

NEW SOUTHWARK PLAN: Statement to Examination, 26 April 2021

London Bridge is world-famous, and people from around the globe choose to do business and visit here. It is constantly evolving and the state of the art station will ensure its ongoing commercial success.

Team London Bridge is a Business Improvement District, or BID, representing approximately 400 businesses in the London Bridge area. Our vision is to make London Bridge one of the most sustainable, culturally innovative and compelling commercial districts in the world. We have a strong mandate from our businesses - in a ballot last month 95% voted to continue the BID for another 5 year term.

We published the [London Bridge Plan](#) in 2015 through wide consultation, setting out key placeshaping priorities and projects. This work has evolved and become more detailed, particularly through our input in the New Southwark Plan and responses to major planning applications over the last four years.

We welcome Southwark Council's responsiveness to our representations and support the overall direction of travel. The London Bridge Area Vision is well grounded and ambitious, and relates well to the area of London Bridge as we conceive it. It is important that the Area Vision now has the status of planning policy.

We actively work to inform development proposals coming forward as planning applications in the area, including on the sites allocated in the New Southwark Plan. A primary objective for us is that this development proceeds in ways that deliver strategic outcomes for London Bridge. These include reimagining St Thomas Street as a boulevard, strengthening Tooley Street's role as London Bridge's High Street, creating the Low Line and a Green Grid of walking and cycling friendly streets and spaces with quality green infrastructure and biodiversity, securing high quality and diverse commercial development - with active frontage, a strong cultural offer and a world leading health cluster - and being a leader in building for a zero-carbon future.

We have stated in response to the Area Vision that a more integrated approach combining development sites along St Thomas Street would help us to realise the potential from the planned scale of development. The New City Court site should also be included.

London Bridge sits within the Central Activities Zone, with one of the busiest and most transformative stations in the country, so there should be emphasis on commercial and cultural uses, and these should predominate over new residential development. New developments also need to give primacy to the important health cluster in London Bridge which we are privileged to have and which we believe must be nurtured in the Plan.

The quality of new building is imperative, in an area with stunning historic and contemporary buildings, and it also needs to respect both designated and undesignated heritage assets. We support the design review process to help deliver this quality and seek an approach to building heights and design which recognises the primacy of the Shard, and which secures high quality public realm at ground level. We are strongly supportive of the Plan's recognition of the contribution made by placemarks where we have worked with the local community to identify a diverse range of valued features and places across the London Bridge area, and recognise that excellent design can create new valued placemarks.

We support the opportunities for creating new quality green space and public realm and for improving biodiversity and the management of water resources. This includes opportunities to extend the approach to community management of green space which we have supported at places such as Melior Street Community Garden, Gibbons Rent and the Greenwood Theatre.

We look forward to the discussion over the New Southwark Plan's approach to London Bridge and to working with Southwark Council, our members, future developers, the local community and others who care so passionately about this unique and important part of London.