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London, the city continues to grow: Royal Docks and Crossrails

The Mori Memorial Foundation, Institute for Urban Strategies

Researcher: Norio Yamato



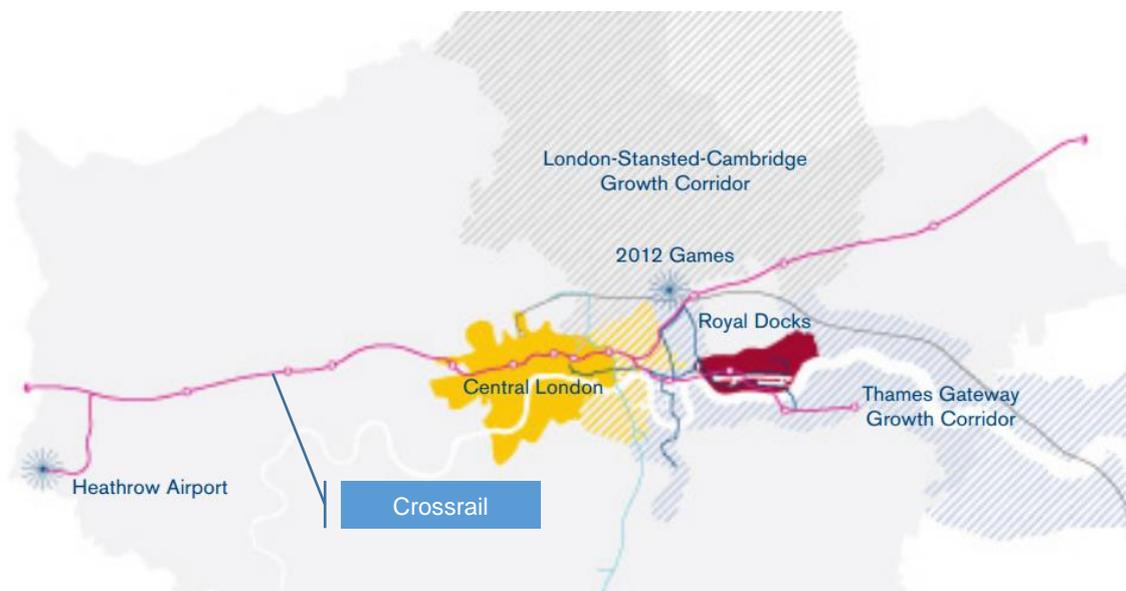
Aerial view of Royal Docks area (Central London and Canary Wharf at the back)

© Royal Docks official website.

Professor Hiroo Ichikawa, executive director of The Mori Memorial Foundation and Dean of Professional Graduate School of Governance Studies at Meiji University visited London from 17-19, March to attend the meeting of the International Advisory Committee on the 4th New York Regional Plan. During this 3-day meeting, discussions were held regarding the 4th New York Regional Plan scheduled to be released in 2016. These discussions covered different aspects of the plan such as residential & city development, transportation, infrastructure & investment, regional government, and a variety of related topics. During the visit, Professor Ichikawa also met Professor Michael Batty of the Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis (CASA) of the University College London (UCL) and he explained the “Global Power City Index (GPCI)” published by The Institute for Urban Strategies, Mori Memorial Foundation to Professor Batty. Professor Batty in turn introduced his team’s city

analysis based on the big data and some recent examples of the corresponding visualization to Professor Ichikawa. The meeting was a valuable opportunity for the two organizations to establish a mutually beneficial relationship.

London is a world city which has stayed at the top of the GPCI for 3 consecutive years since 2012. As the natural and social growth of London's population continues to burgeon, this trend is expected to continue until at least 2030. Because of this, housing supply and infrastructure development have become important issues to the city. With the various large-scale long-term projects under progress in the city center and its nearby areas, the city global power of London is expected to increase gradually through the completion of these projects. In regard to this, we made a site visit and held discussions with the relevant parties of 1) the Royal Docks Project, a project carrying out on the 10-15km east of central London and on the 5km south of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the 2012 London Olympics main venue area; and 2) Crossrail Project, the transportation infrastructure linking the west and east of London.



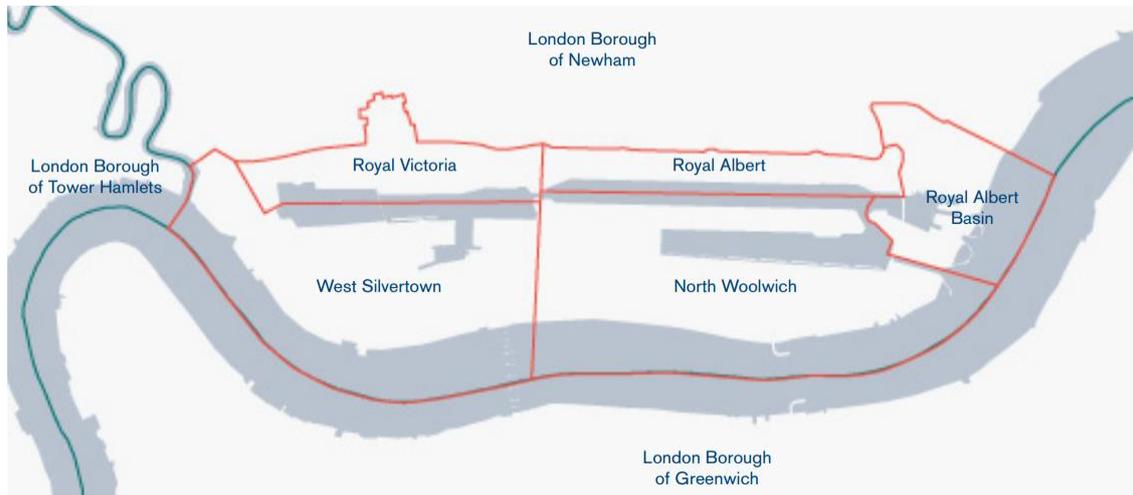
Location of Royal Docks and Route of Crossrail

© *Royal Docks, Parameters For Development*, The Greater London Authority (2011).

1. Royal Docks

The Royal Docks Project is considered an important project to enhance the power of London as a metropolis. The Royal Docks refers to three old docks, the Royal Victoria Dock, the Royal Albert Dock and the King George V Dock. They are the last group of docks built in London during the 1855-1921 period. The development area of the Royal Docks is

composed of 5 areas: Royal Victoria, Royal Albert, West Silvertown, North Woolwich and Royal Albert Basin.



Five areas of Royal Docks

© *Royal Docks, Parameters For Development*, The Greater London Authority (2011)

In recent years, the Royal Docks area has been intensively developed. In 2000, the ExCeL London (operation rights transferred to Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company in 2008) was built in the Royal Victoria area with a total exhibition and convention center space of 100,000 m², which was used as the venue for events such as boxing, fencing, judo, table tennis, etc. during the 2012 London Olympic Games. After the Games, “Emirates Air Line”, a cable car link across the River Thames was built with sponsorship from Emirates Airline of the UAE. In the same year, the German general electric enterprise Siemens opened its exhibition center for sustainable technologies, “The Crystal”. In April, 2012, the government designated the area as one of the “Enterprise Zones” in which policies to encourage economic growth and development are implemented.



Corridor of the ExCeL London



The Crystal, meeting venue of the International Advisory Committee on the 4th New York Regional Plan

The highlight of the Royal Docks Enterprise Zone is the Asian Business Port (ABP) which is scheduled to be completed in 2018 in the Royal Albert Area. This 14 ha area targets becoming the third financial area after the “City of London”, the traditional financial district and “Canary Wharf”, the new financial district developed through regeneration of the East

London Waterfront Area. With its proximity to the London City Airport as a unique value, the area aims to develop itself into a hub for European regional headquarters from Asian countries such as China.



ABP London, scheduled to be completed in 2018 (image)

© Royal Docks official website.

Another large scale project in the “Royal Dock Enterprise Zone” is the “Silvertown” project which is a 24 ha mixed-use development to the south of Royal Victoria Dock. The project aims to create 3,000 housing units, regenerating an icon of London’s industrial past and creating a hub for entrepreneurs. It also plans to attract global brands and enterprises to activate the Royal Dock area. By creating areas which are suitable for intellectual economies and growing industries and connecting human resources around the world, Silvertown intends to turn itself into a creative and innovative hub.



Current situation of the Silvertown Quays area



Future visualization of Silvertown Quays

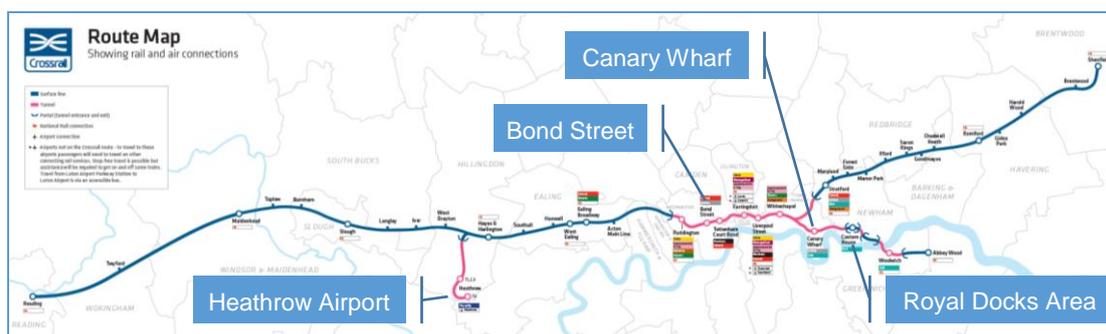
© Royal Docks official website.

It is the Crossrail scheduled to operate in 2018 that will change the district dramatically (discussed in more detail below). Since this area will be directly linked to central London, the West End and Heathrow Airport by the Crossrail, a huge impact is expected for this area.

2. Crossrail

In addition to the aforementioned Royal Dock area, it is Crossrail which is the largest scale railway project in Europe that is believed will increase the power of London as a metropolitan area. The idea of Crossrail emerged in the 1970s, but due to funding problems, it has never been realized. With the law establishment and funding arrangement after 2000, the project was finally launched in 2009. The 118 km rail system is expected to start its first service in 2018 and be fully operational in 2019. With Crossrail, the capacity of London's rail system could be increased by 10% thereby eliminating the congestion problem of other rail lines. The main feature of Crossrail is the fact that it connects important areas in eastern and western London from Canary Wharf to the City of London, the West End and Heathrow Airport. Currently the access time from the Royal Docks to Heathrow Airport is 50 minutes via Heathrow Express, with the Crossrail, the time will be reduced to 43 min without transfer. Although the total amount of investment in the Crossrail project is estimated at approximately 1.5 billion pounds, the trickledown effect is considered to be 3 times larger than the investment, especially on the rejuvenation of central London area and areas along the line.

Crossrail will be extended with its second phase "Crossrail 2", which will connect the Southwest with Northeast parts of London through the city center, aiming to mitigate commuting congestion, and contribute to the overall economic development of London. The route plan of Crossrail 2 will be released in summer 2015 targeting a completion date in 2030.



Crossrail Route Map

© Crossrail official website.

Conclusion

Contrary to Tokyo, London is a world city foreseen as having population growth. For the continuing growth and development in London, the eastern area, which will play an important role in the growth and development of the city, and which has already been

observed as having tremendous changes since the Olympic Games, this trend is expected to remain with the Royal Docks project or Crossrails. The extent of the development in London should continue to be investigated.