

Geoffrey Roper representing the Kings Cross Development Forum, an independent community-led forum which has aimed to involve residents in the neighbourhoods surrounding the Kings Cross Opportunity Area in the area's ongoing redevelopment. [The Forum is committed to developing community networks and infrastructure and to securing the resources to allow a proper community involvement in the area to happen. ] As you can see, I come from a church, but I want to emphasise that we are a highly diverse Forum, all race and people of all faiths and of none.

With significant and sustained help from planning officers of Camden – and Islington – Councils, with some presentations from Roger Madelin and others from the applicant we have been meeting for more than three years and some of the groups represented and the residents have lived for decades with the squalor of Kings Cross, uncertainty over the future of the railway lands and adverse effects of the works on the British Library, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and demolition and reconstruction of parts of St Pancras station.

We do not have a unanimous viewpoint to present; there are too many aspects and too broad a range of opinions. On the whole those of our participants having strong reservations are laying them before you tonight. The balance of view in the Forum as a whole its chair, Satnam Gill, and I believe is broadly in favour of the application as revised and with the proposed conditions and Section 106 elements in your Pre-agenda paper.

Our written submission expresses the balance of views in weighted percentages on [no fewer than] 36 aspects of the revisions submitted in September 2005 by the applicant. All but four of these give over two-thirds support for the revisions.

Many of our member groups have continuing concerns, some listed in the Summary as being shared by London's Mayor; they would wish further changes, mainly in the direction of more affordable housing, greater assurance on community safety, measures to make it easier to walk, push a pram or cycle into and through the site from various

neighbouring directions, saving particular heritage buildings or heritage aspects, greater energy-saving or green energy, bus routes and other transport aspects. There is some resistance to the extreme building heights. But the Forum has throughout its deliberations recognized that this is going to be a major mixed-use development which will regenerate not only some industrial heritage structures but a depressed corner of Camden which has unique potential. There is a desire for progress, not a wish to block the proposed development even if some would like further modifications. We have lived with delay and disappointment for a long while. The window of opportunity created by a fortnight of athletics in the Lee Valley six years from now is an added bonus.