

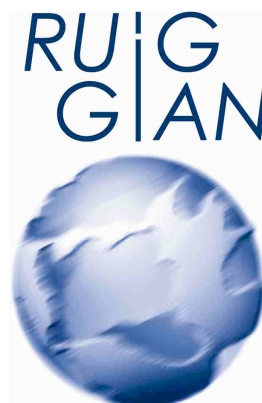
Centre on
Housing Rights
and Evictions



HOSTING THE 2012 OLYMPIC GAMES: LONDON'S OLYMPIC PREPARATIONS AND HOUSING RIGHTS CONCERNS

Background Paper

COHRE's *Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights Project* is supported by the Geneva International Academic Network (GIAN)



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Background

This background research paper is part of the COHRE Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights Project. It was prepared as a preliminary independent study of the impact of the London Olympics on housing rights. Similar studies were done for the cities of Atlanta, Athens, Barcelona, Beijing, London, Seoul and Sydney. The background research papers were used in the preparation of COHRE's *Fair Play for Housing Rights: Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights* report, launched in Geneva on 5 June 2007. The contents and opinions of the material available in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily correspond with those of COHRE. All documents published as part of this project are available at: www.cohre.org/mega-events/.

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CONTENTS

I. Introduction.....	4
II. The Candidate Cities for the 2012 Olympic Games.....	5
1. Comparative analysis of the Bid Books submitted by the 2012 Candidate Cities.....	5
(a) <i>Candidate Cities and references in their Bid Books to the Olympic principles and ethical values</i>	6
(b) <i>Candidate Cities and references in their Bid Books to the Olympic Movement’s housing related commitments</i>	7
2. Comparison of potential housing impacts evident during the selection process.....	10
(a) <i>Olympics related displacements and evictions</i>	10
(b) <i>Escalation in housing costs</i>	12
(c) <i>Reduction in the availability of social and low cost housing</i>	13
(d) <i>Displacements of businesses</i>	14
(e) <i>Discrimination</i>	15
3. Transparency and participation of civil society in the bid process.....	17
4. Conclusions regarding the 2012 Candidate Cities and the consideration of housing rights concerns.....	19
III. London’s preparations for the 2012 Summer Olympic Games and the impact on housing	20
1. Background to London’s hosting of the 20004 Games.....	20
(a) <i>Housing in London: main features</i>	21
(b) <i>London’s Olympic authorities</i>	23
(c) <i>Implementing the preparations for the Olympic Games</i>	24
2. The 2012 Olympic Games: Preliminary impacts upon London	26
(a) <i>Displacement and evictions from the Olympic site</i>	26
(b) <i>Escalation in housing costs and secondary displacements and evictions</i>	31
(c) <i>Reduction in the availability of social and low cost housing</i>	31
(d) <i>Marginalised groups affected</i>	32
(e) <i>Legal measures taken as part of the Olympic preparations</i>	32
3. Community activism during London’s Olympic preparations.....	34
4. Best practices emerging from London’s Olympic preparations.....	35
5. Preliminary conclusions regarding the housing impact of the 2012 London Olympic Games	37

I. Introduction

As part of its project on “Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights” the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) analysed the various Candidate Cities for the 2012 Olympic Games (London, Madrid, Moscow, New-York and Paris) in order to address how housing related issues were integrated in their Candidature file.

We found that limited but positive housing related considerations were outlined in the Candidate Cities’ bid books which, in limited ways, addressed some housing concerns. For example, some Candidate Cities promised that accommodation constructed for the Olympic Games would be used (in part) for social and low cost housing after the Olympic Games. These positive announcements were made voluntarily by Host Cities, and were not requested in the Candidature Manual or in any other guidelines produced by the IOC. Indeed, the IOC did not take in to account any housing related concerns in its consideration of the Candidate Cities and the election of the Host City.

Since the election of London as the Host City for the 2012 Olympic Games, COHRE has followed the preparations underway in that city, and the impacts on housing rights that are already becoming evident, in particular in the East London area. Already, over five years before the Olympic Games are due to be staged, over 1,000 people face the threat of displacement from their homes, and housing prices are escalating. As is common in Olympic Host Cities, these effects are being disproportionately felt by marginalised groups: in particular the poor, low-income earners, residents of public housing, and ethnic minorities such as Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers.

II. The Candidate Cities for the 2012 Olympic Games

The first part of this background paper analyses the extent to which the five 2012 Candidate Cities incorporated housing considerations in their Olympic Games bids.¹ The goal is to identify the potential impact of hosting the Olympic Games on the housing conditions in these cities. Some of the negative impacts that are examined include evictions of residents and businesses and escalations in housing costs that will inevitably lead to secondary displacement. This section also examines whether the Candidate Cities made commitments to creating positive housing legacies in their bid documents, for example promises to increase the amount of available housing, especially affordable and social housing, or incorporate a degree of community consultation in decision making processes. Another aspect examined in this section is the engagement of civil society groups in the bidding process and the degree to which concerns raised by these groups have been addressed by the Candidate City, National Olympic Committee, Bid Committee or other local authorities and the degree of consultation carried out with the affected communities. We had intended to examine how the IOC ultimately valued these initiatives in its final choice. However the answer to this last question is disappointingly simple: Our research showed that no issues related to the housing impact of the Olympic Games were discussed in the report of the IOC Evaluation Commission.²

1. Comparative analysis of the Bid Books submitted by the 2012 Candidate Cities

The tables below were compiled after analysing the bid books of the Candidate Cities. They provide an overview of the contents of the bids in terms of Fundamental Principles of Olympism,³ the principles of the Olympic Movement⁴ and the Olympic Movement's housing related commitments.⁵ The tables show whether each value was mentioned and how clearly it was described in the bid books. This serves to highlight differences in the importance placed on these values by the cities. A more detailed description appears below each table.

¹ This research relied on an analysis of the Bid Books, and included research on issues related to housing. The main sources of information regarding the housing related aspects and community concerns were conversations with groups opposed to their city hosting the Olympic Games for reasons related to the expected housing impacts of the Games. Unfortunately for a variety of reasons, including language barriers, less information was available regarding the actual or potential housing impacts in Moscow.

² IOC, 'Report of the IOC Evaluation Commission for the Games of the XXX Olympiad in 2012' (Lausanne: IOC, 22 Mar. 2005).

³ For a discussion of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism, see Chapter II Section 1.1 above.

⁴ For a discussion of the principles of the Olympic Movement relevant to housing considerations, see Chapter II Section 1.2 above.

⁵ Ibid.

(a) Candidate Cities and references in their Bid Books to the Olympic principles and ethical values

Olympic Principles & values	London	Madrid	Moscow	New York	Paris
<i>Safeguarding human dignity</i>					
<i>Non-discrimination</i>	Mentioned	Mentioned			Mentioned
<i>Promotion of a positive legacy</i>	“model of social inclusion”	“enhance quality of life of inhabitants”		“transform New York City”	“exemplary urban regeneration project”
<i>Sustainable development</i>	“sustainability has been a fundamental criterion”	“sustainability criteria in decision taking”		“model of urban sustainability”	“new benchmark of sustainable development”
<i>Civil society participation</i>		“citizen participation”		“engaging every community in the Games”	“organization of working groups”
<i>Respect for human rights</i>					

The Fundamental Principles of Olympism, and in particular the aspects of these principles that are relevant to housing rights issues, were not clearly addressed in any of the 2012 Candidate City bid books.

Most Candidate Cities stated that they would respect existing anti-discrimination legislation for the period of the Olympic Games. In the context of the Games, this generally refers to legislation prohibiting discrimination against persons with disabilities.

The extent to which civil society was included differed. All Candidate Cities mentioned that their bids enjoyed the full support of the population and the communities concerned and noted the absence of any opposition to hosting the Olympic Games. Some mentioned steps they had taken to include civil society in the decision making process. Madrid promised to establish a “landscape plan with citizen participation.”⁶ Paris committed to creating and participating in working groups on social integration.⁷ New York also promised to “draw broad support by engaging every community in the Games.”⁸

Almost all of the Candidate Cities spoke in the same terms about the principles of ‘positive legacy’ and ‘sustainable development’. New York and Paris envisioned their cities being transformed by the urban regeneration projects.⁹ The Olympic Games were

⁶ *Madrid Mini Bid Book*, p.47 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

⁷ *Paris Bid Book*, p.39 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

⁸ *New York Mini Bid Book*, p.2 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

⁹ *Paris Bid Book*, p.33 and *New York Bid Book*, p.25 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

promoted as a vehicle to accelerate this process. Madrid committed itself to increasing the quality of life of its inhabitants,¹⁰ while London sought to set a model for social inclusion.¹¹ Similar guarantees concerning sustainable development are found in each Candidate City bid book.

(b) Candidate Cities and references in their Bid Books to the Olympic Movement’s housing related commitments

Housing commitments	London	Madrid	Moscow	New York	Paris
<i>Selection of sites – environmental impact & integration</i>	“area ripe for redevelopment”	“old mining area”	“undeveloped area”	“rail yards, vacant land, parking lots and warehouses” “mostly abandoned”	“railway area” “wasteland”
<i>Infrastructure – priority to existing infrastructure</i>	“temporary buildings, new venues only where needed”	“temporary solutions when post-use is not clear”	“maximum utilization of existing infrastructure”	“designed to serve pressing local needs”	“use of temporary venues”
<i>Boost to local housing strategies</i>	“50% of the new housing will be affordable homes”	“half of the housing will be protected”	“sold for use as private residential property”	“rented or sold on the private market”	“social housing and private residence”

In the bid books, the Candidate Cities generally do not detail the current use of the areas that would become sites for Olympic venues. These areas are simply described as ‘undeveloped’, ‘wasteland’ or ‘abandoned’. However some bid books give a more precise description: for example, New York explained it would use “rail yards, vacant lands, parking lots and warehouses”¹² for the location of its facilities. It also acknowledged that a part of the site in Queens was privately owned and needed to be purchased.¹³ Madrid also gave more details on the site envisioned for the Olympic Village, the old mining area of the southern bank of the Manzanares River.¹⁴

None of the Candidate Cities appeared to take into account the possible impact of Olympics related construction on the housing situation of the local communities. For instance, Moscow selected the sites in order “to ensure maximum ease regarding access to the venues”.¹⁵ The candidature file for Paris also cited among the reasons for choosing the locations, their central location or the presence of existing venues and world famous settings,¹⁶ but nothing was mentioned about the impact on local residents.

¹⁰ *Madrid Mini Bid Book*, p.3 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).
¹¹ *London Bid Book*, p.19
¹² *New York Bid Book*, p.25 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).
¹³ *New York Bid Book*, p.203 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).
¹⁴ *Madrid Mini Bid Book*, p.3 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).
¹⁵ *Moscow Bid Book*, p.143 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).
¹⁶ *Paris Bid Book*, p.29 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

London guaranteed that the regeneration of the community would benefit everyone who lives there.¹⁷ In addition, London organised an “Environmental Impact Assessment [EIA] that considered existing site conditions and potential impacts of Olympic developments; this includes detailed assessments of socio-economic aspects.”¹⁸ However London’s bid did not mention explicitly taking into account possible housing impacts in the selection process, and the EIA itself was silent on housing considerations.¹⁹

Paris, Madrid and London mentioned the planned use of temporary venues which are less likely to have a negative impact on the housing situation of residents in these cities.²⁰

The key issue that clearly differentiated the cities in terms of their concern for housing impacts was the anticipated future boost to local housing of their respective Olympic Projects. Moscow and New York’s Olympic village residence was to be sold on the private market, an outcome that would not benefit low income residents. On the other hand, the bids of each of Paris, London and Madrid included provision for social housing. The extent to which the concept of social housing was detailed in the respective bid books varied. Paris’ candidature mentioned its plan for ‘social housing’,²¹ but did not give a more precise definition of this term, or provide further information as to the proportion of housing that was to be allocated for use as social housing. In discussions with representatives of those responsible for the bid, it was explained that 40 percent of the total housing was to be allocated for social use, and that the price of such housing would be regulated to make it affordable to low income residents.²² This policy was also intended to promote the neighbourhood’s diversity.

Madrid’s bid book contained a similar provision: “half of the housing will be protected.”²³ It also stated that “different types of accommodation will be provided in the Olympic Village, according to planned future use: social housing, housing for other income levels, and hotels.”²⁴

London’s bid also envisaged allocating 50 percent of the total Olympic village housing to affordable housing. The London bid provided the clearest and most concise description of the Olympic village’s future use: affordable homes would be “for key workers, such as nurses, doctors, police and teachers and social housing for people in acute need.”²⁵ New houses would be a mix of public rented accommodation and affordable housing.²⁶ The latter was intended to be sold at below market prices and was intended for people with an income under £40,000 per year.²⁷

¹⁷ *London Bid Book*, p.19 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

¹⁸ *London Bid Book*, p.211 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

¹⁹ See further Section 3.7.4 below for further information about the inclusion of housing considerations in the EIA.

²⁰ Reducing the level of construction of new infrastructure in turn reduces the likelihood of displacements and evictions.

²¹ *Paris Bid Book*, p.243 (Volume 2) (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

²² COHRE telephone interview with Emmanuelle Obligis, Directrice déléguée aux infrastructures et opérations du Comité de Candidature aux Jeux de la XXXème olympiade - Paris 2012, 7 June 2005.

²³ *Madrid Bid Book*, p.209 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

²⁴ *Madrid Bid Book*, p.217 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

²⁵ *London Bid Book*, p.207 (available for consultation at the Olympic Studies Centre).

²⁶ COHRE telephone interview with Anthony Vigor, Institute of Public Policy Research, 2 June 2005.

²⁷ It was pointed out that this threshold is still high and encompasses a wide range of the population, prompting the recommendation that socially-rented accommodation would be more appropriate: *ibid.*

Notwithstanding these efforts to assure that housing built as part of the Olympic development would be reserved for those on lower incomes, all bid books lacked a comprehensive analysis of the housing impacts of hosting the Olympic Games. None referred to possible displacements, evictions or relocations. According to the information (or lack thereof) in the bid books, most sites earmarked for Olympic Games venues appeared to be vacant.²⁸

The main differences between the cities in relation to housing are found in their plans for the use of new housing following the Olympic Games. Madrid, Paris and London should be commended for their plans to designate such housing for social use and affordable housing. However, various concerns regarding these plans are outlined below.

²⁸ Although COHRE's research suggests otherwise.

2. Comparison of potential housing impacts evident during the selection process

(a) Olympics related displacements and evictions

London

It is possible at this early stage to surmise that, despite there being no reference to evictions in the bid books, construction of the Olympics facilities in London will affect a number of people, including the residents of a University campus, a co-operative housing estate and two Gypsy and Travellers sites, leading to the possible displacement of approximately 1,000 people.

Foreign students at the East London University Park Village estate were affected by this planned construction even before London had been officially selected as the Host City, with 550 being displaced from their university accommodation under threat of court action. Although it was proposed that these students would be relocated in the Docklands or Barking, this was not a suitable solution for many of the students because it meant living far from their university campus. As a result, many students have been forced onto the private housing market.²⁹ The destruction of the student accommodation represents a loss of a resource which could have continued to house students or others.³⁰ The London Development Agency (LDA) insisted on vacant possession of the University site by June 2005 in order to facilitate the demolition in December 2005. However, Clay's Lane Housing Cooperative, an estate adjacent to the University campus, was not scheduled to be cleared until 2007. Authorities claim this site is also required for the Olympic Village construction. No guarantees were given to the displaced Clay's Lane residents concerning relocation.

According to local activists, the London bid lacked transparency regarding its potential housing impact.³¹ "They don't tell you that Clay Lane Housing Co-op, a modern purpose built estate where 450 people live, would be demolished."³²

There are also two authorised Gypsy and Travellers sites, at Clays Lane in Newham and Waterden Crescent in Hackney, which are scheduled for relocation in 2007.

These evictions are addressed in more detail in Section 2.7.4 below which outlines the housing impacts that are already evident from London's preparations to host the Olympic Games in 2012.

Madrid

It is important to compare London's bid and early preparations with the other Candidate Cities. Although no evictions were planned for Madrid, this city is widely acknowledged

²⁹ COHRE email correspondence with Julian Cheyne, resident at the Clay's Lane Co-operative estate, 8 June 2005.

³⁰ COHRE email correspondence with Julian Cheyne, resident at the Clay's Lane Co-operative estate, Feb. 2007.

³¹ Jim Patton, 'Advisory Services for Squatters', *No London 2012*, press release (14 Feb. 2005).

³² Ibid.

as lacking in hotel space.³³ This in turn makes it more likely that, had Madrid been successful in its bid to host the Olympic Games, landlords would have capitalised on the shortage of Olympic tourist accommodation and many tenants would have faced eviction.

New York

In New York City, the Hudson Yards Stadium Plan would have potentially displaced thousands by demolishing homes and businesses.³⁴ The city also planned to use its 'eminent domain' powers, a law that authorises seizure of private land for public use. Opponents claim it would have in fact been used to benefit a privately owned franchise. Another concern involved fears that the rent stabilisation legislation (which protects tenants by giving them the right to renew their lease) may not be renewed when it expires in 2011. Landlords would have then found it easier to evict tenants in order to accommodate tourists during the Olympic Games.³⁵

“Over 800 people will be moved out of their homes in Brooklyn if the New York is elected” was the dire warning from local activists.³⁶ The homes of these 800 people were to have been destroyed to build a gymnasium basketball arena. In addition, 200 to 300 jobs would have been lost in Brooklyn as a result of the Olympics-related development in the area. About half of those who would have been affected are minorities, most of them African-American or Hispanics. The remainder are white working class persons on low wages. The area in question also houses a homeless shelter, and the Olympic construction would thus have meant the displacement of many homeless people and a reduction in homeless services.

The Clinton Special District Coalition produced a ‘Contra-Bid Book’ to counter the official New York City Bid. This publication noted that:

“One thing that NYC2012 will not tell you is that the west side neighborhoods of Chelsea and Clinton/Hell’s Kitchen are worth saving. We are not rich or famous. We are immigrants, the working class, the place where young actors and musicians make their home in (what used to be) affordable walkups, so that they can audition, wait tables and hold other jobs while auditioning for Broadway and off-Broadway shows. Chelsea and Hell’s Kitchen are the places where generations of families made their homes. NYC2012 would have you believe that because the demographics do not reflect the East Side of Manhattan, or because the support companies do not carry logos worth millions of dollars, we do not have a worth. They are wrong.”³⁷

Paris

Paris presented a different picture as no evictions were considered necessary because very few people lived on the proposed Olympic sites.³⁸ “There will be no displacement

³³ COHRE email correspondence with Angeles Nieto, *Ecologistas en Accion*, 26 May 2005.

³⁴ Jillian Jonas, ‘Analysis: Developments in NY’s future’, *United Press International* (25 June 2004).

³⁵ COHRE email correspondence with John Fisher, Clinton Special District Coalition, New York, June 2005.

³⁶ COHRE telephone interview with Patti Hagan, *Develop Don’t Destroy Brooklyn*, 31 May 2005.

³⁷ John Fisher, President, Clinton Special District Coalition, Letter to United States Olympic Committee Members dated 29 Oct. 2002, in *Contra Bid-Book*, available at <http://www.hellskitchen.net/develop/olympics/contra-bid-book.pdf>.

³⁸ COHRE telephone interview with Emmanuelle Obligis, Directrice déléguée aux infrastructures et opérations du Comité de Candidature aux Jeux de la XXXème olympiade - Paris 2012, 7 June 2005.

[in Paris]. Since most facilities already exist there will be no need to demolish houses for construction”.³⁹

(b) Escalation in housing costs

London

Before London had officially been selected to host the 2012 Olympic Games, many residents expressed fears that hosting the Olympic Games would result in real estate speculation and lead to secondary displacements due to dramatically increasing rents. The suburb of Newham (a site for one of the Olympic venues) is among the most affordable areas in London in which to buy property, and there were widespread concerns over rising rents and landlords evicting tenants if London’s bid were successful. Prices had risen in the London area even prior to the announcement that its bid had been successful. The effect of the announcement is described below in Section 3.7.4.

Madrid

Madrid was in a different position to the other Candidate Cities as it already had a surplus of housing. There were 300,000 empty houses in Madrid, and construction of new homes was continuing unabated.⁴⁰ Despite the excess supply, however, Madrid also suffered from a shortage of affordable housing, and housing advocates in Madrid insisted that Madrid needed *affordable* housing much more than it needed further construction fuelled by Olympic speculation.⁴¹ Despite the fact that rents in Madrid were already the highest of any city in Spain, it was reported that they rose four-fold over a period of two years prior to the selection of the 2012 Host City in areas earmarked as sites for Olympic Games events or facilities.⁴² The simple announcement that Olympic facilities would be constructed if the bid were successful induced rent increases in the surrounding areas. The areas in the vicinity of the planned Olympics site included San Blas and Villaverde. These areas were inhabited by middle-income residents and working class neighbourhoods,⁴³ and it was predicted that the increase in rents would be likely to force the current residents out of those areas.

New York

Escalation in housing costs related to the prospect of the Olympic Games was a problem in New York City before the decision to elect London as the 2012 Host City. Prices for property in Brooklyn are said to have increased five-fold during the period leading up to the announcement of the Host City, and this was said to have been exacerbated by speculation related to the Olympic Games.⁴⁴ Along the waterfront in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, the area in which the swimming and beach volleyball venues were to have been located, the city faced opposition from community groups concerned about rising rents. Brooklyn Borough President Markowitz believed that the rezoning plan for the

³⁹ COHRE telephone interview with Charlotte Nenner, Green Party, 6 June 2005.

⁴⁰ COHRE email correspondence with Angeles Nieto, Ecologistas en Accion, 26 May 2005.

⁴¹ COHRE email correspondence with Carolina del Olmo, Asociacion Ladinamo, 30 May 2005.

⁴² COHRE email correspondence with Angeles Nieto, Ecologistas en Accion, 26 May 2005.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ COHRE telephone interviews with local activists, June 2005.

area was geared towards upper-income people:⁴⁵ “More steps must be taken to protect residents from being priced out of the neighbourhood”.

(c) Reduction in the availability of social and low cost housing

London

Most of London’s proposed Olympics sites, from north Newham to Manor Park, Leyton, Homerton and Hackney Wick, are sites with a major concentration of relatively cheap private rented housing.⁴⁶ This affordable housing is a rarity in a city like London, and is relied upon by thousands of people on low and average incomes. It is widely feared that the Olympic Games will therefore result in a reduction of the total stock of affordable housing in London.

According to London’s Advisory Services to Squatters, “social housing promised by the [London] Olympic Village legacy will not be available in time to be of use to those who lose their homes and is unlikely to provide sufficient housing to compensate for a huge loss of rented housing in the area.”⁴⁷ In addition, the use of the term ‘social housing’ in the London Bid was considered by many to be vague. There were fears the social housing envisioned in London’s bid would not in fact be available to the majority of low wage workers who live and work in the affected areas, but would rather prioritise the ‘modestly prosperous’.⁴⁸ Low income workers would not be able to remain living in the redeveloped areas and the Olympic Games would therefore precipitate an entire social transformation of those areas. The London Civic Forum recommended that:

“It is not enough that the Bid Document state that 50% of new housing in East London and on the Olympic site will be affordable. It should define ‘affordable’ and state how this goal is to be achieved.”⁴⁹

Madrid

Although Madrid’s bid had promised to ‘protect’ half of the Olympic Games accommodation and social housing was also mentioned in Madrid’s bid, some feared that the authorities would not have fulfilled their promise if the bid had been successful. A change in the intended use of Olympic Games accommodation had already happened in Barcelona, when housing was subsequently allocated for luxury use, and there were concerns that this would happen again. Some cautioned that the commitments made by Madrid regarding social housing should be considered nothing more than a ‘declaration of intention’ since the Bid Committee did not have the support of the private sector or the budget to make good on its promises.⁵⁰

Paris

⁴⁵ Graham Rayman, ‘Olympic talks make waves’, *Newsday* (27 Feb. 2005).

⁴⁶ Jim Patton, ‘Advisory Services for Squatters’ (2005).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Elenora Galloni, *An Olympic Legacy for Londoners: An analysis of the legacy planning for the proposed 2012 Olympics and Paralympics: Summary Report and Recommendations* (London: London Civic Forum, 2004).

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 4.

⁵⁰ COHRE email correspondence with Carolina del Olmo, Asociacion Ladinamo, 30 May 2005.

The Paris Bid Committee also indicated its intention that after the Olympic Games, the Paris Olympic Village would become a mixed-use area. Forty percent of the total housing would be ‘social housing’, with price controls including protections against inflation.

New York

New York City made a commitment to provide for ‘inclusionary zoning’, which ensured that 20 percent of new developments would consist of affordable housing. In the long run, however, this would have led to a net loss of affordable housing, because the amount of affordable housing to be gained as a result of Olympics related development was still less than the amount of affordable housing that would have been lost as a result of Olympics related construction. Moreover, ‘affordable’ housing in this context meant housing that would have been available only to those on incomes over \$100,000 per year: “This is not generally considered as low-income revenue.”⁵¹

(d) Displacements of businesses

London

Businesses in London also faced the prospect of displacement as part of the Olympic Games preparations. According to a press release by the opposition group ‘No London 2012’, 5,542 jobs would have to be relocated. Compulsory purchase letters had already been sent out to 284 Lower Lea Valley firms by the beginning of 2005.⁵² Businesses from Marshgate Lane Estate in Stratford protested that compensation packages offered for expropriations were too low, being 20 percent to 30 percent less than original prices paid for land.⁵³ Companies from Marshgate Lane Business Group alleged they were being “blackmailed into moving out of the area.”⁵⁴ Lawyer Mark Stephens claimed “it is obviously contrary to Olympic ideals to enter into the most aggressive method of acquiring property – namely compulsory purchase.”⁵⁵ The LDA was accused of offering “derisory” compensation that made it impossible for business owners to buy new premises.⁵⁶ The Marshgate Lane Business Group argued that the LDA had allocated £450 million to relocate all the businesses when professional advisers to the businesses have estimated that the real cost will be more than £1.5 billion.⁵⁷

New York

If it had been selected to host the 2012 Olympic Games, New York City would also have faced problems with the displacement of businesses. According to John Fisher, President of the Clinton Special District Coalition, the New York Bid Committee was constantly trying to diminish the value of neighbourhoods.⁵⁸ By claiming that the Olympic Games

⁵¹ COHRE email correspondence with John Fisher, Clinton Special District Coalition, New York, 20 May 2005.

⁵² Jim Patton, ‘Advisory Services for Squatters’ (2005).

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Mark Stephens, ‘London 2012 Proposed Stadium Has Set Back’, www.gamesbid.com (20 Apr. 2005).

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ David Smith, ‘2012 Bid News: Businesses Withdraw London Support’, www.sportbusiness.com (6 May 2005).

⁵⁸ COHRE email correspondence with John Fisher, Clinton Special District Coalition, New York, 20 May 2005

venues were to be located on vacant and abandoned land, the New York Bid Committee was implying that the areas had little, if any, value. However the sites were actually home to numerous industries. For instance, in Northern Manhattan, there is a Federal Express Terminal, an important business resident in terms of taxes. This neighbourhood is also a location for gas tanks, small enterprises and warehouses. “Those are not pretty, but they are necessary”.⁵⁹ Fisher alleged that this suggestion of worthlessness was intended to facilitate expropriation. Moreover, the proposed Olympic Games site on Manhattan’s West Side is far from being a “wasteland”.⁶⁰ It has warehouses, slaughterhouses, and railroads. There is extensive infrastructure on the site, in addition to people who live there. Some of the industrial facilities had been converted into artists’ workshops, small law offices, and photography and TV studios. “This is valuable, it generates activity and revenue, it is just different than the kind of activity Olympic developers wish to see.”⁶¹

There were more examples of local businesses in other areas of New York City that were affected by the Olympic Games bid. For example, a unique exotic fruit market, the Bronx Terminal Market, was intended to be sacrificed to make way for the construction of a mall, an Olympic velodrome and a badminton arena, causing merchants to relocate and leading to hundreds of workers, most of them migrants from West Africa, losing their jobs.⁶² Relocation proved unsatisfactory, and compensation was considered insufficient to enable merchants to re-establish their businesses.⁶³ “They are the people who should be assisted and encouraged, not summarily thrown out of their businesses to facilitate a sweetheart development deal and an Olympic facility.”⁶⁴

(e) Discrimination

London

In London, concerns were expressed about likely increases in discrimination due to the hosting of the Olympic Games. According to the ‘Campaign against Criminalising Communities’: “police powers have been used disproportionately against ethnic minorities for a long time” and such practices were expected to continue⁶⁵ There were fears that the London bid could exacerbate racism and that anti-terror laws would be used to harass local people and activists in order to prevent any attempts at protest.

New York

A similar concern existed in New York City, as most neighbourhoods proposed as Olympics sites were inhabited by minority groups.⁶⁶ Thus ethnic minorities would have been the group most affected by displacements. “The area is like a village, it is an

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Tom Robbins, Market-Rate Giveaway, *Village Voice* (22 May 2005).

⁶³ Ibid. The 23 businesses with 900 employees sued Related, the enterprise that acquired the site, in an attempt to stop their eviction: Graham Rayman, ‘City largesse in Bronx deal revealed’, *Newsday* (22 Mar. 2005).

⁶⁴ Adrian Zuckerman, Partner at New York law firm Lowenstein Sandler, as quoted in Rayman, *ibid.*

⁶⁵ Les Lebidow, ‘Campaign against Criminalizing Communities’, *No London 2012*, press release (14 Feb. 2005).

⁶⁶ COHRE telephone interview with Philip de Paola, People’s Firehours, New York, 20 May 2005.

ethnically diverse community”.⁶⁷ Many residents were concerned these areas would undergo a gentrification process and that the Olympics Games would change the entire social profile of these neighbourhoods.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

3. Transparency and participation of civil society in the bid process

London

London's Bid Committee proved receptive to demands from citizen associations. In September 2004 the London Civic Forum⁶⁸ produced its positive analysis of the potential legacy of the Olympic Games, and expressed its support on the basis that it believed the Olympic Games would be a catalyst for urban renewal and civil engagement.⁶⁹ However, it questioned the definition of 'affordable' housing offered by the Bid Committee. The London Civic Forum also noted that some local organisations wanted at least 60 percent of the Olympic housing designated land, including the Olympic village, to be handed over to a 'Community Land Trust' to ensure its post-Olympics use as affordable housing.

Following dialogue with London Citizens,⁷⁰ the Bid Committee included in its candidature file a commitment to designate 50 percent of the Olympic village for affordable housing and to release some land to the Community Land Trust.⁷¹

The LDA also commissioned Fluid, a consulting company, to carry out a survey with each of the affected residents of Clay's Lane regarding their housing needs. The LDA later ignored the survey results, and replaced it with a more restricted one, leading residents to argue that the process raised expectations unrealistically.⁷²

Madrid

By contrast, groups opposing the Olympics bid by Madrid faced difficulties in making their voices heard in the face of overwhelming and unanimous support for the Olympic Games from the media, the government and the left wing opposition. For example, the media refused to publish a bulletin by *Ecologistas en Accion* concerning the poor air quality in Madrid before the visit of the IOC Evaluation Commission.⁷³

New York

While New York's bid and the IOC Evaluation Commission's Report both declared there was no opposition to New York City's candidature, on the contrary numerous groups had expressed discontent with the bid. For example, the IOC and the New York City Olympic Bid Committee ignored community groups and activists opposed to New

⁶⁸ London Civic Forum represents over 1,000 organisations from the private sector, public institutions, voluntary and community organisations, faith groups and minority communities. It seeks to strengthen the role of civil society and ensure that all Londoners are given a voice on issues affecting them. See further www.londoncivicforum.org.uk.

⁶⁹ Elenora Galloni, *An Olympic Legacy for Londoners: An analysis of the legacy planning for the proposed 2012 Olympics and Paralympics: Summary Report and Recommendations* (London: London Civic Forum, 2004), p 1-2.

⁷⁰ COHRE conversation with Neil Jameson, of London Citizens, 6 June 2005.

⁷¹ The Community Land Trust builds homes and sells them for a price which does not include the price of land. This helps to make the homes more affordable.

⁷² COHRE Conversation with Debby Kennet, London Traveller Unit, 8 June 2005; Julian Cheyne, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/258), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>, para. 5.6.

⁷³ COHRE email correspondence with Carolina del Olmo, Asociacion Ladinamo, 30 May 2005.

York's bid during their evaluation visit.⁷⁴ Provisions for a series of hearings were made, named Urban Land Use Review Procedure, but the board members were chosen by City officials and did not include representatives of the dissenting community.⁷⁵ In addition, community groups tried to make contact with the IOC directly three times, but were redirected to the New York City Bid Committee, which set onerous conditions for meeting.

A demonstration against the Olympic Games was also organised in Brooklyn during the visit of the IOC Evaluation Commission, but the IOC Evaluation Commission did not go to Brooklyn.⁷⁶ In the bid preparation process, six alternative plans were proposed by community groups, but none were considered by New York City Bid Committee or by the Mayor.⁷⁷ One of them was called the 'Unity Plan', which proposed the use of large areas of undeveloped rail yards. According to the activists behind this proposal, the 'Unity Plan' would not have affected jobs or people. It also provided for affordable housing that would have benefited the neighbourhood. By contrast, developer Bruce Ratner's plan (the plan ultimately put forward in New York City's Olympic bid) envisioned office towers 60 stories high at a time when Brooklyn's office vacancy rate was already 11 percent. Further, in Williamsburg, where the swimming venue was planned to be located, 400 people were to be evicted through the exercise of the government's eminent domain powers.⁷⁸

Paris

There was comparatively less opposition to the Olympics bid in Paris and no groups in particular opposed the bid on the basis of housing issues. Those expressing concerns about Paris' bid were ecologists and anti-globalisation activists. One focus of criticism was that the funds to be used to stage the Olympics were to be diverted from other uses, such as helping homeless people.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ 'International Olympic Committee snubs NYC Bid Protesters; Denies request to meet with BID opponents; meets with supporters instead', *Hellskitchen* (24 Feb. 2005).

⁷⁵ COHRE email correspondence with John Fisher, Clinton Special District Coalition, New York, 20 May 2005.

⁷⁶ COHRE telephone interview with Patti Hagan, Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn, Brooklyn, 31 May 2005.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ COHRE telephone interview with Philip de Paola, People's Firehours, New York, 20 May 2005.

⁷⁹ Jean-Michel Pinon, 'Non de gauche à Paris 2012', www.agitateur.org (24 Mar. 2005).

4. Conclusions regarding the 2012 Candidate Cities and the consideration of housing rights concerns

[B]idding for the [2012] Olympic Games is also proving to be a catalyst for the regeneration of city areas, accelerated construction of general infrastructure... showing the unique nature and influence of the Olympic Games.

IOC Evaluation Commission⁸⁰

The Report of the IOC Evaluation Commission clearly shows that no housing or other social criteria were applied by the IOC in the selection process: none of the key housing issues discussed in this study is mentioned in the Evaluation Commission's Report. While recognising the way in which the Olympic Games acts as a 'catalyst' for urban regeneration, the report does not comment on progressive measures that cities such as Madrid, Paris, and London were taking to forge a positive legacy of social housing. Indeed, the measures proposed by London, Madrid and Paris to provide some degree of social housing could have contributed to refocusing the Olympic Games legacy. It is therefore regrettable that the IOC did not commend, or even acknowledge, these provisions for social housing, especially as they were included in the bids on the initiative of the cities themselves. Such progressive initiatives should be encouraged and favoured, not ignored.

Despite London's progressive stance on social housing and best practices in communication with opposition groups and civil society, the impact of the Olympic Games on housing (in terms of evictions and displacements) is significant. Holding the 2012 Olympics in either London or New York would force hundreds of people out of their neighbourhoods, and displace businesses, causing many to lose their employment, and putting further strain on their ability to enjoy adequate housing. The bids from Madrid and Paris appeared to entail no direct evictions and potentially fewer secondary displacements.

In relation to the important consideration of housing affordability, it should be noted that rising rents can have multiplier effects on the enjoyment of the right to housing and can lead to large-scale secondary displacements. Such concerns are common among residents in the potentially affected areas of each Candidate City. It appears from our research that each Candidate City would have experienced some form of increase in housing costs (and decrease in housing affordability) as a consequence of the Olympic Games. The Candidate Cities did not propose any measures to address this issue, and the IOC did not require that any such measures be proposed.

While many of the bids mentioned the participation of civil society and the transparency of the bid process, on the whole, activists and community organisers told a different story. COHRE's research shows community activism and concerns were at best placated and at worst totally ignored in the bidding process.

⁸⁰ IOC, 'Report of the IOC Evaluation Commission (2005), p.5.

III. London's preparations for the 2012 Summer Olympic Games and the impact on housing

1. Background to London's hosting of the 2004 Games

On 6 July 2005, at the IOC's 117th Session, London was elected to host the Games of the XXX Olympiad in 2012. This section considers some of the housing impacts already being felt by vulnerable groups in London in light of the preparations the city is undertaking.

For those familiar with the experiences of past Olympic Host Cities detailed in the preceding sections, the description of London's plans to use the Olympic Games to re-urbanise its eastern suburbs sounds frighteningly familiar. The official London 2012 plans explain that the focus of the London Olympic Games will be a new Olympic Park to be constructed in an area that was "carefully chosen ... because of the enormous positive regeneration legacy it offers". The plans go on to explain:

"The Park lies within some of the UK's most disadvantaged boroughs; the Games will herald major changes for them. They will become home to the largest urban park in Europe for over 150 years, the size of Hyde Park. Waterways will be revived and new wildlife habitats created. After the Games the Park will be home to world-class sporting facilities for elite and community use, including an Aquatics Centre, a Velopark, a Hockey facility and a new multi-sport venue. A range of transport improvements are already underway, with an extension to the Docklands Light Railway opened and capacity on the Jubilee Line serving the Park increased. Economically, the area will be transformed. Up to 12,000 new jobs will be created in the Park alone. The Olympic Village, where the athletes will stay during the Games, will be converted into apartments, many available for key workers such as teachers and nurses. In all 9,000 new homes will be built within the Park. Many of the facilities in the Park will remain for use by local communities. The Park will significantly contribute to the regeneration and development of east London and the wider Thames Gateway."⁸¹

Regeneration is not necessarily a cause for concern in itself; on the contrary, it can be used as a positive way to enhance housing standards and the overall enjoyment of housing rights. However, as the case studies of other Olympic Games Host Cities outlined above have shown, in the context of the Olympic Games, regeneration has too often been used as a tool for displacement, evictions and increases in the housing costs resulting in housing unaffordability. Further, implementation of regeneration and reurbanisation processes has usually disproportionately affected marginalised and particularly vulnerable groups. It is therefore a concern that the London plans do not appear to include any reference to the need to displace or evict existing residents, nor do they include details of any relocation or compensation arrangements that will be made to ensure that the housing rights of those likely to be affected will not be violated.

Impact studies and assessments commissioned by Olympic Games authorities have failed to adequately address housing aspects. The *Olympic Games Impact Study: Final Report* prepared by PriceWaterhouseCoopers at the request of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, listed housing as one of many environmental impacts (excluding

⁸¹ 'A massive boost for East London', *London 2012*, <http://www.london2012.org/en/ourvision/regeneration/transforming+the+east+end.htm>

housing considerations from the social or economic impacts).⁸² While it identified the clear levels of existing deprivation in terms of housing in the Olympic areas, it classified the impact on housing in the Lower Lea Valley area during the pre-event period as 'slightly-negative', during the event itself as 'neutral', and during the legacy/post-event phase as 'positive'. The latter assessment seems to be based solely on the fact that 3,600 new houses are scheduled to be built as part of the Olympic village. The 'slightly negative' pre-Olympic assessment was not based on concerns about displacements and evictions, but rather on factors such as deterioration in air quality and expected increases in road traffic during the construction of the new facilities. It is interesting to note that the London Health Commission and London Sustainable Development Commission ordered the preparation of a Health Impact Assessment, which resulted in a thorough analysis of the potential impacts of the Olympic Games on health in London, including factors such as housing.⁸³ It is regrettable that a similar study was not commissioned to specifically address the housing impacts of the Olympic Games.

At this early stage, still five years before the Olympic Games will be held, most of the housing effects that are evident relate directly to relocations of residents and businesses for construction of Olympics facilities. One area in particular where the housing effects of the Olympic Games preparations are already being felt is at Clay's Lane, where a number of residents and businesses face eviction as a direct result of the construction of the Olympic village, and the business district of Stratford which is on the site of the future Olympic Park.

(a) Housing in London: main features

London is a city with a young and growing population which is ethnically and culturally diverse. Its composition is changing rapidly in part because of the large numbers of migrants and asylum seekers who are making their home there. The number of foreign migrants has increased threefold in the last decade.⁸⁴ London is also already a top global tourist destination. These factors put great strain on its housing sector.⁸⁵ The city's diverse nature, its fast changing composition, and the polarisation between rich and poor, means that many are excluded and marginalised in their ability to access adequate housing. Each of these factors also adversely affects housing affordability.

A study published by the Greater London Authority (the main housing authority in the city) in May 2003 concluded that housing related issues are presently the most serious issues affecting the lives of Londoners and the London economy in general.⁸⁶ The report blamed market failure for the shortage of affordable housing for low income earners. The housing market in the United Kingdom has been expanding rapidly since the 1990s: "the past seven years have seen ... a house price boom stronger than in any other major

⁸² PricewaterhouseCoopers, *Olympic Games Impact Study: Final Report* (London: Department for Culture Media and Sport, 2005), pp. 17-18.

⁸³ Andrew Buroni, *Rapid Health Impact Assessment of the Proposed London Olympic Games and Their Legacy: Final report* (London: Environmental Resources Management, 2004).

⁸⁴ Greater London Authority (GLA), *Housing in London: the London housing strategy evidence base 2005* (London: GLA, 2005), p. 19, <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/housing/evidencebase/evidencebase1-4.pdf>.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 6.

⁸⁶ GLA Economics, *Market failure and the London housing market* (London: GLA, 2003), http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/economic_unit/docs/london_housing_market.pdf

world economy”.⁸⁷ The price of houses, of virtually all kinds and in all locations, has increased drastically in recent years, leading the Lord Mayor’s office to describe the problem of housing affordability in London as being “acute, especially for first time buyers on low or moderate incomes”.⁸⁸ During the period from 1995 to the beginning of 2002, London’s average house prices rose by 149 percent,⁸⁹ and house price-to-income ratios are at historically very high levels.⁹⁰ The average London house costs almost seven times a teacher’s average annual salary and almost nine times an average nurse’s salary.⁹¹ On the back of this housing market boom, more and more British people are investing in the property market through ‘buy-to-let’. In 2006 new homes were being constructed at a faster rate than at any other time in the previous 17 years.⁹² Yet the construction of new homes has failed to keep up with the growing population.⁹³

The expansion of the property market has led to a crisis in housing supply, affecting especially the social or public housing sector which suffers from excess demand and increasing waiting lists.⁹⁴ The construction of new social housing has failed to keep up with the loss of stock that has come about as a result of programs like ‘Right to Buy’⁹⁵. In 1984, 35 percent of housing in London was public sector housing, whereas in 2005 this figure was 26 percent.⁹⁶ Fifty-nine percent of London’s housing is made up of owner-occupied households and 16 percent is privately rented.⁹⁷

The 2004 London Housing Requirements Study⁹⁸ found that there were over half a million households in unsuitable housing in London. Nearly 48 percent of households in London (1.4 million households) suffer so badly from housing unaffordability that they would be unable to afford housing without subsidies.⁹⁹ Such unaffordability particularly affects certain ethnic groups, in particular Bangladeshi, black African and other black communities.

Ethnic diversity in London is marked and in some boroughs minority ethnic groups make up more than 50 percent of the population.¹⁰⁰ In London, ethnicity has a large effect on the ability to enjoy the right to adequate housing. However, a study conducted by the Lord Mayor of London’s office shows that “factors such as nationality, culture, faith and immigration status may have a much greater impact on housing needs and

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ GLA, *Housing in London* (2005), p. 63.

⁸⁹ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), *Housing Market Outlook: London* (Ottawa: CMHC, 2006), p. 38.

⁹⁰ GLA Economics, *Market failure* (2003).

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 42.

⁹² GLA, *Housing in London* (2005), p. 60.

⁹³ Ibid. page 33.

⁹⁴ GLA Economics, *Market failure* (2003).

⁹⁵ ‘Right to Buy’ is a program targeted at tenants of council housing which enables them to purchase their public rental property. Since the introduction of the program in 1980, over 31 percent of the housing stock has been transferred into private ownership through this scheme. While there has been an increase in low-income homeowners, there are many instances of private companies encouraging tenants to buy and then taking over the properties to let at market rates. GLA, *Housing in London*, (2005), p. 40.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 31.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ GLA, *Greater London Housing Requirements Study* (London: GLA, Dec. 2004).

⁹⁹ GLA, *Housing in London* (2005), p. 64.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. p. 19.

aspirations than ethnicity alone.”¹⁰¹ International migration plays a large part in London’s ethnic diversity. The number of immigrant workers moving to London as the European Union expands has placed more pressure on the low cost housing market. Many immigrant workers rely upon privately rented accommodation, often on short tenancies.

Other disadvantaged and marginalised groups in London, and in Britain in general, are the Romani Gypsies and Irish Traveller populations. Gypsy and Traveller communities are protected in the United Kingdom under Section 225 of the *Housing Act 2004*. This legislation ensures that every local housing authority must assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their district. There are over 800 gypsy sites in London and its surrounding areas, including approximately 209 unauthorised encampments. Previously existing official sites have been progressively dismantled since the legislation was amended in 1994. The United Kingdom has been found in violation of the European Convention of Human Rights as a result of issues related to failures to provide adequate sites for Travellers.¹⁰²

Finally, there are over 11,000 statutorily homeless persons in London, and around 60,000 households in temporary accommodation.¹⁰³

Given this context, there are concerns about the possible link between London’s existing housing crisis – including the lack of affordable housing, decreases in social housing stock, the unsatisfactory nature of existing housing, and particular vulnerabilities of marginalised groups such as ethnic minorities, Gypsies and Travellers and the homeless – and the city’s susceptibility to escalations of these problems due to the Olympic Games.

(b) London’s Olympic authorities

London’s bid for the Olympics was coordinated by ‘London 2012’ and a multi-agency group comprised of the following stakeholders: the British Olympic Association (BOA); the Department for Culture, Media and Sport; the Government Office for London; the Greater London Authority (including the LDA and Transport for London).

Now that the bid has been won, the Olympic Games in London will be organised by the London 2012 Organising Committee, which is responsible for organising, publicising and staging the Olympic Games, and reporting to the IOC after the event. The creation of new venues and infrastructure and management of their legacy is the responsibility of the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA). The ODA is a public body authorised by an act of Parliament to buy, sell and hold land, and to make arrangements for building works, and the installation of transport and other infrastructure. It has been designated as the local planning authority for the areas surrounding the Olympic sites, and as such has control over all planning applications for the Olympic areas and their surrounds.¹⁰⁴ The ODA

¹⁰¹ GLA, *Capital Homes: London Housing Strategy 2005 – 2016, Report of the equality impact assessment* (London: GLA, 2006),

<http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/housing/eqia-report.pdf>

¹⁰² *Connors v. The United Kingdom* (Application No. 66746/01), Judgment of the European Court of Human Rights, 27 May 2004.

¹⁰³ New Policy Institute (NPI), *Estimating the Numbers of People in Housing Need and at Risk of Homelessness in London: A Report for the GLA* (London: NPI, 2004)

http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/housing/docs/housing_need.pdf

¹⁰⁴ See further London 2012, ‘ODA Planning Decisions Team’,

<http://www.london2012.org/en/ourvision/ODA/ODA+Planning/>

will build the Olympic village and manage the ‘venue legacy conversion’. It is working with a number of regional development agencies, other public bodies, the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation, and other companies.

The London 2012 Organising Committee’s £2 billion budget for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games will be raised almost entirely from the private sector.¹⁰⁵ The 2012 Olympic Games’ corporate sponsors (British Airways, British Telecom, Siemens and Microsoft) will also dominate much of the commercial side of the Olympic Games. A Public and Private Partnership arrangement will ensure that those enterprises sponsoring the construction and other work are partners in the Olympic Project along with other Olympic Games authorities.

It is expected that the 2012 Olympic Games and their preparations will provide London businesses with enormous possibilities for financial reward. The President of London’s Chamber of Commerce has predicted that: “The Games will produce a colossal one-off commercial boost to the entire country.”¹⁰⁶ London’s Olympic Games will be an important opportunity to attract investment from private companies, and will necessitate the involvement of many private enterprises, including building companies. It has been reported that share prices for construction and civil engineering firms likely to win contracts have already increased since the announcement that London was to host the Olympic Games.¹⁰⁷

(c) Implementing the preparations for the Olympic Games

London’s main Olympic Games venues include the new Olympic Park, as well as an Olympic stadium, a velodrome, an aquatics centre, the press centre, and the Olympic village. The majority of these facilities will be located in the Lower Lea Valley, an area comprised of sections from four London boroughs (Newham, Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Waltham Forest).

The Lower Lea Valley is a 1,500 acre expanse of light industrial land and contaminated waterways.¹⁰⁸ Its skyline is dominated by electricity pylons and car and rubble dumps. Despite these negative environmental factors, its proximity to central London, and its easy accessibility, makes the area an appealing location for many businesses and some residents.

The Lower Lea Valley is one of the most disadvantaged and underprivileged areas in Britain.¹⁰⁹ It has high levels of crime, and a higher than national average proportion of residents in the area suffer health problems and rely upon social security benefits. The

¹⁰⁵ See further London 2012 ‘Sponsorship - a vital part of a successful Games’

<http://www.london2012.org/en/gettinginvolved/Sponsorship/> There have been controversies over this budget of £2 billion, with the estimates having been revealed to be closer to £8 billion: Denis Campbell, ‘Revealed: the true cost of the Olympics’, *The Guardian* (19 Nov. 2006).

¹⁰⁶ Michael Cassidy, ‘British Business “Ecstatic” at the IOC’s Decision on 2012’, *London Chamber of Commerce*,

http://www.londonchamber.co.uk/lcc_public/article.asp?id=65&did=47&aid=1005&st=&coaid=-1

¹⁰⁷ Paul Bond and Daniel O’Flynn, “London Olympics 2012: corporate greed and privatisation”, World Socialist Web Site, 2 August 2005.

¹⁰⁸ Matthew Beard, ‘Family Firm Forced Out; Up in Smoke: The Firm that Lost Out in the Olympics’, *The Independent* (6 Oct. 2005); See also, Sean O’Hagan, ‘Remember Lea’, *The Observer* (23 Oct. 2005).

¹⁰⁹ Galloni, *An Olympic Legacy for Londoners* (2004).

area is marred by poor housing, high levels of unemployment and educational underachievement. It has been identified as one of the top-10 most deprived areas in the United Kingdom.

In 2002, the LDA¹¹⁰ targeted the Lower Lea Valley in its first corporate plan.¹¹¹ In the years since, London's bid and success at attracting the Olympic Games have focused the LDA's attention on this area. While the area was targeted for redevelopment and reurbanisation regardless of the success or failure of London's Olympics bid, it is believed that:

“The Olympic and Paralympic Games would speed up the rebirth of the Lower Lea Valley by six or seven years, cleaning up polluted land and reclaiming the area for the benefit of the whole of London.”¹¹²

¹¹⁰ The LDA is one of nine regional development agencies created under the Regional Development Agencies Act of 1998. Its mandate includes creating economic development through job growth, urban competitiveness, job training programs, and sustainable development.

¹¹¹ The London Development Agency (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) Compulsory Purchase Order 2005, Statement of the Case of the London Development Agency. This document is available at: http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/docs/Core_Documents/CD3.pdf

¹¹² Galloni, *An Olympic Legacy for Londoners* (2004); PriceWaterhouseCoopers, *Olympic Games Impact Study* (2005).

2. The 2012 Olympic Games: Preliminary impacts upon London

(a) Displacement and evictions from the Olympic site

In order to progress the plans for redeveloping the Lower Lea Valley, the LDA has been negotiating relocation options with residents and businesses currently located in the area. The LDA argued that the Olympic Games will bring much needed regeneration to the area, which would “far outweigh the effect upon those who own property or live in the area.”¹¹³ However these negotiations have taken place under the shadow of a compulsory purchase order (CPO). The LDA issued a CPO for the land to ensure its acquisition from those with whom it could not strike a deal. This CPO issued for the Olympics site is said to be the largest ever compulsory land acquisition programme in England.¹¹⁴ Once the LDA acquires the land, it will transfer it to the ODA, the official body charged with constructing Olympic venues and infrastructure.¹¹⁵

The main area affected by the CPO is Clay’s Lane, where 430 residents of the Clay’s Lane Housing Cooperative were issued with orders to leave by July 2007, as well as 15 families residing at an adjacent Romani Gypsy and Travellers site, who must leave by July or August 2007.¹¹⁶ The second key residential area affected by the CPO is a Gypsy and Travellers site at Waterden Crescent, in which 20 Irish Traveller families reside. They have been given several alternatives to their present site. The proposals involve splitting the community into four smaller sites.¹¹⁷ In addition, over 400 students from the University of East London were evicted in July 2005.

Over the course of the negotiations for the Lea Valley area and the related CPOs, businesses employing nearly 15,000 workers in total were also reportedly forced to move.¹¹⁸ In Stratford, 300 businesses were evicted in order to use the land on which they operated for the Olympic Park.¹¹⁹ In order to clear the path for the construction of the Olympic Stadium, companies employing over 5,000 staff were reportedly moved out of their establishments in the Marshgate Lane area.¹²⁰ Many of these businesses benefited from their proximity to central London, and the relocation sites offered were over 50 miles away from where they were originally located.¹²¹ The businesses argued that the LDA’s valuation of their land was made before news of the bid had inflated property prices in the area,¹²² and that the LDA’s proposed alternative sites would leave many of the businesses at a competitive disadvantage.¹²³ However, the vast majority of businesses

¹¹³ Bob Sherwood, ‘Inquiry Begins into Purchase of Olympics Land’, *The Financial Times* (London, England) (10 May 2006).

¹¹⁴ Matthew Beard, ‘Business on Olympic site fight to avoid eviction’, *The Independent* (13 Aug. 2005).

¹¹⁵ Ellen Widdup, ‘Caravan Families Stand in the Way of Olympics’, *Evening Standard* (8 May 2006).

¹¹⁶ John Sole, Clay’s Lane Housing Estate, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/308), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>.

¹¹⁷ Rebecca Taylor, ‘Fool’s Gold, Real Stories Behind the 2012 Olympics’, *Time Out* (31 May 2006).

¹¹⁸ Malcolm Moore, ‘Businesses on planned Olympic site vow to sue if London wins’, *The Daily Telegraph* (London) (4 July 2005).

¹¹⁹ Beard, ‘Business on Olympic’ (2005).

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Matheus Sanchez, ‘400 Stratford Residents Face Eviction to Make Way for 2012 Olympics’, *The Evening Standard* (London) (15 Nov. 2005); *See also*, Ben Leapman, ‘400 Residents, 280 Firms Ordered Off Olympic Site’, *The Evening Standard* (London) (16 Nov. 2005).

reached agreements with the LDA before the CPOs were issued.

Clay's Lane

The Clay's Lane estate evictions have become the most controversial aspect of London's Olympic Games preparations. The Clay's Lane Housing Cooperative is located in the Lower Lea Valley, which sits adjacent to Stratford City, three miles from central London. It was developed in the 1970s to provide cheap cooperative living quarters, in a combination of shared and self-contained accommodation, for single persons earning low wages.¹²⁴ It was constructed by the National Building Agency with a unique layout, specifically designed to sustain the institutions of a housing cooperative and to promote social interaction among residents.¹²⁵ It is the largest purpose-built development for single inhabitants in Northern Europe.

Clay's Lane estate also includes an authorised Caravan site in which English Romani Gypsies reside, some of whom have lived there since the early 1970s.¹²⁶ It is estimated that approximately 15 Traveller families are resident at the Clay's Lane Caravan Site.¹²⁷

Residents of Clay's Lane Housing estate enjoyed extremely low rents of between £46 and £69 per week, including service charges, energy costs, and Council taxes.¹²⁸ The complex has a permanent staff of five, and a maintenance staff of three.¹²⁹ Residents enjoy direct and indirect access to various open spaces, which are used for informal recreation. They also enjoy relatively close proximity to roads, local and coach bus stops, rail, light rail, and the Underground.¹³⁰ In fact, the existence of extensive transportation infrastructure is said to be one of the principal reasons that the LDA targeted this area for Olympics development projects.¹³¹

Residents of Clay's Lane were first approached by the LDA in 2004.¹³² While some members of the community apparently welcomed the opportunity to trade in their flats, the majority have not been satisfied with the LDA's relocation offers. Residents of Clay's Lane are among a group of parties that contested the CPO in a public inquiry conducted by the City of London. Almost 450 objections to the CPO were received before and during the public inquiry.¹³³ As part of the public inquiry process, an Inspector was appointed to review the evidence and make recommendations to the Secretary of State,

¹²⁴ John Sole, Clay's Lane Housing Estate, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/308), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>.

¹²⁵ Ben Leapman and Matheus Sanchez, "Mayor's Olympic Deal Rescues £4bn Plan for Stratford City Project," *The Evening Standard (London)* (15 Nov. 2005).

¹²⁶ Widdup, 'Caravan Families' (2006).

¹²⁷ Games Monitor, *Briefing Paper 1: Impact, Games Monitor*, (2006), available at www.gamesmonitor.org.uk [accessed 15 Sept. 2006].

¹²⁸ COHRE email correspondence with local residents, February 2007.

¹²⁹ Taylor, 'Fool's Gold' (2006).

¹³⁰ Julian Cheyne, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/258), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>, para. 3.2.

¹³¹ Leapman, '400 Residents, 280 Firms' (2005).

¹³² Hellen William, 'Coe Quizzed Over Olympic Park Eviction Plans', *The Press Association Newsfile* (11 May 2006).

¹³³ Decision of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the London Development Agency (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) Compulsory Purchase Order Inquiry (18 Dec. 2006), para. 17, available at http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/docs/Final_Decision.pdf.

who then ruled on whether the CPO should be upheld.¹³⁴ In December 2006, the decision was announced: the CPO was upheld with some modifications and exclusions.¹³⁵ The importance of quickly acquiring the land, including Clay's Lane estate and the Waterden Crescent Travellers site, in order to prepare for the Olympic Games, outweighed the objections of residents and concerns about the evictions and the inadequacy of relocation options for residents who would be displaced.¹³⁶

In the letter communicating the Secretary of State's decision, it was explained that:

“[T]he benefits of hosting the Games and providing the catalyst to a lasting Legacy are likely to be immeasurable ... the Order is crucial to this [Olympic] timetable and [this] has ... been a factor to which [the Secretary of State] has attached considerable weight in his consideration of the objections ... [While] in order to achieve the benefits ... identified, a substantial group of residents would have to give up their homes and a number of businesses would be displaced... the Games represented a unique opportunity to secure benefits on an unimaginable scale which could not be realised in a less damaging way.”¹³⁷

With regards to the Gypsies and Travellers, whom the Secretary of State recognised “could be rendered homeless”, it was noted:

“The Secretary of State has considerable sympathy with those living at the Clays Lane and Waterden Crescent sites but ... he take[s] the view that the scale and extent of physical infrastructure required for the Olympic Games necessitates [the CPO] ... Therefore given the urgency, timing and importance of the Olympics and Legacy developments, he considers the acquisition of the gypsy and travellers' sites is vital in order to meet the requirements of the Olympic timetable.”¹³⁸

During the inquiry, residents explained that they were fearful of the uncertainty, and did not understand the logic of displacing a large group of longstanding residents in order to host a two week event.¹³⁹ Some residents were also worried that any new place they settle may not welcome their Traveller lifestyles.¹⁴⁰ One resident specifically complained that Romani Gypsies have special status under the *Race Relations Act 1976*, and that despite this they have often been placed in unsuitable living conditions.¹⁴¹ Three Travellers from the Clays Lane and Waterden Crescent Caravan sites challenged the issuance of the CPO as an unlawful interference with the right to private and family life, as protected under Article 8 of the *European Convention on Human Rights*.¹⁴² However on 3 May 2007, a high

¹³⁴ Jonathan Bunn, 'Inquiry into Olympic Row', *This Is Local London* (11 May 2006).

¹³⁵ Decision of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the London Development Agency (2006).

¹³⁶ Ibid, para. 19.

¹³⁷ Decision of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the London Development Agency (2006).

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Lily Smith, Clay's Lane Travellers Site, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/317), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Stephen Rowe, 'LDA Faces Opposition from Olympic Park Residents' (2005)

¹⁴² Saied Fatehi, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/250), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>. Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights provides: (1) Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence. (2) There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in

court judge ruled that although forcing the families to move was a “very significant interference” with their human rights, it was nevertheless proportionate considering the benefits of development for the Olympic Games.¹⁴³

In documents submitted for review during the public inquiry, Clay’s Lane residents complained at length regarding the LDA’s approach to dealing with their potential relocation. The inadequacy of the relocation options was also recognised in the CPO Decision.¹⁴⁴ For example, the LDA has not agreed to explain the CPO public inquiry process to residents, despite being requested to do.¹⁴⁵ Julian Cheyne, a tenant at Clay’s Lane, reported the following list of improper and allegedly illegal behaviour by city officials during the process: poor quality of information provided; imposition of a flawed advice/advocacy service in the Independent Tenants Liaison Advisor; the inequity of granting legal advice to businesses and private residential tenants - but not to Clay’s Lane; ignoring a survey conducted by a consulting company (Fluid), and replacing it with a more restricted one; general slowness; failure to research residents’ demands for changes; and changing and ignoring commitments.¹⁴⁶

The LDA originally promised that the community would be rehoused in homes “as good as or better than before”.¹⁴⁷ But in more recent documents from the LDA this language has been changed to “at least as good as residents currently have and as far as is reasonably practicable”.¹⁴⁸ Julian Cheyne has argued on behalf of the tenants at the Clay’s Lane Housing Cooperative that the original promises of the Mayor should be legally binding.¹⁴⁹

Some residents have allegedly already been pressured into moving to flats with which they are unhappy.¹⁵⁰ The issue of relocation remains unsettled, and residents fear that it will remain unsettled until they are forced out by bulldozers due to construction timelines.¹⁵¹

Much of the residents’ upset with various relocation offers is attributable to the fact that the offers have come about too slowly. Despite promises that they would be given a number of relocation options by 11 May 2006, they had only received one by that date.¹⁵² Mrs Lily Smith, one of the Travellers who submitted an affidavit at the public inquiry,

a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

¹⁴³ *Smith & Ors v Secretary of State for Trade and Industry* [2007] EWHC 1013 (03 May 2007); see further Rachel Williams, ‘Gypsies lose high court battle over Olympic sites’, *The Guardian* (4 May 2007).

¹⁴⁴ Decision of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the London Development Agency (2006), para. 32 and 33.

¹⁴⁵ Sanchez, ‘400 Stratford Residents Face Eviction’ (2005).

¹⁴⁶ Julian Cheyne, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/258), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>, para. 5.6.

¹⁴⁷ Sanchez, ‘400 Stratford Residents Face Eviction’ (2005).

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ Julian Cheyne, blog entry at: <http://forum.insidehousing.co.uk/shwmessage.aspx?ForumID=9&MessageID=75>.

¹⁵⁰ Bunn, ‘Inquiry into Olympic Row’ (2006); Sherwood, ‘Inquiry Begins’ (2006).

¹⁵¹ Lily Smith, Clay’s Lane Travellers Site, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/317), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>.

¹⁵² Saied Fatehi, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/250), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>.

has said that she would not oppose relocation if the proposed alternatives met her needs.¹⁵³ Other residents have submitted affidavits in which they argued that relocation proposals did not take into account the low rent, the inclusion of council taxes, and the security of tenure that they currently enjoy.¹⁵⁴ One resident has noted in an affidavit that the LDA must take into account factors other than the size of alternative accommodations.¹⁵⁵ The LDA had offered self-contained flats between 30 and 45 square metres in size; however, it did not take into account many of the other unique facets of the current accommodations at Clay's Lane, such as the high standard of design and quality, secluded location and ready access to lots of open space.¹⁵⁶ Other residents have focused on more specific problems that Clay's Lane residents would face should they be forced to move, such as losses of their proximity to doctors, the ease with which they can access public transportation, and their inherent closeness as a community.¹⁵⁷

By way of compensation, each of the residents relocated from the Clay's Lane Housing Cooperative will receive £8,500 to compensate for the loss of their house and to cover relocation expenses.¹⁵⁸ Each of the Gypsy and Traveller residents (35 families) will receive a similar amount as a 'disturbance fee'.

With regard to the Traveller communities, the LDA's first relocation offer was a parking lot in Beckton, which is bordered by industrial land, a rubbish dump, and the Thames, and is also close to a roundabout of the busy A13 road.¹⁵⁹ Two alternative sites were proposed, another in Beckton, and one in Leyton Road. Residents had identified a third potential site. Residents have themselves identified a third potential site.¹⁶⁰ The CPO Decision recognises that the latter options "may have shortcomings as a suitable relocation site".¹⁶¹ Some also see the relocation as a questioning of their Traveller lifestyle.¹⁶² However, the LDA has decided that the Clay's Lane Travellers will be relocated nearby to Major Road Park, Newham, despite opposition from the Travellers, as well as the local community. The site currently contains a children's playground and green space used by local residents. It is also surrounded by four busy roads.¹⁶³

"We are being forced to move to a place we don't want to go and local people don't want us. I feel we will be hated by local people for something we don't even want. I am very worried for my children and how this

¹⁵³ Lily Smith, Clay's Lane Travellers Site, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/317), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at:

<http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>.

¹⁵⁴ Saied Fatehi, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/250), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at: <http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>.

¹⁵⁵ John Sole, Clay's Lane Housing Estate, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/308), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at:

<http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>.

¹⁵⁶ John Sole, Clay's Lane Housing Estate, *Proof of Evidence* (OBJ/308), The LDA (Lower Lea Valley, Olympic and Legacy) CPO Inquiry, available at:

<http://www.persona.uk.com/olympics/objectorsproofs.htm>, para. 7.13.1.

¹⁵⁷ Leapman and Sanchez, 'Mayor's Olympic Deal Rescues £4bn Plan' (2005).

¹⁵⁸ Denis Campbell, 'Gypsy fury over £2,200 Olympic Clearance Payout', *The Observer* (24 Dec. 2006); COHRE email correspondence with local residents, February 2007.

¹⁵⁹ Jonathan Bunn, 'Olympics Could Force Travellers to Move to Car Park', *This Is Local London* (13 Dec. 2005); Widdup, 'Caravan Families' (2006).

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Decision of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on the London Development Agency (2006).

¹⁶² Sherwood, 'Inquiry Begins' (2006).

¹⁶³ Duncan Campbell, 'Travellers go to court over eviction to make way for Olympic village', *The Guardian* (12 Mar. 2007).

will be for them.”
Sylvia Smith, resident of Clays Lane Caravan Site¹⁶⁴

(b) Escalation in housing costs and secondary displacements and evictions

“This is a major concern for some people in the East End of London, who fear that Olympics-led regeneration of the area will make the area as unaffordable as everywhere else in the London area, particularly for key workers and other workers on low incomes.”
Louise Every, Institute for Public Policy Research¹⁶⁵

The announcement of London’s decision to bid for the Olympic Games fuelled an increase in housing prices in the relevant areas. This situation has only escalated since London was announced as the Host City for the 2012 Games, leading journalists to report that “[p]roperty developers and estate agents have been predicting medal-winning performances for housing markets in the Olympic zone ever since London’s successful bid.”¹⁶⁶ During the latter months of 2005, property prices in the areas surrounding the Olympics site had increased between 1.4 percent and 4.6 percent on the back of the announcement of London’s winning bid, while prices across London were in general down by 0.2 percent.¹⁶⁷

There are concerns that because the neighbourhoods where the Olympics site is positioned are some of the most affordable in London (for both buyers and renters), they are prime candidates for price escalation, which will drastically affect the current affordability of these areas. For example, much of the Lower Lea Valley area is already a popular ‘buy-to-let’ investment zone, with a high proportion of tenanted properties.

Residents on short term private tenancies are likely to bear the brunt of the effects of rising property values, either through terminations or non-renewals of their tenancies by landlords wishing to capitalise on the increased property values, and/or potentially higher than average increases in rent over the coming years. Those priced out of the market will be forced to relocate to other areas, with flow on effects on their ability to access work and livelihood opportunities.

(c) Reduction in the availability of social and low cost housing

London’s Olympic village will house up to 17,000 athletes during the Olympic Games. Afterwards, it will be converted into 3,600 homes with ‘guaranteed legacy use’ as affordable housing for ‘key occupations’ (such as teaching and nursing).¹⁶⁸

It is planned that after the Olympic Games, a total of 9,100 new housing units will be constructed on former Olympics sites by 2020 under the Olympic Legacy Development plan.¹⁶⁹ This will include 4,300 units from the former Athletes’ village which will be

¹⁶⁴ Games Monitor, *Briefing Paper 1* (2006).

¹⁶⁵ COHRE email correspondence with London Gypsy and Traveller Unit, 17 May 2007.

¹⁶⁶ David Budworth, ‘Landlords chase Olympic gold’, *The Sunday Times* (16 Oct. 2005).

¹⁶⁷ David Budworth, ‘Olympic boost for East End property prices’, *The Times* (17 Oct. 2005).

¹⁶⁸ See further <http://www.london2012.org/>

¹⁶⁹ Galloni, *An Olympic Legacy for Londoners* (2004), p 3.

converted into a mixed residential community. One thousand, four hundred units in the north western area of the Olympic site and the Bow Lane Industrial Estate will also form part of a mixed use area, and 3,800 new units from the southern part of the Olympics site will become new housing neighbourhoods. However, research shows some discrepancy in the promised number of new housing units.

Given the loss of 150 units from the Clay's Lane estate, the projected new housing construction should result in a considerable overall increase in housing. However, it may result in a decrease in affordable housing in the area.¹⁷⁰ Less than 50 percent of the new housing will be 'affordable', and of this, only about 30 percent may end up reserved for social housing, which will itself become more expensive.¹⁷¹ Student accommodation is being included within the 'affordable housing' bracket, further reducing the amount of affordable housing actually available to families. Questions have also been raised about whether the 'affordable housing' components promised will become even more susceptible to real estate speculation given the housing shortage in London.¹⁷²

*"[R]egeneration might just lead to a change in the composition of the local communities, through a classic process of gentrification such as other Olympic cities have experienced. The bid said the Olympics would be a one-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the local community. This might prove true: it just depends on what the local community looks like. ... The Games are meant to lead a regeneration that is not only made for local people, but is also inclusive of local people."*¹⁷³
Fabien Vaujany, University of East London

(d) Marginalised groups affected

The groups affected by the displacements and relocations in London are predominantly low income earners and ethnic minorities, including Gypsies and Travellers. For example, the Clay's Lane Travellers site is inhabited by English Romani Gypsies, and Waterden Crescent is inhabited by a group of Irish Travellers. Due to the high concentration of Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers residing at the Olympics sites, these groups are likely to be the most affected by the redevelopment proposals.

(e) Legal measures taken as part of the Olympic preparations

*"I am worried the police are going to get heavier, there's going to be more stop and search and it will be worse for Blacks and Asians – they really going to have a hard time, especially the youth."*¹⁷⁴
Stratford resident

¹⁷⁰ Fabien Vaujany, 'Hardly Heroic: Olympics Housing Plans', *University of East London: Rising East Online* Issue No. 3 (2006).

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Paul Bond and Daniel O'Flynn, 'London Olympics 2012: corporate greed and privatisation', *World Socialist Web Site*, 2 Aug. 2005.

¹⁷³ Vaujany, 'Hardly Heroic' (2006).

¹⁷⁴ Comment made by a Stratford resident during a focus group conducted by the University of East London as part of a project to monitor and evaluate the impact of the London Games: Phil Cohen and Iain MacRury, 'Hopeful or worried but not yet jumping for joy ...', *University of East London: Rising East Online*, Issue No. 2 (2005).

To date there has been little official public discussion of the new legal measures that will be taken as part of the Olympic Games preparations; for example, enhancement of police powers or restrictions on freedom of association and assembly. However, there are concerns that pre-existing police powers and anti-terror legislation could be used generally for this purpose, and that such powers could and would be used disproportionately against ethnic minorities and to harass or threaten local people and activists in order to prevent protests.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ See, for example, Carolyn Smith, 'Intensification of policing, civil liberties implications', *Games Monitor*, (27 Dec. 2006), available at www.gamesmonitor.org.uk.

3. Community activism during London's Olympic preparations

"There has been no option to say no. There has been a suppression of any dissent, a diktat 'thou shalt back the bid'.

Annie Chipchase, NoLondon2012¹⁷⁶

Both the London Bid Committee and the IOC Evaluation Commission noted that there was no organised public opposition to hosting the 2012 Olympic Games in London.¹⁷⁷ However, at least two public demonstrations took place in February 2006 at the time of the IOC visit to London, one organised by 'Critical Mass' and the other by 'No London 2012'.¹⁷⁸ Since the decision to award the hosting of the Olympic Games to London, the 'No London 2012' campaign has been taken over by the 'Games Monitor' network, and the 'No London 2012' website (www.nolondon2012.org), along with all of the electronic resources that it contained, was taken offline. The 'Games Monitor' website (www.gamesmonitor.org.uk) was established to scrutinise the Olympic Games preparations and their effects, especially on London's East End. 'Games Monitor' describes itself as "a network of people raising awareness about issues within the London Olympic development processes",¹⁷⁹ seeking to highlight "international as well as local and London implications of Olympic processes".¹⁸⁰

*"Supporting London 2012 has been presented as some kind of national duty, and anyone questioning it – which is by no means the same as opposing it – thus becomes a traitor."*¹⁸¹

Fabien Vaujany, University of East London

Local researchers explain that:

"Officially, everyone supported the bid. However, those trying to challenge some issues of the bid, those raising concerns and worries, those wanting to actually discuss the bid, those not taking everything for granted have been ignored or strongly criticised."¹⁸²

At a community meeting on 'Olympic Mega-projects' in August 2005, local residents revealed that they had found the bid campaign to be "aggressive, undemocratic and neglectful of local communities".¹⁸³ A documentary, *The Bid* (by Agitate Films),¹⁸⁴ and a short film, *All that glitters* (by Noemi Rodriguez), have detailed the concerns of the local communities – sides of the Olympics story that have to date been left out.

Community and business leaders have also raised concerns directly with the IOC: in early 2005 companies wrote to the IOC to complain about their eviction from the Olympics sites, threatening also to protest publicly at the IOC Session in Singapore in 2005.¹⁸⁵ The 'No London 2012' group also sent a briefing document to IOC members in early 2005.

¹⁷⁶ As quoted in Rohrer, 'Saying no to London 2012' (2005).

¹⁷⁷ IOC, 'Report of the IOC Evaluation Commission (2005).

¹⁷⁸ London Action Resource Centre Archive of Events, available at http://www.londonarc.org/larc_archive2005.html

¹⁷⁹ www.gamesmonitor.org.uk

¹⁸⁰ Games Monitor, *Briefing Paper 1* (2006).

¹⁸¹ Vaujany, 'Hardly Heroic' (2006).

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid. The meeting took place at the Institute of Contemporary Art on 25 Aug. 2005.

¹⁸⁴ Available for viewing at www.agitatefilms.co.uk

¹⁸⁵ Beard, 'Business on Olympic' (2005).

4. Best practices emerging from London's Olympic preparations

Although it is far too early to draw many conclusions regarding best practices or positive outcomes from the 2012 Olympic Games, one aspect of London's Olympic Games preparations deserves highlighting as an example of best practice. In 2004, the London Health Commission and the LDA commissioned a private company (Environmental Resources Management) to undertake a rapid Health Impact Assessment of the 2012 London Olympic bid and the associated legacy plan.¹⁸⁶ This Health Impact Assessment provides a positive example for what could be undertaken in the area of housing, and begs the question why a similar study was not conducted to assess the potential impact of the Olympic Games on housing in London.

The Health Impact Assessment set out its objects as being to:

“[I]dentify the potential health impacts of the London Olympic Games ...; to support the development of health indicators to be applied [in the Olympic Games Impact Study]; and to identify potential means to mitigate health impacts and maximise health benefits.”¹⁸⁷

The rationale behind this report is that “[a]nalysis and management of the health impacts associated with the success of infrastructure projects has ... become as important as the management of environmental issues”.¹⁸⁸

The Health Assessment Impact explained that:

“[I]nternational magnitude and near perpetual nature of the Olympic Games makes them very suitable for Health Impact Assessment ... community susceptibilities and the inequalities within host nations, along with the potential impacts and benefits to the wider determinants of health, are not always considered prior to planning Olympic events. As a result, mitigation, health maximalisation options and subsequent health legacy opportunities are missed. A health impact assessment is therefore a logical progression for the Olympic movement, identifying potential impacts to host nations, removing or reducing negative impacts and maximising health benefits and legacy.”¹⁸⁹

It stated that:

“The health assessment of the proposed London Olympic Games provides an effective method for identifying, preventing and integrating health concerns into the Games, maximising local and regional legacy benefits, displaying an attitude consistent with the Olympic ethos, and promoting the London bid as being the first Organising Committee to provide a ‘Fourth Olympic Pillar’ of Health.”

One hardly needs to point out that each of these aspects could be equally relevant, necessary and accurate if the word ‘housing’ was used instead of, or as well as, the word ‘health’.

The Health Impact Assessment also included an analysis of the ways in which housing impacts upon health, using a comprehensive range of determinants including: quality of

¹⁸⁶ Buroni, *Rapid Health Impact* (2004).

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. pp. 4-5.

housing; distribution; overcrowding; affordability and ownership of homes.¹⁹⁰ It assessed the long term post-Olympic legacy impact of the Olympic Games on housing as being positive:

“As a mass of additional housing and residential areas will have been created through the Olympic Village and other new housing developments, the Legacy Masterplan aims to re-house the local population, increasing the availability of local affordable housing in the areas and massively improving their standard of living and quality of life.”¹⁹¹

However, it stated that some human displacement would be necessary in the preparatory stages, and that the Olympic Games would displace some local and travelling communities, potentially affecting their health and well-being.¹⁹²

While conducting a Health Impact Assessment is to be applauded, the absence of a similar assessment for housing is lamentable. Even if a Housing Impact Assessment were conducted, this identification tool would only be one step, it is equally important that measures be implemented to minimise or alleviate the identified impacts.

In terms of best practices, it should also be mentioned that the way in which most 2012 Candidate Cities set out social housing as a component of their legacy plans for the Olympic village is an important step forward in ensuring housing considerations are integrated into Olympic Games bids. It is disappointing that the IOC did not pay more attention to this aspect in their assessment of the bids, and that such initiatives on the part of the Candidate Cities were largely ignored in the selection process.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 36.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. p. 70.

¹⁹² Ibid. p. 77.

5. Preliminary conclusions regarding the housing impact of the 2012 London Olympic Games

“Under the Legacy proposals, East London is supposed to benefit from the Olympics. At the moment it is hard to see how Clays Lane residents are going to receive what has been promised to them. If the community which is demolished to make way for the Olympics does not benefit what hope for the rest of East London?”

Julian Cheyne, tenant at Clay’s Lane and campaign activist¹⁹³

The potential displacement of over 1,000 residents from their housing is already an important impact flowing from London’s successful bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games. The impact on Gypsy and Traveller communities is also of concern. The escalation of housing costs will inevitably change the composition of the communities currently residing in the Olympic areas, unless further steps are taken to ensure sufficient supplies of social housing and other forms of low cost and truly affordable housing.

Many of these early stage impacts resulting from the preparations for the Olympic Games are the direct result of the construction of the Olympics facilities. It is likely that other impacts will emerge over the next five years, and in the years following the Olympic Games in 2012. The key challenge faced by the London 2012 Organising Committee and all of the members of the Olympic Movement and others involved in hosting the London Olympic Games, will be to ensure that the potential negative effects are prevented or at least minimised, especially for marginalised communities.

¹⁹³ Julian Cheyne maintains a blog on the removal process, available at <http://forum.insidehousing.co.uk/shwmessage.aspx?ForumID=9&MessageID=75>.