

Mr. Collins
Chairman
Canning & Clyde Road Residents
Association
59 Canning Road, Croydon
CR0 6QF

Please ask for/reply to Mike Fisher

Your Ref
Our Ref: MF/maf/6077
Date: 23 October 2006

Dear Mr. Collins,

East Croydon Gateway Development

Thank you for your letter of 2 October 2006 in which you express concern about the development of the Croydon Gateway site.

I understand you are the spokesperson for five residents' associations and The Croydon Society and so I address this letter to you, but I am also copying it to the other residents' associations and the Croydon Society who were signatories to your letter.

As you know we have already been in correspondence on this matter over a period of time and so I will not repeat what I have already covered, but will concentrate on new issues and bring you up to date.

As you know it is this Council's long held ambition to maximise the enormous potential of the Gateway site and its ability to secure a notable transformation in the regeneration of not only central Croydon but the south east region at large. In fact it could be argued that we would be in breach of a dereliction of our duties if we did not secure the maximum benefit from this prime site. We believe that this can best be achieved by an arena led development rather than an office and residential scheme only. In proceeding with the arena led development, the Council will ensure that the developers are mindful of local concerns and will naturally endeavour to minimise or reduce altogether impact on local residents.

A traffic impact analysis carried out by consultants to examine the implications of travel movement to and from the arena concluded that the numbers involved can be adequately managed. Extensive discussions have been carried out in consultation with Transport for London which has concluded that the transport infrastructure proposed for the arena led development is adequate. We anticipate public transport will play a key role – as it does with other venues that attract large audiences. Croydon's existing transport infrastructure is one of the many advantages of developing the Gateway site in a manner that will secure long term vitality for the town. The vast majority of events occurring in an arena in Croydon would be at the end of the working day when car parks and public transport have



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most capacity.

A plain English guide on transport issues in relation to the Gateway site is currently being written and when this is available I will send you a copy.

It is perhaps worth noting that the government's own planning policies require arena-type entertainment facilities to be built in town centre locations so we are consistent with government policy as well as supporting our own policy as enshrined within the Croydon Gateway Planning Brief, Vision 20:20, the Croydon Plan and the Community Strategy.

Recently two Members of this Administration visited the Hamburg arena in order to see for themselves how the venue worked in terms of the arriving and departing of a large number of people. Never did it seem crowded as people arrive and leave over a period of time so they can eat and drink before and after the event at the many food and beverage outlets. The Members were able to question the arena operator and City officials who confirmed that the arena has a huge knock on effect on the economy of the city in terms of additional expenditure. The Hamburg arena, upon which Arrowcroft's Croydon arena is modeled, is most successful with a full programme of events. All the research undertaken on the proposed Croydon arena supports a similar economic success.

The Council's expert advisers have consistently verified the viability of an arena on the Gateway site. However, the project is ultimately a commercial venture with the private sector taking all the risk. Considerable research has been taken and is still being updated as time goes on to ensure that such substantial investment is undertaken without risk. Local tax payers will not be exposed to any financial loss or risk.

We acknowledge that a project of this scale may cause some apprehension amongst residents. At the appropriate time we will ensure that those responsible for developing the Gateway site will liaise closely with local residents and community groups to ensure that needs of the local residents are taken into consideration. I know you have recently met with representatives from Arrowcroft and I would urge you to take advantage of any further such opportunities so you can put your concerns directly to the developer.

As I have already mentioned, if you are still concerned about the Gateway devolvement when the public inquiries take place, you will have an opportunity to put forward your views. In the meantime I would urge you to keep an open mind into the Gateway arena development as I believe it can only be for the good of Croydon.

Yours sincerely



Mike Fisher
Leader of the Council