

MQ 2017/ 3964 **Vittoria Wharf - affordable workspace**

Vittoria Wharf was one of the first buildings in the UK to be listed as an Asset of Community Value and is widely recognised as a strategic hub for providing affordable workspace for creative and artistic industries in Hackney Wick. How is the part-demolition of Vittoria Wharf, to provide a pedestrian bridge, consistent with your manifesto promise of "providing dedicated small workspace with live-in space so that creative industries, artists and the fashion industry are given extra support to flourish"?

Caroline Russell

The part of Vittoria Wharf being demolished was acquired by a CPO so that it could make way for a new bridge. Since ownership passed to LLDC it has only been a temporary, low cost space used for short-term lets as the intention was always to demolish. The tenants - which included a range of companies including those in the food supply industry as well as artists - were always aware of the nature and duration of tenure and the future plans for the building when they signed their leases. It was not, and has never been, a formal live/work space as it is wholly unsuitable for such use and was never let on those terms.

LLDC worked closely with the tenants to support them in acquiring alternative workspace including giving two months' notice, offering 1-to-1 support and highlighting alternative workspace in the local area. I have been clear that developers and planners must do all they can to protect artists' workspace, which is integral to the character of Hackney Wick, and I have been assured that LLDC is working to ensure the amount of creative workspace will remain the same in the area. This includes the commitment in the Hackney Wick Masterplan to protect and re-provide 8,439 sqm of low-cost workspace, including artists' studios.

As I have said before, the bridges are a key part of a wider strategy for Hackney Wick and Fish Island that includes thousands of new homes, a major refurbishment of Hackney Wick Station and employment space which includes 73,340 sqm of workspace of which 21% (15,622 sqm) will be low cost / affordable workspace and artists' studios.

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