

Roles for Planning Debate

James Nicholson (Factory owner Lea Valley)

I owned a factory in the Lower Lea Valley. The Olympic plans meant my business headquarters had to be bulldozed to make way for the Olympic park.

I employed 15 local people who relied on the company for jobs. It is not simply a case of just moving the business. Many of my workers did not own cars and walked to work. They have had trouble getting to work since the factory relocated to the edge of the city.

I am sad that the long-established, thriving business and industrial community in the Lea Valley have been wiped about by the development. In the end some of businesses were evicted before they could get new premises.

I do agree that the area needs regenerating but I think it should be in a way that will benefit all local people.

Peter Connor (14) member of the Eastway, Lea Valley, cycle group

I have been training at the Eastway cycle club since I was 11. When the old Eastway cycle park was bulldozed to make way for the Olympic park we were promised improved cycling facilities on the new Olympic site.

In fact, the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) has scaled-down the plans to provide these cycling facilities. We believed that the new 34-hectare site would include a 6,000-seat velodrome, along with a one-mile road-racing circuit, a BMX track, a full-scale mountain bike track and a cycle speedway circuit.

The plans have now changed and the new cycle park will not be of the same standard as the one that had been demolished. I would like to compete in the Olympics as I am ranked in the top 10 nationally. I hope I will have adequate facilities to train.

Mrs Cessario (Local community spokesperson)

There are fears that this first burst of development for the Olympics will not benefit the people actually living in Newham.

Areas around the Olympic site are already becoming hot property for developers. Property investors are moving in; buying up cheap housing and hoping for a housing windfall as gentrification drives up property prices. The 'real' residents are being pushed to the edges of the borough, and into next-door Barking and Dagenham where they can afford rents. It is sad that young people will not be able to get a foot on the property ladder in their own area.

Miss B (Local councilor for Newham)

£2 billion will be invested in the Games, much of which will be in Newham, bringing many benefits. The area will be improved to provide the biggest new park in Europe and provide a better sense of security and openness with improved access for pedestrians and cyclists. More than 9,000 new homes will be built, with schools, health and community facilities to match. The Games will provide hundreds of jobs and improving the image of Newham. The Games will bring great sporting facilities and help to promote sport and healthy lifestyles in an area that has one of the worst health records in the UK. Stratford and West Ham stations will be improved. Lastly, the Games will boost London's tourism industry. Newham businesses will be gearing up to take advantage of this opportunity.

Mrs A (Representative of the ODA Olympic Delivery Authority)

Our job is to create one of the largest new urban parks in Europe for 150 years with a lasting legacy of world class sporting facilities, homes for the community that will live in the areas and unrivalled green open spaces around the Park after the Games. Benefits resulting from the Olympics include a World class Stadium, velodrome, Aquatics Centre and indoor arena, 110 hectares of improved open space and significant employment opportunities. Approximately 4,500 homes will be converted from the Olympic Village and there will be 150,500sq metres of new retail space at Stratford City and 465,000sq metres of new office space.

Zara Daniels (Local school leaver)

What I want from the Olympics is for jobs to be created in my local community. At the moment Newham has a high youth unemployment rate of 25.2%. The overall unemployment rate is 6.7% the second highest in London below Hackney. What I want from the Olympics is a good job in the future and a lower unemployment rate.

I have heard that up to 34,000 new jobs could be created in the Stratford city development alone as London prepares for the 2012 Olympics. My Main concern is that I may not be able to afford to live in the borough in the future unless I can get a well paid job.

Debate/ Role play:

Each pupil takes the role of one of the people on the cards. In groups they have to decide if they think the Olympic Games will benefit the local people of Newham. A spokesperson from each group should feedback the group's decision to the rest of the class.