ' it's noteworthy that transport retail is out-performing the high

street. One explanation is that business rates are too high on the high street. If (retail) trade is done in a big shed in Loughborough then that is where the tax should be. We are running three year duration leases now, but we believe in a partnership model rather than a landlord-tenant one. This is easier to do across a single ownership project than on a high street which is more fragmented. We are also re-working the Leake Street Arches where we are promoting independent brands and retailers.'

The financing for major projects question was discussed in relation to LCR's Mayfield project in Manchester, where the developer is planning a four acres public park next to the development of the redundant Mayfield station. Adrian believes that in order to make this work project well for the 'public good' - and because Manchester has so few public green spaces - there may well need to be additional financial intervention.

The former head of planning at CBRE, Stuart Robinson, spoke on the panel following Adrian and described how he became involved in place-making and retail via the regeneration of Regent Street and working on King's Cross with Argent. Now working with TfL, Stuart is advising on realising the ambition of building 10,000 homes by 2021 on TfL-owned sites.

'As planners and developers we want to leave a fantastic legacy so I have been trying to set up a way of developing up to 80 projects with a focus on quality of design and place. Dealing with an East Acton or Hounslow West (station) means that while we can't replicate King's Cross (on scale) we should be living up to the Charles Holden and Frank Pick legacy. We use design review protocols, and we look back to Frank Pick who was an inspiration, as well as to the British-Italian architect Roman Paoletti who master-minded the design of the Jubilee Line stations. Pevsner described Pick as greatest commissioner of architecture in 20th century. Paoletti coordinated the architects and laid down the principles to achieve the outstanding design quality of the Jubilee Line.

We have now divided design into stewardship and place making for people. We try to embed these into psyche of the development team - it gives them 'nagging rights' so they can ask colleagues 'how does this hit our principles for designing stations?' It will really help to bring on beauty and effective place-

making. One of the reasons why King's Cross St Pancras regeneration was successful is because it was driven by public realm design and this in turn was driven by people.'

Ivan agreed: 'Guide lines are very important. Architecture is collaborative. Through negotiation you can get better answers so good architecture can take a long time...the best architects can make magic out of compromise.'

The British Retail Consortium's Head of Property, Dominic Curran, our fourth panel member commented: 'Ivan spoke about 'the inevitable retail' and despite all the well-publicised problems (for high streets and retailers) there will always be a retail role in regeneration projects but I hesitate to put forward retail as a catalyst. As transport is the maker and breaker of cities, so footfall can be the maker and breaker of retail.'

'To a large extent the success of retail can be linked to curation of place. However, please don't forget that the local economy needs to be supportive, so higher local incomes make a positive difference to retail which is obvious but the link should not be forgotten. Retail is undergoing a transformation ...and business rates are fundamental during a huge change with online now taking 20% of retail sales (and this could rise to 50%) but it is not just online versus offline and most retailers are moving to omni channels with the shop as 'shop window' with more experiences.'

'Some centres will have to contract as there is 20% too much space for the industry. We at the BRC think that changes to planning and business rates systems are essential for what is the biggest private sector employer in the UK.'

We will be returning to the important issue of retail on the high street, cultural regeneration and tourism in our debates next year.



Whitechapel High Street 2018: Uber, private cars, TfL buses, cyclists, pedestrians

Mobility and the modern city

We were delighted that Jof Ruxton, Head of Infrastructure at Immense Simulations spoke at our forum.

Immense is a software company enabling intelligent mobility, that is already helping transport stakeholders, including Highways England and leading local authorities across the UK, make informed decisions associated with the movement of people and goods. Immense also works with clients in the USA and the EU.

It is working with Greenwich Council's company dg:cities on a project called 'Endeavour' to link efficient journeys from homes to transport hubs using autonomous vehicles and Jof joined Kim Smith, Head of Smart Mobility dg:cities, in the panel discussion. Kim is a transport specialist with over 25 years in transport planning, project delivery, policy formation and high-level strategy.

dg:cities specialises in the integration of 'smart city' technologies and approaches. The organisation has particular expertise in 'smart mobility' such as Mobility as a Service, e-Mobility and Connected and Autonomous Vehicles.

The company is involved in several projects including The Smart Mobility Living Lab: London, which is an Innovate UK and industry collaboration, building a state-of-the-art test bed for Connected Autonomous Vehicles. Situated in London with facilities in Greenwich and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, it will offer advanced real-world testing and development of future mobility solutions.

The project is led by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) with consortium partners including Cisco, Transport for London, Cubic, London Legacy Development Corporation, Loughborough University and dg:cities. Bringing technology, infrastructure and transport experts together, SMLL will allow clients and partners to test, develop and deploy a wide range of solutions related to CAVs in the real world.

dg:cities' 'Endeavour' project is an initiative looking at the potential for a fleet of shared autonomous vehicles to fill mobility gaps between people's homes and public transport hubs, with the support of Addison Lee, and consortium partners Oxbotica (which is a spin-out from the University of Oxford), Immense Simulations and Nominet. The project will deliver Europe's largest pilots of self-driven passenger services with trials taking place in 2020.

Together with the Faraday Institution, we discussed future mobility planning, new applications for data, transport project funding from the EU after Brexit and concerns over EV charging.

Key questions were asked about whether the necessary sharing of information in mobility planning between boroughs was taking place, the danger of relying on data for mobility planning if it becomes 'old', how data captures individual transport behaviours and whether the move to electric vehicles was being overshadowed by concerns about future city congestion.

Kim Smith has been looking at the future growth of the population in the east of London:

'We were tasked with creating a smart city strategy for the borough, and this included a transport strategy on balancing car use with how people could access mass transport systems more efficiently as well as walking and cycling.

'London wasn't built to have three million vehicles. We are looking at how technology can help the city in future. One of the important questions is why we have a city that only seems to work on a radial basis, with people commuting to the centre when technology now allows alternatives? Our primary concern is how technology helps us play, work and live better but more efficiently. EVs won't solve congestion and simply swapping old vehicles for EVs means urban congestion is not solved. What we are interested in is how we take single vehicle ownership and use off the road via ride share and better access to mass transit.

'We are on a learning curve and dealing with behavioural change for example with young people now showing patterns of not wanting to own cars but pay for them solely on usage. Information sharing is important and while we use Greenwich as a test bed for some of our projects, for example in the autonomous vehicles area, there is vital information sharing with other boroughs and cities in Europe. TfL brings boroughs together for information sharing and learning in London but some boroughs need to want to participate in this. 'Sharing Cities' is a very worthwhile EU project with Gothenburg and Brussels. It will be tragic if we lose connections with Europe post Brexit. Isolating Britain is wrong.'

Jof Ruxton, Head of Infrastructure at Immense Simulations which has been working with dg:cities on autonomous vehicle planning and its project 'Endeavour' said:

'We are making the most of data sets on people, mobility and systems and this allows quick and intuitive planning. It is all about creating the foresight on how growing populations will move about.

'Traditional transport modelling relies on surveys, but now we have telemetry from vehicles and masses of data from mobile phones. Traditional models

would often be based on outdated information, but now we can work much closer to real time. Traditionally survey models take an average day in the year but now we can be much more granular than that.

'How can you can plan for idiosyncrasies? We can now build a model which represents people with differences which allows you to predict better. We are also working on a mobility project for Oxfordshire which may also be of interest to developers. It shows how people are moving in, around and through stations and offering this information to people designing those places - this could make a real difference. We are also looking at Tokyo because land values are so high around stations, so data to help planning is also important there.'



The Faraday Institution's Head of Economics and Market Insights, Stephen Gifford, then commented on the challenges of the switch to electric. Stephen previously worked on Crossrail, the 2012 London Olympics, and on planning for Heathrow's new runway but is now working on making sure that the new battery industry is strong and growing for the UK. He was optimistic about the growth in people buying electric vehicles but recognised at the moment that the UK is lagging behind other countries: He also highlighted concerns for a

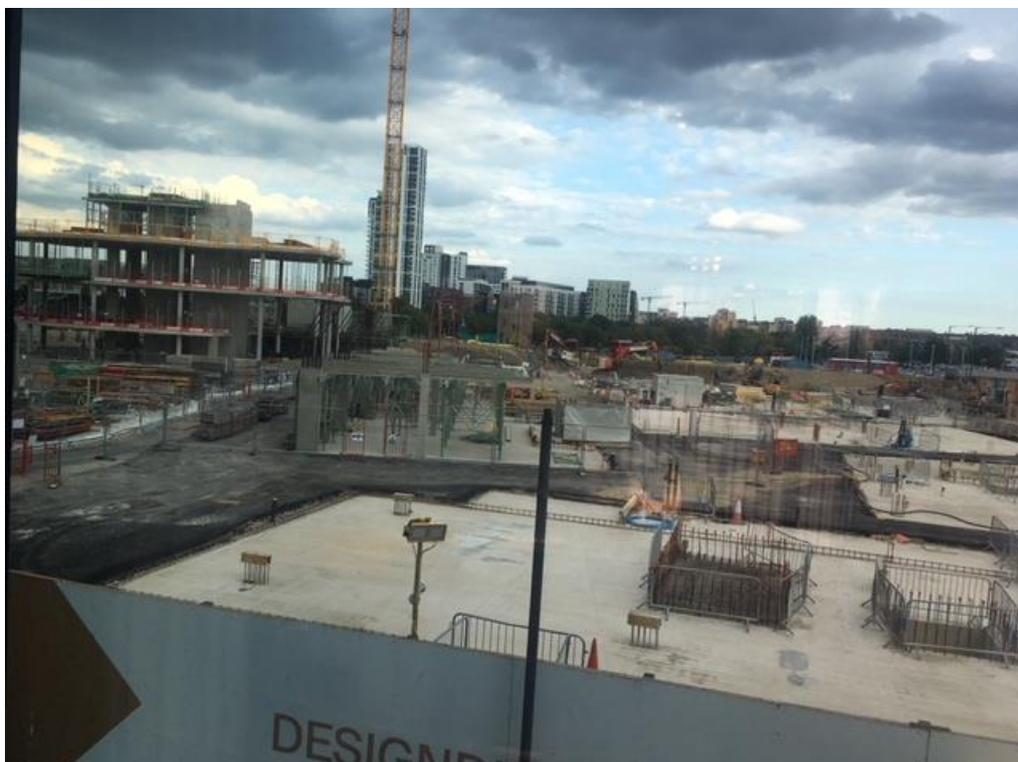
slow growth in 'on-street' charging in cities and the need for significant investment in giga factories for battery production:

'We are still in an early stage of transition in the UK but there is strong growth around the world. China is leading the way on EV but the UK and Europe will be catching up soon.

'The main issue for the UK is whether the car industry can be kept in its current shape and capacity, so we are looking at giga factories like Tesla's in the US. It's important to remember that electric vehicles may be expensive to buy, but they are cheaper to run.

'Electric vehicle charging on the motorway network is also growing rapidly, but there may be problems with the growth of charging on streets in cities, because it is expensive to charge electric vehicles this way.

'Rapid charging networks need help from government and it is likely that government will tax through congestion charging rather than via fuel tax. Shared mobility in cities through autonomous vehicles is likely to take off in the 2030s.'



Design District, North Greenwich under construction 2019



Making public space, mixing modern and historic: Wren's St Stephen Walbrook with Foster & Partners' new Bloomberg offices to right and N M Rothschild & Sons head-quarters behind (by OMA)

Building beautiful, building better

Next to the O2 in North Greenwich a new 'design district' is being constructed, with 16 buildings designed by eight architectural practices. The aim, according to the developers, is 'a new district dedicated to creativity, bringing together 1,800 creatives from all industries.' It promises affordable rents and flexible workspaces – with clean desk space and dirty work-shops'. There will be a central market building, flexible street-facing space for pop-up galleries and a basketball court on the roof of Building 3C. The winding lanes on the two hectare-sized area will be car-free.

It will be a 'making' district, in contrast to the creative district at the Royal Arsenal Woolwich – ten minutes further down the river – which will focus on performance for music, drama and dance.

The importance of cultural infrastructure as well as space for artists and performers as integral to the emotional health and economic well-being of cities has been discussed at our previous June and April forums.

Following on from our April 'Cultural regeneration' forum at Goldsmiths' Hall with the V&A, South Bank Centre and Royal College of Art, we discussed the importance of including 'cultural infrastructure' in city planning and design. This year the Mayor of London published an interactive 'Culture Map' of London's venues and arts, drama and music institutions, vowing to make cultural investment a priority for the city.

The Mayor launched a Cultural Infrastructure Plan and alongside it created an online toolbox of resources to support its implementation. This includes an interactive open source 'Culture Infrastructure Map'. The map provides the location of over 30 typologies of cultural infrastructure from galleries to recording studios alongside contextual data about population growth, transport and planning policy areas, making it a practical tool for the development community.

Around new housing, there is concern for proper creation of place and sustainability of the high street. The government has announced that over 50 areas across the country are going through to the second phase of a multi-million fund (launched in December 2018) that will transform their high streets. From improving transport and access into town centres to converting retail units into new homes, the £675 million Future High Streets Fund will help local leaders to reinvent their town centres. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will work closely with those places that have 'shovel ready' projects where there might be opportunities to accelerate.

Recently the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport together with the Architectural Heritage Fund and National Lottery Heritage Fund announced a £62 million package of support to breathe new life into historic high streets across the country, to restore historic buildings, create new work spaces and cultural venues. As part of the funding, £55 million has been allocated from the Future High Streets Fund. The hotly contested Great British High Street Awards are also part of the campaign to save our flagging town centres.

A final report in the coming months from the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission on how the UK can make 'places not homes' and transform retail parks into thriving communities, will be sent to government. Redeveloping abandoned out of town retail parks and ugly old supermarkets would deliver something much more beautiful in the form of thriving new communities where people can raise a family, work or settle down.

On housing, the commission praises beautiful developments, including The Malings in Newcastle, which is a riverside development of 76 new homes built on brownfield land and in keeping with traditional terraced properties in the area. An interim report at this stage recommends that councils should have the confidence in saying 'no to ugliness' and any financial support from Homes England and councils for a development should 'aim for beauty'.

During our summer months round tables, Future Cities Forum debated the report's emphasis on the word 'beauty' and why this was a helpful word to concentrate on when trying to raise the standard of housing design and place.

Professor Yolande Barnes commented:

'The word beauty is useful as it opens debate beyond the usual architectural critiques to discuss how the whole place (neighbourhood and city) works. You have to think beyond the boundaries of a building. We have to look at how do we design land and design money as well as design product. I mean by this how does the land market work and how do we procure land? We cannot just we keep selling to the highest bidder as the business models behind development have a huge impact on what's built and its very often that business model that designs the building.

'Authenticity particularly in new housing has been missing. I am not just interested in individual buildings, it's the beauty of places that matters. Geography is under-rated. Streets and spaces are important and there has to be some authenticity to create beauty. Our space syntax work at UCL is making sense of how people inter-act across spaces. (Beauty is a) productive place where human exchanges can take place. We can see now what has been wrong with single use housing...all of these developments fail the pint (of milk and beer) test! There is often a void of human interaction and that is ugly.

'The interim report outlines the problem, but the next part of the report can look at solutions in a holistic way, and community involvement has a supremely important role. A global phenomenon is that real estate will be in future valued on a net income stream basis and not on immediate capital receipts. What will matter is rent, so building and estate management costs, energy costs and how productive the space is, will be very important to the long-term investors. Therefore, making a place attractive and successful for the long term becomes important and how you respond to what your 'customers' – the people living and using the properties - want will be crucial.'

Our planning and 'Building beautiful, building better' panel discussion at our September forum included urban master-planning design partner at David Lock Associates Simon Pugh, who specialises in master-planning for strategic growth studies including Milton Keynes.

Also on the panel was Sharon Strutt - the Head of Regeneration at the London Borough of Redbridge, in charge of Redbridge Living, the council's wholly owned development company, and also the economic development team, Ben Grubb, Director of New Settlement Policy at the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government, a department which is working with councils to deliver more beautiful places, and Dominic Eaton, Director and residential expert at Stride Treglown Architects.

When asked whether 'beautiful' was a good word or too nebulous, Ben Grubb said: 'Too often we just look at beauty in terms of heritage so it's important to drive for beauty across new build developments. Our garden communities' team is now working on 48 schemes across the country supporting local authorities in delivering many more homes - each project typically has more than 1,500 - where the focus is on making high quality spaces. The scale and the extra money from land value capture means that there is more to invest in creating beautiful places.'

Dominic Eaton commented: 'The reason why I am so interested in the (Building Beautiful) Commission is simply to try to make things better. Lots of places are too awful, and the design falls short of beauty. Modern Methods of Construction is a useful tool for developers but reliance on these presents a challenge as so many (new developments) constructed this way are identical

and repetitive. How do we get more variety and quality? Shortage of construction skills is a problem, and when I talk to developers, MMC looks like a solution. However, there is a disconnect between the production line, car factory model of creating new homes and the traditional model.'

Simon Pugh of David Lock Associates then responded to a question about role of master-planning in creating beautiful places: 'You have to get the big scale to work as well as the micro level of housing detail. On master-planning across the Oxford-MK-Cambridge corridor there is lots of focus on the car but at a local city level rapid mass transit is at the core of getting those places to grow in right way with public sector taking a lead. Public-private partnerships will be very important in the connection of new housing to employment centres.'

Drilling down to the local examples of planning in action in Ilford and creating 'beautiful places', Sharon Strutt said: 'Public realm interventions are at the heart of what we are doing in Ilford to help kick start the catalyst for regeneration. We are fortunate to have a Crossrail station so there is a great connection between rail infrastructure and neighbourhood improvements. We have invested in the public realm and we are moving away from a traditional model of people just coming in to shop then out again, towards making a much more liveable town centre. It must have performance spaces, and we have brought in a new market operator who can help make a more flexible set of shopping and social experiences. We are laying the groundwork for a cultural place.'

'Ilford does not feel beautiful at the moment, as there is the problem of rough sleeping and anti-social behaviour, which detracts from the economic life blood, as people do not dwell in the centre. We do have open and accessible space but it doesn't work hard enough. Curating the space to attract people to spend time in the centre is crucial. It can't be a place that shuts at 6 pm.'

Answering criticism that there are too many aged planners working in councils, and not enough young voices, Sharon explained: 'We took a decision on a delivery prospectus rather than opting for a formal plan in a traditional way. We hold the vision but how it gets there will evolve along the way with a flexible plan allowing innovation as councils do not have ownership of all good ideas. We are part of the wider East London community, and being well-

connected is a good thing so having four Crossrail stations across the borough is helpful. We need to make the most of the growth narrative that is common to all the East London boroughs.'

On the issue of better communications around planned developments both David Lock Associates and Stride Treglown were asked what they wanted from conversations. Simon Pugh said: 'Communication is at the heart of achieving good development, between developers, councils, planners, and architects. Sometimes local authorities are not funded well enough for planning discussions on large developments and this can be frustrating for planners trying to deliver schemes.'

Stride Treglown's Dominic Eaton described why flexibility in discussions on planning and design is vital: 'What's more important is collaboration and a shared vision. At the core it's about negotiation and as a practice we like to find out what the council vision is and then try and align that with our client's view. If you go in and you are all in different corners it will end in tears.'



Workshop round table led by Dominic Eaton of Stride Treglown Architects (on left) and Matthew Pullen of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (on right)

Research findings from workshop round tables

Attendees found our research round tables at our September forum extremely useful both for learning purposes and networking. Lewisham Council, Tower Hamlets Council, Redbridge Council, Amber Infrastructure were among the organisations that took part in our forum workshops looking at station place-making and retail, joined up planning in mobility and housing and the regeneration of town centres.

Key questions posed to our attendees were around good practice in creating new sustainable districts and regenerating existing town centres. The workshop also looked at the UK government's 'Building beautiful, building better' campaign and whether the term 'beauty' is helpful when considering the standard of design in our built environment and the challenge of creating space around high-density living.

Among the findings was the assertion from one table member that 'connectivity' in place is key and should be secured through design, while other participants remarked that neither planning or design can in itself deliver a concept of 'beauty' in our cities and that a wider look at the 'integrity' of place' was important. Additionally, it was suggested that some home builders do not retain a long-term interest in land, therefore designing high quality green space in and around housing developments, is seen as a liability.

Participants from the round table workshop were asked to form a feedback panel at the end of the forum (pictured above) and London Borough of Tower Hamlets' infrastructure planning manager, Matthew Pullen recording from his round table that:

'Connectivity across development projects is absolutely key, but also creating community and not just being taken up with practical issues of waste management and utilities planning. Our table talked about public spaces and density and difficulties of creating open space when living at Hong Kong style

densities. It's therefore very important to consider examples from around the world which could help us.'

Tim Jeffery of Jeffery Associates Architecture, added: 'The Building Beautiful issue answer was all about the long-term view. We discussed places which were planned well but suffered through poor stewardship - like Byker Wall in Newcastle. The failure to look after our environment is a key thing we must never forget. Alongside that, what makes retail and high streets work best is partly community. It's important not to let the 'great master plan' take away the interest and individuality of a place. How you plan for richness and allow for serendipity in settlements should be incorporated.'

Karen Pugh, Partner at David Lock Associates commented that: 'Perhaps we can look at the term 'integrity' rather than 'beauty' which has subjective, different meanings depending on whether you are homeless or a middle-class person living in a leafy suburb. We are better at designing green spaces now, but there are different perspectives depending on whether you are a developer or a long-term owner. The town centre question made for interesting discussions - at the core these are places for exchanges, meeting our needs as social animals.

As we were holding the forum on the Greenwich Peninsula our workshop groups looked at ways of improving the design for children and older people around river and dock space, using water as an important amenity, getting buy-in from water bodies.

We discussed why the under-used asset of the River Thames, accessibility and 'blue views' are so important during the workshops at our June City Hall London forum on infrastructure.

Guests at the June forum decided that having an underutilised waterfront is a huge missed opportunity, in particular for the Isle of Dogs but this applies to many other cities and districts. Arup's Ricky Sandhu drew together thoughts from his table: 'Creating a community or district that is very walkable to not only green space but blue space is an enormous advantage. All great cities grew from the water (London included) but we feel that the Isle of Dogs is not capitalising on this.

‘Accessibility is the biggest issue faced by cities and particularly districts like Isle of Dogs. The lack of it in this case is a huge problem. The area is cordoned off by the Thames to the E-W-S and hemmed in by Canary Wharf to the North. The area needs more access via the Thames, via bridges that connect to adjacent neighbourhoods and better connectivity to Canary Wharf too.’

‘Central Park in Manhattan was conceived by Frederick Law Olmsted to ‘relieve Manhattan of its ills’ – perhaps this forgotten area of Tower Hamlets could be re-conceived as a safe haven and a place to escape ‘London’ and be by the water and allow residents of London to escape from the city but at the same time attract tourists.’



Pictured: Sharon Pugh of David Lock Associates, Tim Jeffery of Jeffery Associates Architects, Heather Fearfield of Future Cities Forum, Matthew Pullen of LB Tower Hamlets and John Roots of Amber Infrastructure

Conclusions

- Telemetry and data from mobile phones are giving us a greater understanding of how populations move around. In London, experts still bemoan the radial nature of the city, where populations converge on one central area to work despite technology enabling alternatives. Isolating Britain post-Brexit through potential lack of funding for transport projects and the sharing of information is viewed with dismay.
- There are concerns over continuing congestion in cities, as the move to EV's experts believe, will not solve this. Meanwhile, the new UK government league tables show an uneven distribution of EV charging throughout the country. The Faraday Institution predicts problems with EV charging on streets in cities because of the expense.
- Careful curation of areas around stations is the concern of our leading architects and planners. The design of stations – at least in London through TfL – is being controlled by design review protocols, inspired by the work of Frank Pick and Roman Paoletti and this has an important anchoring role in the design of new homes around these stations.
- Our British architects, for example Ivan Harbour, are connecting with and influencing European cities on place-making standards and an example of this is the move towards reducing car dominance across Madrid's Distrito Castellana Norte regeneration project.
- In the UK, transport retail is outperforming the high street and helping dispel the notion that infrastructure is enough in itself, where station place-making is concerned.
- On place, our forum workshop drew concerns that MMC may in future create identical and repetitive new developments, that design alone cannot create good connectivity in cities and that the 'integrity of place' should be preserved to create 'beauty' without the 'great masterplan' taking over.
- In the UK, we still need to work harder to create green spaces to improve the health of our cities, be mindful of the long-term

stewardship of 'beautiful places' and improve walkable connections in cities to 'blue space' for quality of life among communities and to boost tourism.

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