

Housing and Sustainable Development Select Committees			
Title	Heritage in Deptford: Proposals for Convoys Wharf	Item	3
Contributor	Scrutiny Manager		
Class	Part 1 (Open)	Date	2 December 2013

1. At its July and October meetings the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered items about retaining and enhancing heritage in Deptford. In July, Members heard from the 'Build the Lenox' project about their plans to build a replica 17<sup>th</sup> century ship (the Lenox) on Convoys Wharf, in celebration of the area's maritime history.
2. In October the Committee heard from Hutchison Whampoa, the current owners of Convoys Wharf, who have put forward plans for the complete redevelopment of the site. Their plans include proposals to build several thousand new homes, incorporating three tall towers of more than 30 stories on the currently unused site. Hutchison Whampoa's plans also include proposals to create new transport links, new facilities to support the development and new public spaces. It is intended that the historic elements of the site be incorporated into the new development.
3. The Committee is also due to hear from members of the Sayes Court Garden project about their plans for the revival of the historic garden, which was first founded by John Evelyn in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.
4. Information provided to Sustainable Development Select Committee members is included in the appendices to this report. Appendix 1 sets out the Lenox Vision for Deptford. Appendix 2 includes the question and answer to a Council question about building the Lenox. Appendix 3 sets out the views of the Sustainable Development Select Committee on the Lenox project. Appendix 4 provides a short summary of the history of Sayes Court Garden. Appendix 5 includes the question and answer to a Council question about Sayes Court Garden and the Royal Dockyard.

If you require further information regarding this report please contact Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager) on 02083147916

## Appendix 1:

<http://www.buildthelenox.org/index.html>

### The Lenox Vision

*Our proposal is to build a replica 17<sup>th</sup> century warship, over a 7-10 year period, on the very site the original ship was constructed, as part of the Convoys Wharf redevelopment in Deptford, Lewisham.*

*Once the Lenox is launched and completed, we propose to moor her in the restored Great Basin in front of the Olympia Building which will become her home port.*

*We propose to support the creation of an interpretation centre at the site, the Deptford Dockyard Museum, which will focus on the history of the King's Yard as well as the wider history of Deptford.*

*We propose to work in partnership with educational and government agencies to create a skills and training programme as part of the Lenox construction scheme.*

*We propose to support the establishment of a marine enterprise zone in line with the requirement to create a viable use for the protected wharf.*

### We intend:

- to build a 17th century replica ship using a combination of traditional and modern methods and to launch it
- to use the ship and its construction as the central focus of a heritage tourist attraction at the site. Along with Sayes Court Gardens, this opportunity signifies perhaps the last chance for Lewisham, as a riparian borough, to make the most of its riverfront
- to establish a future role for the ship both at the site and in an ambassadorial capacity, attracting visitors to the area and representing Deptford and the UK on overseas voyages
- to provide a platform for cultural, historical and educational exploration through collaboration with academic, heritage and scientific groups
- to provide training in manufacturing and maritime skills through apprenticeship programmes

### To do this, we need:

- an agreement with the developer to use part of the site to build the ship, ideally the Double Dry Dock.
- space for an interpretation centre and visitor facilities
- subsequent use of a suitable mooring for the ship at the restored Great Basin. Mooring her at this location will put the Olympia Shed in context and connect it to the river
- a commitment from the developer and Lewisham Council to provide safe, suitable access to the site for visitors during the construction phase
- a commitment from Lewisham Council to establish and develop a proper tourism strategy for the area, which will support and enhance the community-led projects

such as the Lenox and Sayes Court Gardens, as well as the redevelopment of the site and the wider Deptford area

- to gain an understanding of the developer's planned phasing so that we can collaborate on our proposed timescales and construction programme to suit the site and afford the project the strongest chance of success

### Some specific benefits (more details in the Lenox Vision)

#### **Tourism**

Building the Lenox at Convoys Wharf would create a tangible and undeniable link to the site's history that would have an immediate and lasting impression on visitors. With a ship in construction in the Double Dry Dock, or moored in the Great Basin, and the recreation of John Evelyn's Sayes Court Gardens nearby, the place-making aspirations of the redevelopment could be realised in a single stroke.

The projects will present an opportunity for Lewisham to create a new, cohesive tourism strategy, which focuses on the north of the borough. This will put Lewisham on the London tourist trail for the first time, a position strengthened by its proximity to the World Heritage site and the Cutty Sark at Greenwich.

There is a strong case for the history of the dockyard to be emphasised in the creation of an interpretation centre. This could be an annexe to the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich and the Museum of London Docklands. As well as those artefacts held by the Lewisham Local History Archive, there are a great many held in storage by the National Maritime Museum relating specifically to Deptford, which could bring the history of the site alive for local residents and visitors alike.

#### **Regeneration**

The project will have wider benefits of regeneration and rejuvenation, not just in the local area but also beyond. As well as contributing to the existing maritime cluster along this part of the Thames, the Lenox will become established as a viable and sustainable local business entity, contributing to the local economy and promoting volunteer and community inclusion. During construction, the use of sustainable materials will drive reforestation and responsible woodland management, and being a ship-building project will support the reinvigoration of UK maritime links and businesses.

#### **Employment and training**

Central to the Lenox Project is the opportunity to provide meaningful training and employment opportunities to local people, in collaboration with partner organisations in the area such as Lesoco, Greenwich Community College, Greenwich University and the Ahoy Centre. The chance to work on a live ship-building project which is also a visitor attraction represents a unique opportunity with exciting possibilities for learning and development.

**Appendix 2:**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**26 JUNE 2013**

**Question by Councillor Curran  
of the Deputy Mayor**

**Question**

What progress has the Council made in supporting the proposals of Build the Lenox campaign?

**Reply**

Build the Lenox is a project to build a 17<sup>th</sup> century warship on the site of King Henry VIII's Royal Dockyard at Convoys Wharf Deptford.

Council officers have been in regular contact with the Build the Lenox group over the past two years and have met them to discuss their proposals. Officers have also sought to facilitate a dialogue between the group and the owners of the Convoys Wharf site, Hutchison Whampoa, about the potential to deliver the project and have discussed the project with the developer to try to identify an area of the site that could be used. Very early discussions have also taken place with the GLA regarding the potential for the project on the site.

Most recently officers met with the group in May 2013 following the receipt of their vision for the proposal to examine the document and provided comments at that meeting to ensure that proposals are suitably robust and look at all of the available options on the site.

Officers have expressed their general support for the project and opportunities it could bring to the area. There are outstanding issues to be resolved about the location within the site which might be used and the full costs and implications of all the options have yet to be fully appraised.

### **Appendix 3:**

Referral by the Sustainable Development Select Committee to Mayor and Cabinet (11/09/13):

On 11 July 2013, the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered a report entitled Build the Lenox and received a presentation from members of the Build the Lenox group.

The Committee recommends that the Mayor write to Li Ka-Shing, Chairman of the Board of Hutchison Whampoa to urge a meeting between the developer and the Build the Lenox group.

The Committee recommends that a review be carried out by planning officers to determine what support can be given to the Build the Lenox group to assist in achieving the Lenox vision.

The Committee acknowledges the potential lasting benefits the Build the Lenox project might bring to the borough, including the employment, heritage, tourism, training and education initiatives it should help to create. The Committee also acknowledges that the project could help to create an iconic destination for tourists from around the world.

The Committee acknowledges the success of similar projects in regenerating towns and cities across Europe.

The Committee urges the Mayor to work jointly with the office of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly to support the project.

The Committee welcomes efforts by the Build the Lenox team to encourage the builders of the L'Hermione in Rochefort, France to visit the borough and share their experiences of building a replica warship.

The Committee notes the relevance of sections of the Council's core strategy, specifically section 4B of the spatial strategy for regeneration areas, which relate to community wellbeing.

At the meeting on 11/09/13, the Mayor resolved that officers be tasked with implementing the Sustainable Development Select Committee's recommendations immediately.

## **Appendix 4:**

Extract from the Sayes Court Garden website  
(<http://www.sayescourtgarden.org.uk/about.html>)

John Evelyn established his garden at Sayes Court in 1653. Over the next 30 years he laid out his innovative designs, bringing ideas from the Continent and plants from around the world, using the garden as a setting for his experiments and research. The garden was famous in his own day, and the texts which he wrote from his research remained influential long after his death. Many of his concerns remain relevant today, such as adapting for climate change, or growing trees to purify the London air.

200 years later, when John Evelyn's garden had long since faded away, his descendant was concerned by the appalling living conditions in Industrial London. W J Evelyn decided to create a public park on the site of Sayes Court, to provide a place of beauty and fresh air for the people of Deptford in perpetuity. Through his discussions with Octavia Hill, this project at Sayes Court led to the formation of the National Trust.

Only a portion of Sayes Court Park still exists: the remains of the manor house, the site of John Evelyn's garden and the rest of the former Park now lie within the boundary of Convoys Wharf. The approaching development plans bring the opportunity to reclaim this land for the public, to create an experimental 21st Century garden and building to act as a centre of research, education and enterprise.

This project has the power to help integrate the proposed new development into the local community as a place for everyone - bringing education, jobs and training as well as a place of beauty and fresh air once more.

**Appendix 5:**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**27 NOVEMBER 2013**

**Question by Councillor Curran  
of the Mayor**

**Question**

Will the Mayor advise us of any meetings he has had or intends to have with the Mayor of London to press for a decision that is sympathetic to Deptford's heritage with regard to Sayes Court Garden and the Royal Dockyard at the site sometimes known as Convoys Wharf?

**Reply**

The decision by the Mayor of London to intervene in the Convoys Wharf project is wrong and was opposed by this Council. The legislation which established the London Mayoralty gave that mayor individual powers in relation to planning matters which no other mayor, including myself, enjoys. This intervention exposes the dangers of giving an individual such unfettered power.

I have already made it very clear that the Council is supportive of the Build the Lenox and Sayes Court Garden projects. Council officers will work with the GLA, Hutchison Whampoa, Sayes Court Garden Group and the Build the Lenox Group to review and agree the most appropriate way forward to ensure the inclusion of the projects in the overall Convoys Wharf development. We will also make very clear the key issues and concerns about this scheme more generally. I shall demand a meeting with the Mayor of London to press those views at the most appropriate time ahead of his decision making on the application.