

# News Release

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**London Docklands  
Development Corporation**

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15 October 1992

## **BLACK CAB CONVOY TRAVELS THROUGH LIMEHOUSE LINK**

Inner Cities Minister leads the Drive Through  
and opens New Poplar Bridge

A convoy of black taxi cabs, led by Inner Cities Minister, John Redwood, MP, were today the first vehicles to drive the full length of the 1.8km Limehouse Link tunnel, Britain's largest road construction project.

Docklands business people, developers, local councillors and others joined Mr Redwood, in the only "drive through" possible before the road opens to traffic in May 1993, experiencing at first hand how it will dramatically improve access to and from the Isle of Dogs. The distance between the Tower of London and Canary Wharf Tower, via the Limehouse Link, is less than three miles, allowing a journey time of six to seven minutes.

Mr Redwood will also open the new £3.5 million cable-stayed Poplar Bridge jointly funded by Wetherby Limited and the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), which creates a direct pedestrian link between Poplar High Street and the proposed commercial scheme at North Quay. Access to the refurbished Docklands Light Railway Station at Poplar will be available when upgrading works are finished.

LDDC Chairman, Michael Pickard, commented: "Progress on completion of the Limehouse Link tunnel has been remarkable, particularly as it has been constructed through the densely populated and historic area of Limehouse. By May next year when the Limehouse Link opens to traffic it will be possible to drive from the City to London City Airport direct on new and improved dual carriageway roads, all south of the A13.

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"The new Docklands highways network was approved by the LDDC Board in March 1986. Within the space of seven years all the schemes will have been designed, land acquired, inquiries held, planning permissions obtained and contracts let and completed - an outstanding achievement.

"We believe that the opening of the Limehouse Link will boost confidence in the area as a business location and finally put to bed the myth that Docklands is inaccessible. The road schemes funded by the LDDC, together with the existing and planned public transport network, will undoubtedly enhance the attractiveness of the area for both businesses and residents."

-END-

**Further information from:**

LDDC Press Office      Tel: 071-512 0444 (day)  
Thames Quay            Tel: 071-512 3000 (after hours)  
191 Marsh Wall  
London E14 9TJ

Note to Editors

1. The Limehouse Link

The dual carriageway Limehouse Link tunnel connects The Highway, at the junction with Butcher Row and Narrow Street, with Westferry Road on the Isle of Dogs and the Poplar Link at North Quay.

Construction by Balfour Beatty Fairclough Joint Venture commenced in November 1989 with the section between The Highway and The Isle of Dogs originally scheduled for completion in May 1993 and to North Quay in October 1993. In March 1992 LDDC and Balfour Beatty Fairclough agreed a £251 million lump sum for completion of the whole works and for the two phases to be finished together on 17 May 1993. This, together with an estimated sum of up to a maximum  
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of £12 million for other works unable to be included under the lump sum agreement, gives the final cost of the Limehouse Link at no more than £263 million.

The route has minimised the amount of demolition required to build the new road and under the Accord, an agreement with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the LDDC has rehoused 570 Council tenants directly affected by its road schemes and is refurbishing a number of other properties near the line of the new roads. The tunnel has been designed so that buildings six storeys high can be built over the top. With the opening of the road the residential nature of Limehouse will be restored as traffic will be taken away from the area's narrow streets. A new park will be laid out at Ropenakers Field.

Disruption has been minimised by the top down 'cut and cover' construction method, as once the tunnel walls and roof were put in place most of the work has been carried out "underground". The LDDC required the contractor to use the river for delivery and removals of material, and also contributed to the cost of a new lock entrance at Limehouse Basin. The tunnel has been designed to meet high environmental and safety standards. Three ventilation and service buildings have been designed to emit pollution concentrations from tunnel traffic at such a height that levels near the ground and in the vicinity of nearby buildings will be well within the relevant standards and criteria.

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Client:                 | London Docklands Development Corporation |
| Contractor:             | Balfour Beatty Fairclough Joint Venture  |
| Consulting Engineers:   | Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners          |
| Quantity Surveyors:     | Beard Dove                               |
| Environmental Advisors: | Rendel Science and Environment           |
| Materials Testing       |  |
| Consultants:            | Sandberg                                 |
| Land Surveyors:         | Geonex                                   |
| Urban Design:           | Tony Meats and Amroc                     |
| Building Assessment:    | S P Christie and Partners                |
| Building Strengthening: | R T James and Partners                   |
| Category III Checkers:  | Husband and Co                           |

## 2. The Poplar Bridge

The 88 metre long cable stayed Poplar Bridge spans, at a height of 10.5 metres, the new dual carriageway Poplar Link (Aspen Way) and Castor Lane as well as the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), providing a pedestrian route from Poplar High Street to Wetherby's proposed commercial development at North Quay and on to the rest of the Isle of Dogs. The Poplar Link is currently being built in phases across the north of the Isle of Dogs and will connect the Limehouse Link on the western side with the Preston's Road roundabout and flyover and the Lower Lea Crossing to the east.

A footbridge across this major road and rail corridor was required in the 1989 DLR Beckton Bill, to reduce severance and improve access to Poplar Station. The covered bridge will also give pedestrians access to Poplar Station. A walkway, from Poplar High Street to the north side of the bridge, hard landscaping and a new public toilet are also included in the contract which is being carried out as part of the DLR Beckton Extension works.

The bridge, which together with associated works will cost £3.5 million, will link into the 'galleria' area at North Quay where Wetherby is planning, on the three hectare site, a 600 bed hotel (44 storeys and 176 metres high) with banqueting and exhibition facilities, 48,000 sq. metres of commercial space in two office buildings and 2085 sq. metres of shops.

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Clients:              | London Docklands Development Corporation<br>Wetherby Limited |
| Contractor:           | Mowlem Taylor Woodrow Joint Venture                          |
| Consulting Engineers: | Maunsells  |
| Architect:            | Ahrends Burton and Koralek                                   |
| Main Sub-Contractor:  | Robert Watsons   |

# News Release



BRITAIN  
AT  
EXPO '92  
OFFICIAL SPONSOR

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## PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

### BLACK CAB CONVOY TRAVELS THROUGH LIMEHOUSE LINK

Inner Cities Minister leads the Drive Through  
and opens New Poplar Bridge

Thursday, 15 October 1992

commencing 10.15am

from Tobacco Dock, The Highway, E1

A convoy of 20 black cabs, led by Inner Cities Minister, John Redwood, MP, will be the first vehicles to drive the full length of the 1.8km Limehouse Link tunnel on Thursday, 15 October 1992.

Docklands business people, developers, local councillors and others will join Mr Redwood in the only "drive through" possible, prior to the opening of the road to traffic in May 1993, experiencing at first hand how it will dramatically improve road access to and from the Isle of Dogs. The opening of the Limehouse Link will also restore peace and quiet to the residents of Limehouse as the road will take through traffic away from the area's narrow streets.

The convoy will travel from Tobacco Dock and enter the Limehouse Link at the junction of Butcher Row and Narrow Street, E14, through the western portal, and follow the route of the four lane tunnel under Limehouse Basin, pass the slip roads to Westferry Road and Canary Wharf, to emerge from the eastern portal at Aspen Way, near the Docklands Light Railway Poplar Station.

Mr Redwood will also open the new £3.5 million cable-stayed Poplar Bridge which has been jointly funded by Wetherby Limited, the developers of the proposed commercial scheme at North Quay, and the London Docklands Development Corporation.

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### The Limehouse Link

The Limehouse Link is the lynch pin of the Docklands Highways network which will be completed in May 1993 when the Link opens to traffic. Designed by Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners, the contract to build the tunnel was awarded to Balfour Beatty Fairclough Joint Venture in September 1989.

The underground route has minimised the amount of demolition required to build the new road and under the Accord, an agreement with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, the LDDC has rehoused up to 450 Council tenants directly affected by its road schemes and is refurbishing a number of other properties near the line of the new roads. The tunnel has been designed so that buildings up to six storeys high can be built over the top.

Disruption during construction has been minimised by the 'cut and cover' building method, as once the roof and tunnel walls were put in place most of the work has been carried out underground. The LDDC has contributed to the cost of a new lock entrance at Limehouse Basin and required the contractor to use the river for delivery and removals of material. The tunnel has been designed to meet high environmental and safety standards. Three ventilation and service buildings have been designed to emit pollution concentrations from tunnel traffic at such a height that levels near the ground and in the vicinity of nearby buildings will be well within the relevant standards and criteria.

Technically a very complex project, the Limehouse Link is the largest 'cut and cover' construction contract underway in the UK and will be the longest tunnel in the UK to be built by this technique. The completed tunnel walls of the dual carriageway road are on average 20 metres high and 34 metres at the deepest point, with each tunnel bore 10 metres wide. At its deepest the tunnel base is 28 metres below ground. More than 227,000 cubic metres of concrete have been used together with 35,000 tonnes of steel reinforcement in the tunnel bores alone, while more than 660,000 cubic metres of material have been removed from the site by river.

The Poplar Bridge

The 88 metre long cable stayed Poplar Bridge spans, at a height of 10.5 metres, the new dual carriageway Poplar Link (Aspen Way) and Castor Lane as well as the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), providing a pedestrian route from Poplar High Street to Wetherby's proposed commercial development at North Quay and on to the rest of the Isle of Dogs. The Poplar Link is currently being built in phases across the north of the Isle of Dogs and will connect the Limehouse Link on the western side with the Prestons Road roundabout and flyover and the Lower Lea Crossing to the east.

A footbridge across this major road and rail corridor was required in the 1989 DLR Beckton Bill, to reduce severance and improve access to Poplar Station. Construction is being carried out by Mowlem Taylor Woodrow as part of the Beckton Extension contract. The covered bridge will also give pedestrians access to Poplar Station when upgrading works are completed later this year. A walkway, from Poplar High Street to the north side of the bridge, hard landscaping and a new public toilet are also included in the contract.

The bridge and associated works will cost £3.5 million, with Wetherby Limited, contributing £2.7 million. Designed by Ahrends Burton and Koralek, the footbridge will link into the 'galleria' area at North Quay where Wetherby is planning, on the three hectare site, a 600 bed hotel (44 storeys and 176 metres high) with banqueting and exhibition facilities, 48,000 sq. metres of commercial space in two office buildings and 2085 sq. metres of shops.

Note to Editors: Media transport for the "drive through" will be provided and will depart at 10.30 am in advance of the main convoy. Please notify the LDDC press office of names and numbers of those attending.

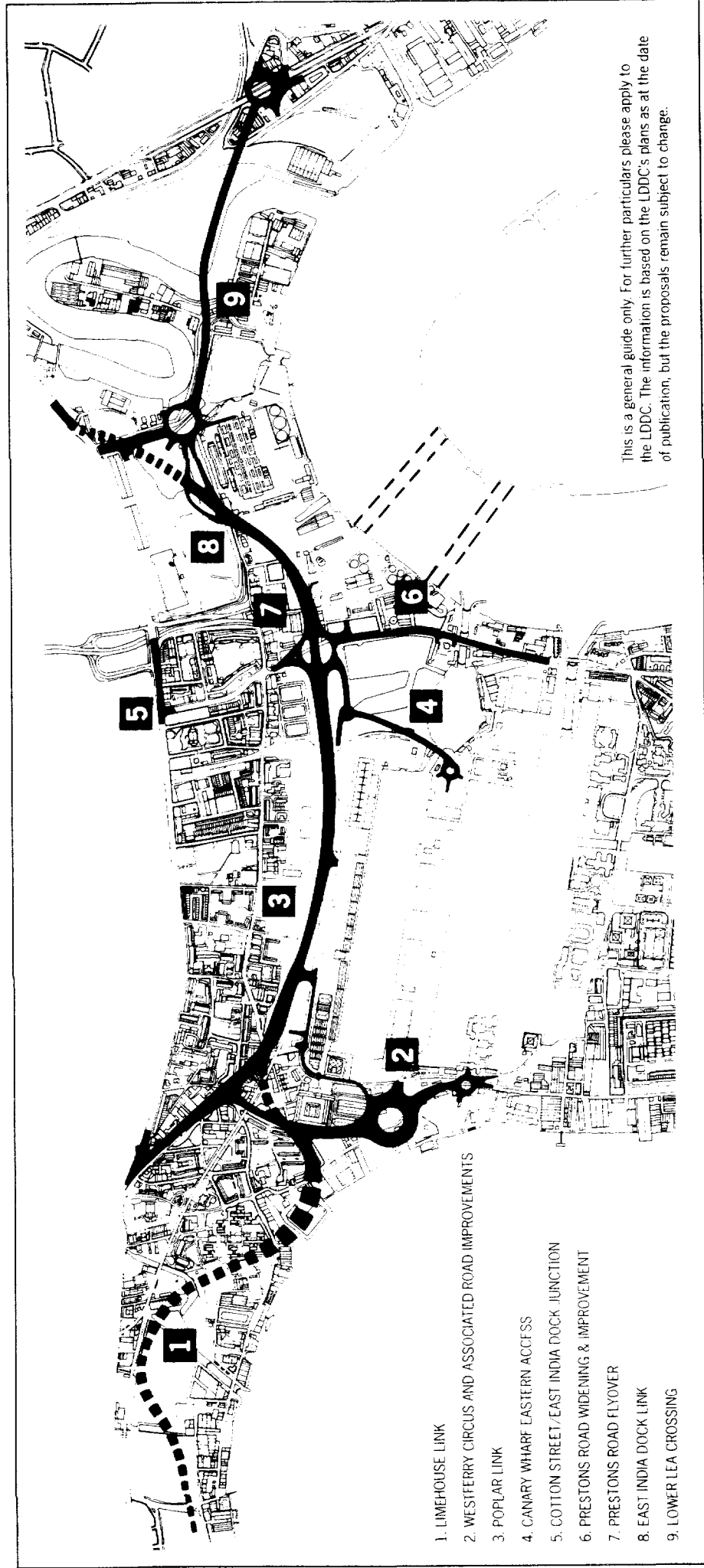
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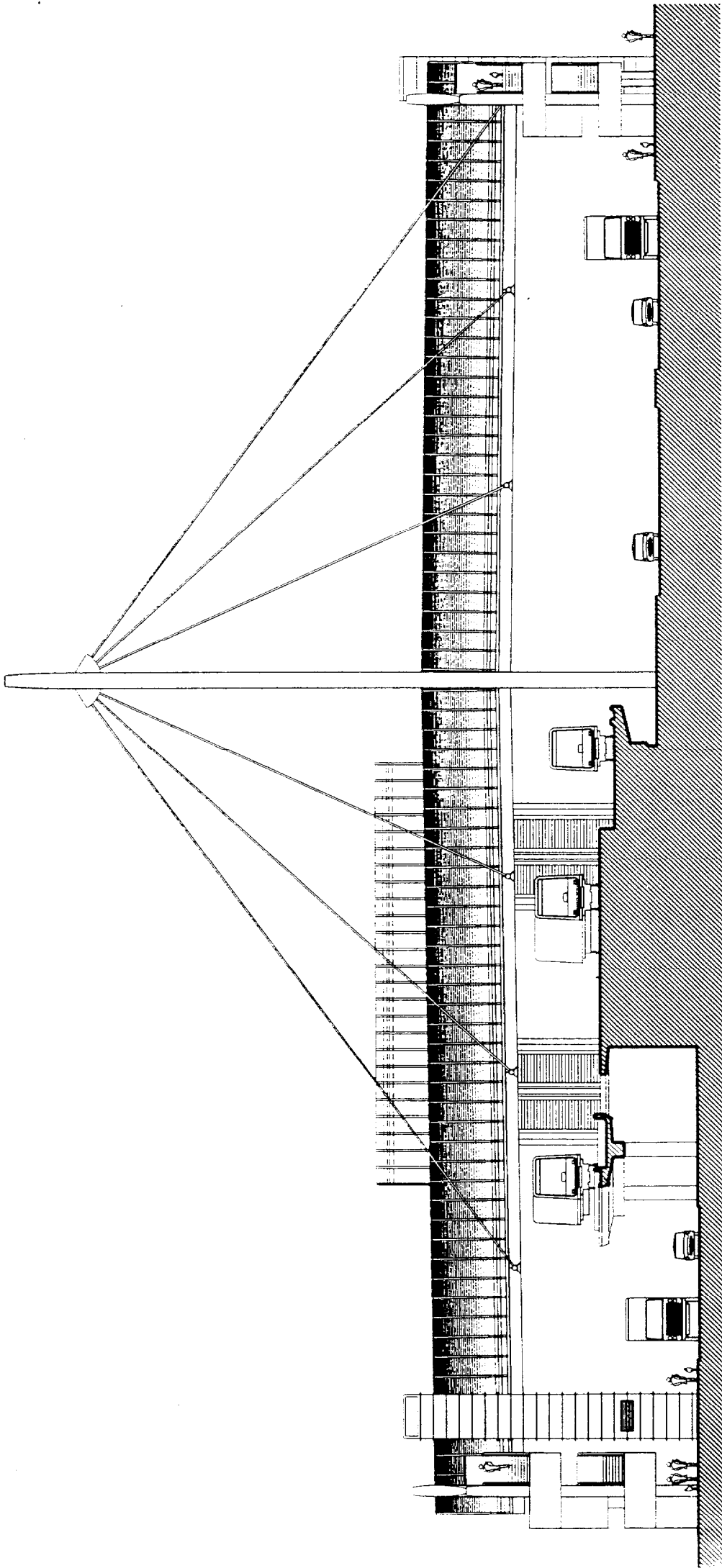
6 October 1992

# LDDC Major Road Schemes

## Limehouse to Leamouth







CASTOR LANE

DOCKLANDS LIGHT RAILWAY POPLAR STATION

ASPEN WAY

NORTH QUAY

P O P L A R B R I D G E

POPLAR HIGH STREET