

26 APRIL, 1983

LDDC ANNOUNCES INTENTIONS FOR GREENLAND AND SURREY DOCKS SITES

More than a decade of uncertainty over the future of the Surrey Docks was ended today when the London Docklands Development Corporation's intentions for the regeneration of the controversial site at Southwark and plans for the adjacent Greenland Dock site were announced by the LDDC Chairman, Nigel Broackes.

The Corporation, he explained, had approved the revised Greenland Dock "Framework for Development" and would be seeking the necessary planning approvals at the earliest opportunity.

The Greenland Dock site was vested in the LDDC in September 1981 from the London Borough of Southwark. Consultants, Conran Roche, were commissioned to devise a strategy for the Dock. In April 1982, a draft "Framework for Development" was published.

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The LDDC then undertook public consultation and an exhibition was held at the Rotherhithe Civic Centre. Detailed presentations were made to various tenants' groups and each of these meetings was open to the public. The product of this consultation was the revised "Framework" which is now to be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval.

Following the failure of the former owners of the Southwark site, the GLC and the LBS, to reach agreement over the development strategy there with Lysander Estates, the 131.5 acre site was vested by Parliament in the LDDC on March 29, 1983. The Corporation sought to accommodate the Lysander proposals, but found that the scheme guaranteed neither the scale of development nor the commitment required by the LDDC.

The Corporation already has outline planning permission for the site at Southwark. As the development authority, the LDDC is committed to the lasting regeneration of Docklands and it believes that by developing the site itself, it will achieve that regeneration faster.

It is therefore the Corporation's intention to place individual sites on the market with the intention of assembling the office, industrial, housing and shopping components. It is expected that such developments will be started well before the end of this year.

Such is the urgency (in the Corporation's view) that site preparation has already been initiated. Mr Broackes announced that yesterday (Monday) de-silting work was put in hand by Taylor Woodrow - the contract is worth £1m and is providing immediate work for more than 50 people.

Mr Broackes said: "The Southwark site has been the subject of much public debate, and rightly so. The people of Southwark have waited too long for a significant development on site after several false starts. The site, which comprises more than 200 acres of Inner London, has been unused since it was acquired by its former owners in 1975.

"To secure an early start to construction, my Corporation has issued the first site preparation contracts and that work began yesterday. The regeneration of the Surrey Docks area is vital for Docklands - in terms of jobs, homes and recreational facilities. The opportunity to relate this to the Greenland area will enhance the prospects of both."

He went on to say that the installation of main infrastructure facilities, including roads, services and landscaping would cost at least £6m. Development should bring a projected 1800 jobs into the area over the next five years. Initial building activity should provide up to 800 jobs, most of them for local people. Further jobs, in the office and technology grades, should take that figure up to 3000.

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It is intended that the first housebuilders should be on site before the end of this year. The majority of the homes will be family dwellings with gardens, well within the financial reach of first-time buyers. Housing sites will be made available to housing trusts and to the local authority, provided they can develop promptly. Road improvements to Evelyn Street and Lower Road will be welcomed - but the development is not dependent on them.

The existing water features will be retained to enhance the character of the development and a tree-lined, shallow canal system between the Surrey Basin and Canada Dock is programmed.

A new approach to retail development is being examined, making use of the opportunity to create an office/retail complex linking Canada water and Brunswick Wharf.

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