



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
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BA (Hons) Business Management / Stakeholder Engagement
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Valya Borisova 2430598

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Introduction

The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Redevelopment in Stratford, East London, represents one of the largest and most influential urban regeneration projects in the United Kingdom. Originally constructed for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the site has since been transformed into a long-term legacy project overseen by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC). The redevelopment aims to create a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive district that provides new housing, public spaces, cultural facilities, transport connections and economic opportunities for the surrounding communities. Its relevance lies not only in its contribution to London's housing and infrastructure needs but also in its wider social objectives of reducing inequality, increasing employment and improving quality of life in one of the most diverse and historically deprived areas of the city.

The project supports London's strategic priorities for regeneration, including affordable housing development, environmental sustainability, and community wellbeing. According to Melhuish and Campkin (2017), the Olympic Park area was identified as a crucial site for promoting cultural and social regeneration due to its location across four boroughs—Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, each with high demographic diversity and significant socio-economic challenges. The transformation of the park into a long-term urban district has therefore become a key model for how major international events can generate lasting benefits for host cities.



Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Map (LLDC, 2024)

At least six major stakeholder groups benefit directly from the redevelopment:

1. *Local Residents* – Residents of the surrounding boroughs benefit from improved housing options, more accessible green spaces, new leisure facilities, and increased employment opportunities linked to local businesses and cultural venues.
2. *London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)* – As the main body responsible for delivering the legacy vision, LLDC benefits from achieving its strategic goal of creating a sustainable, socially inclusive urban district that reflects the commitments made during the 2012 Games.
3. *Local Councils (Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest)* – The councils gain from improved local infrastructure, enhanced public services, increased investment and improved quality of life for their communities.
4. *Developers and Investors* – Organisations involved in construction and commercial development benefit from new investment opportunities, large-scale building projects and long-term returns from residential and commercial properties.
5. *Cultural and Educational Institutions (e.g., UCL East, V&A East, Sadler's Wells East)* – These institutions gain access to high-quality facilities and a growing audience, while contributing to the park's cultural and educational identity.
6. *Local Businesses* – Small and medium-sized enterprises benefit from increased footfall, new customers, improved transport links and the economic stimulus generated by new residents and visitors.

Together, these stakeholders contribute to and benefit from a redevelopment project that aims to create a thriving, inclusive and sustainable urban environment that extends the legacy of the 2012 Olympics far into the future.

2. Stakeholder Engagement Strategies

Effective stakeholder engagement is essential for ensuring that the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Redevelopment delivers long-term social, environmental and economic

benefits for the surrounding communities. This section presents a stakeholder power–interest table, a stakeholder map, and a communication and consultation strategy aligned with best-practice engagement principles.

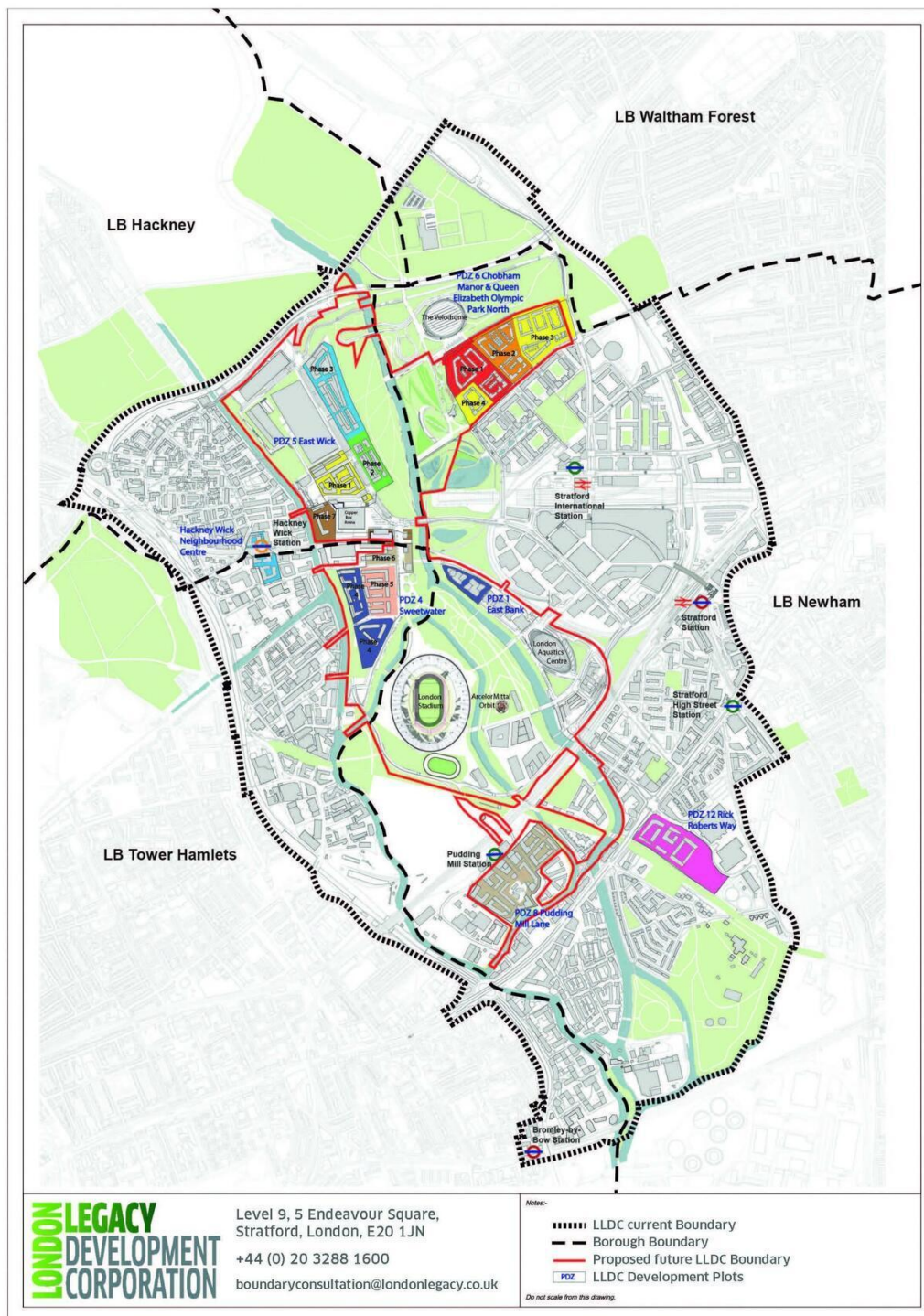
2.1 Stakeholder Power, Influence and Interest Table

Understanding the extent of each stakeholder's power, influence, and interests enables project managers to prioritise engagement effectively (Freeman, 1984). The table below categorises key stakeholders according to their roles in the redevelopment.

Stakeholder	Power	Influence	Interest	Justification
London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)	High	High	High	As the main public body overseeing park legacy delivery, LLDC has strong decision-making power and significant interest (Melhuish & Campkin, 2017).
Local Residents (Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest)	Medium	High	High	Residents are directly impacted by housing, public space, jobs and amenities. They influence public opinion and legitimacy.
Local Councils	High	Medium	High	Councils control planning approvals and local policy; they have high power and are key governance partners (Essex, 2024).

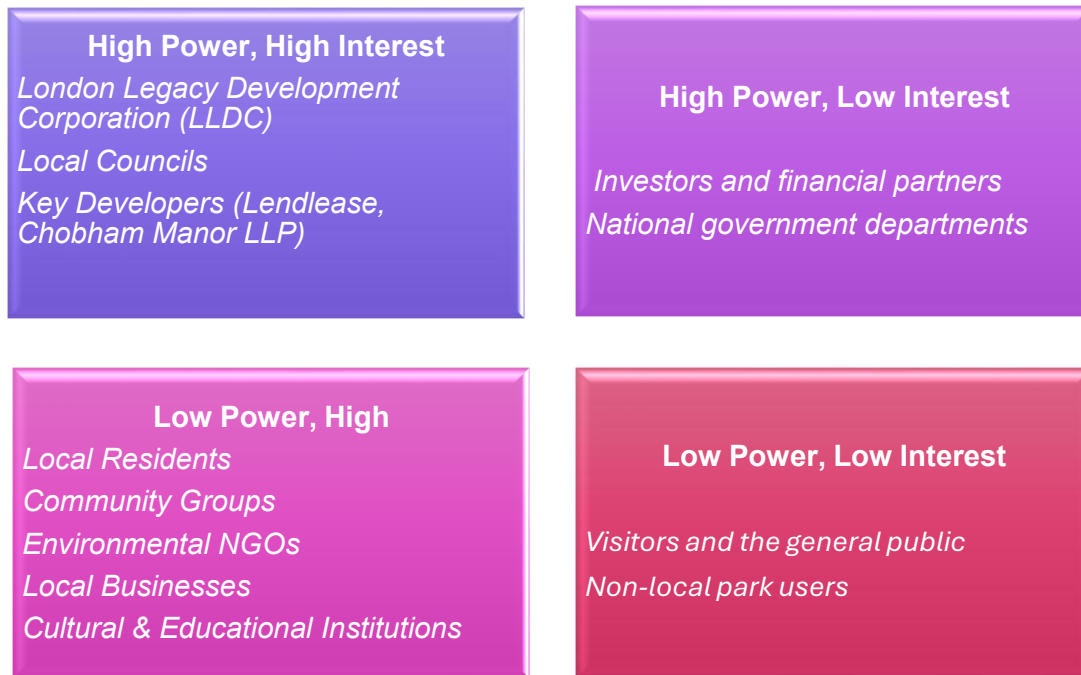
Developers & Investors (e.g., Lendlease, Chobham Manor LLP)	High	Medium	Medium	Developers shape delivery outcomes and bring financial capital, but their primary interest is commercial.
Cultural & Educational Institutions (UCL East, V&A East, Sadler's Wells)	Medium	Medium	Medium	They influence cultural and educational outcomes but have moderate power in design decisions.
Environmental Groups (London Wildlife Trust)	Low	Medium	Medium	They advocate for biodiversity and sustainability; their influence comes from expertise and public pressure.
Local Businesses	Low	Low–Medium	Medium	They are affected by footfall, redevelopment phases, and retail changes but have limited direct power.
Visitors / Wider Public	Low	Low	Low–Medium	Minimal direct influence; communication needed for park usage and public perception.

2.2 Stakeholder Map



Boundary Map of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Redevelopment Area (LLDC, 2024)

Mitchell, Agle & Wood (1997) highlight that stakeholder salience depends on power, legitimacy and urgency. For this project, the **power-interest grid** helps categorise stakeholders into four quadrants.



Quadrant A: High Power, High Interest — “Manage Closely”

These stakeholders must be involved in strategy setting and continuous decision-making. They require regular, detailed briefings as their support is essential for planning approvals, securing funding, and long-term governance.

Quadrant B: High Power, Low Interest — “Keep Satisfied”

They have the authority to influence major decisions but may not be involved in daily operations. Engagement should focus on showing stable progress and compliance with national policy priorities.

Quadrant C: Low Power, High Interest — “Keep Informed”

This is the most ethically sensitive group. They have strong interest because redevelopment affects their livelihoods, access to amenities, and sense of place. However, they lack formal decision-making power. Frequent, accessible, two-way communication is needed to avoid conflict, mistrust, or tokenism—issues highlighted in past London regeneration projects (Smith, 2016).

Quadrant D: Low Power, Low Interest — “Monitor”

These groups need broad, low-effort communication such as social media updates, signage, and newsletters.

2.3 Communication Plan and Consultation Strategy

Effective communication requires tailoring messages, frequency, and channels to each stakeholder's needs and level of influence (Innes & Booher, 2004). The communication strategy for the redevelopment aims to uphold the principles of **transparency, inclusivity, accountability, and accessibility**.

Communication Objectives

1. Ensure stakeholders understand project aims, timelines, and expected impacts.
2. Facilitate two-way dialogue to incorporate feedback into planning.
3. Manage expectations to minimise conflict and distrust.
4. Support long-term community empowerment and legacy delivery.

Communication Methods by Stakeholder Group

Stakeholder	Information Needs	Communication Method	Frequency
LLDC & Local Councils	Planning updates, risks, milestones	Bi-monthly strategic meetings; formal reports; email briefings	Monthly to bi-monthly
Developers & Investors	Timelines, design changes, compliance	Workshops; contractual meetings; dashboards	Monthly
Local Residents	Housing plans, public space access, employment, community impact	Public meetings; surveys; drop-in sessions; translated materials; SMS updates	Quarterly + during each phase
Community Groups & NGOs	Environmental impacts, equity issues	Workshops; consultation forums; site visits	Quarterly
Local Businesses	Impact on trade, footfall, opportunities	Business forums; newsletters; email updates	Quarterly

Cultural/Educational Institutions	Integration with facilities, programming	Partnership meetings; joint planning sessions	Monthly/quarterly
Visitors/Wider Public	Opening times, events, construction activities	Social media; website; signage; press releases	Continuous

2.4 Consultation Strategy



Visual Layout of Key Venues and Development Zones within Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (Dunked, 2024)

Consultation for the redevelopment must be ethical, inclusive, and rooted in strong governance. The following methods align with UK best practice (OECD, 2022):

1. Public Consultations (Town Hall Meetings)

Used to present major plans and gather early-stage feedback. These meetings must offer:

- evening and weekend sessions
- live-streaming and recordings
- moderated Q&A sessions

This ensures accessibility and reduces power imbalances (Davies & Pill, 2019).

2. Focus Groups

Targeted discussions with:

- youth groups
- ethnic minority organisations
- residents in social housing
- disability advocacy groups

These groups often lack voice in traditional consultation forums but are significantly affected by regeneration.

3. Surveys (Digital and Paper-Based)

Surveys allow widespread, anonymous feedback. They should:

- be available in multiple languages
- include accessible formats
- avoid technical jargon

Research emphasises that anonymity increases honest feedback in regeneration contexts (Cornwall, 2008).

4. Stakeholder Forums

Quarterly cross-stakeholder meetings bring together:

- councils
- residents

- NGOs
- developers
- cultural institutions

Forums reduce conflict by promoting shared understanding and transparency (Innes & Booher, 2004).

5. Local Drop-In Sessions

Held in community centres, libraries, schools, and shopping centres, drop-in sessions help reach:

- low-income families
- elderly residents
- migrant communities

These populations are often underrepresented in engagement (Melhuish & Campkin, 2017).

6. Digital Engagement Platforms

A dedicated online portal should include:

- project timelines
- interactive maps
- feedback forms
- response tracking system

Digital engagement is essential for improving reach, particularly among younger demographics.

2.5 Justification for Communication Approaches

Effective communication is fundamental to the success of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Redevelopment because it directly shapes stakeholder perceptions, trust, participation, and long-term support for the project. Urban regeneration initiatives, particularly in areas with complex socio-economic histories, often face scepticism due to past examples of displacement, gentrification, and lack of meaningful consultation (Smith, 2016). Therefore, adopting robust communication approaches is not only a managerial necessity but an ethical responsibility.

Transparency and Trust

Transparency is one of the most important factors in building and maintaining trust between project authorities and the local community. Clear, timely and consistent communication ensures stakeholders understand what decisions are being made, why they are being made, and the expected impacts on households, businesses and community institutions. As Smith (2016) notes, distrust commonly arises when residents perceive that information has been withheld or presented in inaccessible technical language. By making information fully available—including plans, timelines, risks, and alternatives—the redevelopment team can demonstrate accountability and reduce the sense of uncertainty that often surrounds large regeneration projects. This is crucial for the Olympic Park area, where community members have historically been concerned about rising housing costs and potential displacement.

Equity and Inclusion

Given that the redevelopment spans four of London's most diverse boroughs, communication must be designed to promote inclusivity and equitable participation. Research highlights that linguistic, cultural, physical, and socio-economic barriers often limit the involvement of minority or vulnerable groups in planning processes (Melhuish & Campkin, 2017). Ethical communication therefore requires providing translated materials, offering meetings at accessible locations, scheduling sessions outside working hours, and ensuring that digital tools do not exclude those with limited internet access. Inclusive strategies support meaningful participation rather than tokenistic engagement. When communication reaches all demographic groups fairly, the project becomes more legitimate and responsive to the actual needs of the community.

Conflict Prevention

Regeneration projects frequently encounter opposition when stakeholders feel overlooked, misinformed, or insufficiently consulted. Essex (2024) emphasises that many delays, legal challenges, and public protests arise directly from poor communication practices. By engaging stakeholders early and maintaining consistent dialogue throughout project phases, the risk of conflict is significantly reduced. Early communication allows project teams to identify concerns before they escalate and to negotiate solutions collaboratively. This is especially important in multi-stakeholder environments such as the Olympic Park, where residents, developers, councils and

cultural institutions may have competing interests. Proactive communication supports smoother project delivery and prevents reputational damage.

Improved Decision-Making

Another crucial justification for strong communication is its contribution to higher-quality decision-making. Stakeholders—particularly residents—offer lived experience and local knowledge that planners and developers may overlook. Bryson (2018) argues that incorporating diverse perspectives leads to more innovative, socially informed and contextually relevant outcomes. In the case of the Olympic Park, community insights can improve decisions on green space use, cultural facilities, housing designs, accessibility and transport routes. Good communication not only gathers this valuable information but also ensures stakeholders understand how their feedback influences final decisions. This strengthens long-term support and aligns the redevelopment with genuine community priorities.

Conclusion and Reflection

The redevelopment of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park demonstrates how complex urban regeneration projects rely heavily on effective stakeholder engagement. The park's transformation from an Olympic venue into a long-term community asset requires collaboration among public authorities, private developers, cultural institutions, environmental organisations, and the diverse local population. The earlier sections of this portfolio have highlighted the importance of understanding stakeholder roles, analysing their influence through a power-interest grid, and applying communication and consultation strategies that promote transparency, inclusion and accountability. This final section provides a conclusion to the stakeholder management plan and a personal reflection on the importance of stakeholder engagement for project success and sustainability.

The stakeholder mapping exercise illustrated that the redevelopment involves a wide range of stakeholders with different levels of power, influence, and interest. Organisations such as the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) and local councils hold significant decision-making power, whereas community groups and residents possess high interest but comparatively less formal influence. Recognising this imbalance allows project managers to design communication approaches tailored to each group, ensuring that dominant actors remain accountable and that vulnerable or under-represented groups are meaningfully included in the development process.

The communication and consultation strategies outlined earlier emphasise the value of dialogue that is transparent, accessible and ongoing. These approaches help build trust—especially important in an area where communities may feel concerned about displacement, gentrification or loss of identity. Creating opportunities for two-way communication, such as drop-in sessions, online portals, public meetings and stakeholder forums, helps ensure local voices are reflected in final decisions. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, privacy, DEI and avoiding tokenism were also identified as essential for ensuring that engagement remains fair and respectful.

Overall, the analysis shows that stakeholder engagement is not an optional step but a critical component of the project's sustainability. Without it, the redevelopment risks public opposition, poor design outcomes, reputational damage, and long-term failure to meet the social objectives promised during the 2012 Games. With effective engagement, however, the project has the potential to deliver inclusive growth, strengthen local identity, and create a thriving, connected community.

Reflection

Completing this portfolio has helped deepen my understanding of stakeholder engagement theory and its practical relevance in real-world projects. Before undertaking this assignment, I viewed stakeholder engagement largely as a communication task. However, analysing the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Redevelopment has shown me that engagement is a strategic, ethical and relational process involving negotiation, balancing competing interests, and building long-term trust. It is not simply about informing people but about enabling participation, sharing power and demonstrating accountability.

Through the use of tools such as the stakeholder matrix and power–interest grid, I developed the ability to classify stakeholders more accurately and understand why different groups require different engagement strategies. I also learned that ignoring stakeholder differences can lead to ineffective communication and potential project failure. For example, local residents and community groups need accessible, continuous consultation, whereas developers and investors require structured updates and alignment with planning goals. This reinforced the idea that engagement must be tailored, not generic.

Reflecting on the ethical aspects of engagement made me more aware of the responsibilities that organisations have when collecting stakeholder feedback. Issues such as privacy, data protection, inclusion and bias are not merely theoretical—they directly affect whether stakeholders feel respected and whether their participation is meaningful. Learning about DEI considerations helped me appreciate how regeneration projects can unintentionally marginalise certain groups if engagement is not designed carefully. This insight will be

valuable to me in future professional roles, as ethical sensitivity is essential when working with diverse communities.

Finally, this assignment has strengthened skills that are transferable to many areas of business management, including communication, problem-solving, critical thinking and project planning. Understanding how to manage stakeholders will be valuable whether working in consultancy, marketing, operations, or public sector management. It has also helped me develop a more reflective approach to my own learning, recognising areas of strength—such as analytical thinking—and areas where I can continue to improve, such as refining communication strategies for different audiences.

Overall, this portfolio has demonstrated that effective stakeholder engagement is fundamental to achieving successful, sustainable and socially responsible project outcomes. It has also strengthened my confidence in applying theoretical concepts to real-world contexts and highlighted the importance of ethical, inclusive and transparent practice in professional environments.

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