

FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S EYES



ROYAL FINE ART COMMISSION

With the ~~Secretary's~~ Compliments

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PRESS RELEASE

LONDON DOCKLANDS: CANARY WHARF

Mr. Norman St. John-Stevan (Chairman, Royal Fine Art Commission) said after the meeting of the Commission to consider the proposed Canary Wharf project:

"The Commission had a full discussion this morning with the architects, sponsors of the project and representatives of the London Docklands Development Corporation and the Local Authorities concerned. This meeting took place at the Royal Fine Art Commission's request. The Commission met privately this afternoon to consider the position. The Commission warmly welcomes the imaginative idea of developing Canary Wharf as a major contribution to the regeneration of Dockland and the maintenance of London as a world financial centre. However they believe equally strongly that the scheme has not been thoroughly thought through and needs clarification, development and modification.

The Commission was not against a scheme involving towers as such, but were clear that the first tower it was proposed to build, would destroy the vista from Greenwich Observatory and the Royal Naval College, and it should not be built in this position.

The towers might well be grouped together in another part of the site.

The Commission further consider that the development plan is too loose and the general design needs to be tightened. They are also concerned that the problems present in creating a fully human environment, the circulation of pedestrians, and dealing with British climatic conditions had not been resolved.

The Commission were appreciative of the offer of the developer to engage in further conversations and intend to take up at once a constructive dialogue with them over the economic, aesthetic and social issues involved."

Prime Minister

In many ways, helpfully mild.
But the Government's attitude will need to be sensitive to avoid damaging the atmosphere for discussions about the Channel Tunnel, particularly since there is to be a public enquiry for neither. Agree to write in this sense to Mr Baker?

DAS

15/11

I see no reason
to write to K.B.
at present. In this sense
of handling it well