Is the Elephant your neighbourhood?

Workshop 28th January 2012 Summary Report

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## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction and context</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Heygate Street and Central area</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Brandon Street area</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pullens area</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Railway corridor</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Walworth Road area</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Enterprise Quarter</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Rockingham area</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Housing, Community &amp; Sustainability</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Latin American Businesses</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Green Links/ Routes</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Neighbourhood Planning</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Next steps &amp; overall vision / Appendices</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Introduction

• The “Special Planning Document” (SPD) for the Elephant and Castle “Opportunity Area” is currently being developed by Southwark Council. In parallel, Lend Lease, the council’s developer for the Heygate Estate area and the Leisure Centre (accounting for almost a quarter of the opportunity area), has just released its final masterplan for the area for comment. They intend to submit a planning application for these huge developments in spring 2012.

• The Elephant Amenity Network organised a community planning day on Saturday 28th January at Crossway Church SE17 1SL to discuss key themes arising from the SPD and relating to a future possible Neighbourhood Plan for all or part of the area. The aim of the session was to animate the SPD document, to introduce Neighbourhood Planning, and to consider uses of S106 /Community Infrastructure Levy alongside a reinvigorated project bank.

• The event comprised workshops focusing on areas and on themes
  • Workshops focusing on each so-called “character area” (sub-divisions of the “Opportunity Area”) were held in the morning session
  • Workshops focusing on Latin American businesses, housing, community and sustainability, neighbourhood planning and Green Routes were held in the afternoon session

• Plenary sessions in the morning and afternoon were presented by representatives from existing neighbourhood forums:
  • Borough and Bankside (morning session)
  • Hackbridge (afternoon session)

• This document summarises the discussions that took place in these workshops, and documents the aspirations and concerns of the attendees.

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The Opportunity and Character Areas

Planning area hierarchy

www.openstreetmap.org

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Workshop Summaries
# Organisers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Jerry Flynn (Elephant Amenity Network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening plenary</td>
<td>Andrew Richardson (Co-ordinator Bankside Residents Forum) Simon Bevan (Acting Director of Planning, Southwark Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heygate St and Central area</td>
<td>Sanna Wennberg (Elephant Amenity Network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon St area</td>
<td>Luke Miller (Elephant Amenity Network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walworth Rd, Pullens &amp; Railway corridor</td>
<td>Jeremy Leach (Walworth Society <a href="http://walworthsociety.co.uk/">http://walworthsociety.co.uk/</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise quarter</td>
<td>Katherine McNeal (Elephant Amenity Network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockingham area</td>
<td>Jerry Flynn (Elephant Amenity Network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and Community</td>
<td>Steve Lancashire, Annie Lennox (Elephant Amenity Network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American Businesses</td>
<td>Patria Román-Velázquez, City University London Richard Lee (Elephant Amenity Network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Planning</td>
<td>Elena Besussi (Town planner, neighbourhood planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing plenary</td>
<td>Simon Courage (Hackbridge Neighbourhood Planning group)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Photos from the day

Photos © Katherine McNeil (dialogue)

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Heygate Street and Central

Introduction
• Overall, it was noted that the definition of the Central area in the SPD as the “Town Centre” is difficult to understand at the Elephant, which is focused on a 7-lane trunk road at the heart of the area. A description of a transport interchange with a series of surrounding linked neighbourhoods was suggested as a more appropriate description of the current area - and it is not clear from the SPD how this will change.
• Many of the concerns for the Heygate Street Character area applies to this area too. However, the main concern was how the intended changes to the shopping centre would impact on the socio economic aspects of the community that currently use the shopping centre.
• It was noted that Draper House should be mentioned in the SPD.
• The intended improvement to the exterior spaces around the shopping centre were generally viewed as positive, but more focus was desired on greening the area, including the northern roundabout where there is room to plant trees, to avoid the sterile acres of paving introduced at the Southern Roundabout.
• Some flexibility over retaining some of the pedestrian subways was wanted given current plans show longer journey times (and indirect routings) via proposed surface crossings.
Heygate Street and Central
(cont’d)

Interaction of the Lend Lease Masterplan area with the character area

Given that a very large part of the area defined as the Heygate Street Character Area is an opportunity site much of the discussion focused on understanding what is to be provided and how this affects on the neighbouring character areas and the streets that border the opportunity site. The SPD therefore needs to be clearer on the following issues:

• the rights of the public within the masterplan area including new park - the terms under which the park is created is very important and the SPD must make it clear the park will be properly public, that is, not a public space which is privately managed on terms that are agreed in a lease which is not subject to public consultation. Bad examples include the spaces at More London or at Paternoster Square where the private owners are permitted to make arbitrary restrictions on public use and which are under overt surveillance by private security firms. Avoiding this mistake is critical to the success of the whole area if it is to form part of a “character area” at the Elephant.

• how the intended improvement of the built, social and economic environment on the Heygate Estate opportunity site will have an equally positive effect on the surrounding neighbourhoods and the existing residents home environment and existing retailers businesses.

• how it will ensure that the new development does not become a “gated community” separated physically or practically from the surrounding community.

Some of these points may already be covered in the SPD but they were raised/emphasise as important aspects that needs to be included in the guidance for the Opportunity site 18 (Heygate Estate) to ensure that the new development brings a positive impact on the wider area.

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Heygate Street and Central
(cont’d)

Lend Lease Masterplan Area Community Facilities

- Existing community spaces/facilities should be documented and as a minimum re-instated for public use - for example, the purpose built Crossway Church, the community spaces in the building located between Rodney Road and Brandon Street.
- Cultural facilities should be incorporated according to the projected increase in population.
- The new Library at Canada Water was mentioned as an example where a new community facility, although very welcome and much appreciated already, has had the negative repercussion two other libraries closing in the borough to pay for it, one of which was distant. Given the increase in projected population, it was felt that if the masterplan provides for a community facility this should not reduce facilities elsewhere.
- Space for one (or more) GP practice(s) are needed to ensure that the current GP facilities in the area do not come under further strain, together with space for a NHS dentist (group) practice.
- The design of the residential units should envisage long stays to allow for a genuine amalgamation of existing and new communities can happen - as was the original objective for the regeneration. Thus it should not be permitted that a large number of the new residential units be by-to let properties or places that people by and sell soon afterwards in order to make a quick profit.

Building blocks/massing

- It was felt that the SPD should comment on the arrangement of the building blocks in the masterplan area. Currently the site shows an overtly gridded/blocky area which is in great contrast to the inner London urban grain. there is concern that this 'Blocky' area will feel as 'monolithic' as the concrete blocks that are being replaced. It is therefore suggested the SPD should encourage designs of the blocks that incorporates small pedestrian passage ways/short cuts, these could even be combined into small shopping arcades.
Heygate Street and Central
(cont’d)

Lessons from Recent Residential Developments
The workshop attendees went outdoors to look at two recent development sites located near New Kent Road (Munton St and New Kent Road) Whilst providing some so-called “affordable” housing, both buildings were seen to fail in bringing general improvement to the urban environment, both physically and experientially, through re-development. For example:

• The forecourt of the New Kent Road side is gated in such a way that it appears to be a high security industrial unit rather than a residential entrance. The design seems to signal that this is a dangerous area.
• The facade material on one of the building-block is brick but the bland and uniform colour of the brick and the poor design detailing of the parapet mean that’s the building appears bland and low quality.
• The facade material on the Munton St block is a rain-screen made up of multi-coloured tile pattern that appear to be inspired by an army camouflage. With a cheap/nondescript treatment to the side walls makes the “fun” front facade look gimmicky.
• The Munton St building shows no coherent thinking; the lift over run/plant box on top of the building does not contribute to the streetscape and the urban context but adds to the already chaotic/unplanned/ill-considered street and roof scape on New Kent Road.

Although negative, these points illustrate that if the purpose of planning guidance is going to be achieved, then needs to be more precise guidance about the areas where designs interact - that is, at the edges. It also suggests that it is equally important that the planning guidance is strictly adhered to for both the small to medium size developments as much as the larger developments such as the Elephant and Castle shopping centre and the Masterplan Area.

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Heygate Street and Central (cont’d)

Central Area Tall Buildings

- Mitigation of effects of tall buildings on winds and the ground micro-climate that a tall building can have must be strongly enforced through the SPD.
- A strong desire was expressed for some of the new tall buildings could be publicly accessible, for example through creating a public viewing gallery/exhibition space/museum of urbanism at the top of one of the tallest buildings.

Commercial units

- The range of commercial / retail units in the area should include a wide range from affordable shop units to medium to large scale destination stores; there could also be some live-work units to encourage local production. Light industry units could offer additional employment opportunities beyond the currently suggested kinds of shop/retail units.
- Employment opportunities for local people are key: the SPD notes that all the new shops and retail units represent new employment opportunities; a strong desire was expressed to target these new employment opportunities (perhaps through training schemes if the job description requires specific skills) to people who live locally - and how people who live locally and are currently out of work could be informed about new positions and given support in their applications where required.
Heygate Street and Central
(cont’d)

Developer Contributions

• The very positive description at the early plenary session about how Tate Modern has worked with the local community suggests that, given the size of the Heygate Estate, there should be a wide discussion about the amount of community contribution that should be earmarked, beyond S106 money, for a long term programme of contribution to the local community/improvement to the local environment by the developers.

• The SPD should also be clear as to how much S106 funds will come from each development and how it will be spent - there is currently no clarity over expected income or how and when items will be identified and prioritised given the huge range of potential options available.

• Recent statements that most (if not all) S106 money from the Masterplan area development will be spent on upgrading transport (rail, underground and some of the TfL roads) were strongly felt to be unfair. It was suggested that such major elements of London’s Infrastructure should be funded mainly from other resources and not at the expense of improving the urban and living environment of the local community - or if not, the scale of the development must be much reduced to avoid negative impacts.
Brandon Street Area

Recommendations

• Little mention or attention is given to the role of and future of East Street market in the SPD - much more support is required. Noted that only half of the market, the north side, is included within this character area - in practice the market forms the centre of gravity of the community north and south of East Street.

• The rationale that was used in the SPD to designate opportunity/development sites is not clear - in particular, it is noted that the SPD has designated only three sites in the Brandon Street area beyond the New Housing site on Stead Street:
  • two sites on Brandon Street that currently function as businesses and employment generators
  • One site on Rodney Road which currently provides the only retail in the area beyond East Street and also provides local employment

It is not clear why only sites which are currently trading a businesses have been identified for development, with no other potential sites for new employment identified.

• The buildings identified as having potential for local listing are welcomed, but it was noted that the process of developing the local list has taken so long that the demolition and replacement of at least one of the candidates has already been approved.

• It was further noted that beyond East Street, the retail provision in the area is now on concentrated in only two places - a small cluster in Brandon Street and the parade in Rodney Road. The designation of the Rodney Road parade as an opportunity site appears to threaten the future of these facilities. This is to be resisted.

• The proposals for Green Links were welcomed, but further clarity over the objectives and function of these routes was required - Brandon St/Portland St is a key commuting route for cyclists whilst local links between parks could use more circuitious quieter routes to reduce conflicts between users.

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Pullens area

Recommendations
• Attention needs to be given to Dante Road which is an extremely poor environment with large amounts of unused carriageway at present. The road could be established as a green route and far more attractive with higher levels of tree planting.
• Specific attention and detail is needed on the proposed green route along Longville Road.
• Funding for these two initiatives should be from S106 contributions from the adjacent former London Park Hotel which will impact significantly on these streets.
• Recognition should be given to the important community activities which currently occur in the area such as the 56a Infoshop and Fareshares which are important community spaces, and the Electric Cafe on the Pullens Estate. Affordable rents are important to allow these community resources to survive and thought needs to be given as to how sharp rent rises can be avoided to allow these enterprises to flourish.
• On the Newington Estate there is a need to support young people with activities as there have long been problems in the area with lack of youth facilities and resultant antisocial behaviour.
Railway Corridor area

Recommendations

• This area needs an actual sense of character which is lacking at present. One idea is to take a theme from the historic nature of the Pullens and use the development of this area not only for increased levels of residential provision but also to provide opportunities for employment. In this way it might become a real workshop for the area.

• Complementing new residential developments, business incubators, live workspaces and flexible (possibly subsidised) workspaces for artisans/small businesses should be encouraged.

• It is unrealistic to rely on retail to provide animation for all of the ground floor/street frontage that will be created. Instead, the building of townhouses in certain developments should be considered which can provide residential activation at ground floor level as occurs on many of our older streets.

• Small/Medium sized Enterprises could be encouraged with subsidised rates for those with less than 15 employees to encourage new employment.

• New amenity/social space should be created in the new residential developments that are to be created.

• Good quality lighting and active uses at ground floor level would create a livelier atmosphere and thus improve levels of surveillance and perceived safety for those moving through the area into the evening.

• Improvements needed on Hampton St/Steedman St to rectify the cluttered, broken and filthy pavements.

• The proposed pedestrian routes that run along both sides of the rail corridor is a really visionary aim (and potentially safe but slow cycling routes) and could have a tremendous effect in opening up the whole area to pedestrian movement and encouraging uses of the railway arches too - but more detailed work is needed.

• A great “quick-win” would breach the fence to the west of the railway line (at the Newington Industrial Estate just south of the Newington Estate Boiler Block) to start to open up a route from Amelia St to the Elephant.

• Consideration should be given to re-use of some of the buildings in these development sites such as Stanhope House which is virtually brand-new and its demolition would be a waste of high levels of embedded carbon.

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Walworth Road area

Recommendations

• Little mention or attention given to the role of and future of East Street market in the SPD - much more support is required.

• The “Walworth Road project” should be completed in its southern section in the area around the Gateway estate.

• Protection needed for more buildings along the Walworth Rd (currently omitted from either local listing or being of townscape merit):
  • Walworth Road - the newsagents north of NatWest bank and buildings above Bagel King and Chicken Cottage.
  • The buildings on East Street at its junction with the Walworth Road (which includes the Halal meat shop).

• The retail mix needs to be improved - can the SPD help to improve the balance of the Walworth Rd retail offer and address perceived negatives such as an excess of payday loans & betting shops? There is an excess of large retailers with the presence of Morrisons and two Tesco Expresses on the Walworth Road. Limitation should also be considered for large retailers.

• Now that Carter Place Garden is being built on it is now time to look seriously at a replacement for it in terms of new green space in the area. One opportunity lies in Liverpool Grove itself between the Walworth Road and St Peter’s Church and also the creation of a green link east-west from Faraday Gardens via Liverpool Grove, McLeod Street into Sutherland Square (and east to Forsyth Gardens and the Brandon Estate) that will provide a strong east-west connection through the area that is currently lacking in the open space strategy and in the SPD plans.

• As well as the proposed green link east-west through the Kwik-Fit site (number 24), some public/green open space could be created here to give balance to the square that is being created by the Town Hall and to strengthen the purpose of the green routes to the west into the Pullens area.

• Re-use or refurbishment might be considered for properties such as Chatelaine House rather than demolition owing to the large amount of embedded carbon in the development.

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Enterprise Quarter

Key concerns

• The area is losing too many local business sites, for example the small independent shops and businesses to the north side of Newington Causeway.

• The art shop and gallery/cafe on London Road is considered a positive example of an independent business meeting local needs.

• Participants noted a significant increase in the number of pound shops and betting premises on the Walworth Road. This influx is not considered as a positive for local trade and commerce.

• Many of the university buildings have “barren” frontages. London Road is a prime example of dead street frontage which makes walking unattractive.

• University environment considered as an area which the public would not walk through or visit, unless on university connected initiatives. Discussion took place on whether public routes through should be encouraged. Commentary ranged from acknowledging the different atmosphere within the neighbourhood, to promoting a more cohesive and higher quality public realm strategy.

• The proposed (SPD) east-west pedestrian route was not considered to be a natural desire line and the proposed north west pedestrian link was considered to be unrealistic.

• This zone is recognised as an area populated primarily during daytime, with little residential use. Development of a night-time economy could be considered, relative to adjacent neighbourhoods, as a way of drawing people in to the area.

• Garage site at Borough Road/Newington Causeway (identified as an “Opportunity Site” in SPD were considered by some participants to have a value in terms of human scale and relationship with the adjacent housing and open urban space at street level.

• Some concern over whether London Road Bus-only proposal is appropriate - detailed study and local consultation is needed.

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Enterprise Quarter
(cont’d)
Recommendations

• The existing small local shops are valued by all, with the suggestion that stronger protection and promotion of local shops should be included within the SPD.

• There should be a balance of needs and allocations for local shops. A survey of existing locations, types, leases etc. will help to understand the existing situation and develop an appropriate area wide strategy.

• Provision for affordable rents and consideration of business types within the Planning use categories.

• An exploration of the Use Classes could be examined, with a view to a more detailed examination and development – essentially developing and forwarding Planning Legislation.

• A specific commitment in the SPD to support for small local shops and businesses.

• Active frontages developed along all entrances along the South Bank University Listed buildings (currently being redeveloped) to be encouraged within each shop front, rather than limited accessibility of a few.

• Long term and sustainable job creation needed within the Enterprise Quarter – and across the Elephant – should be positively promoted at local level.

• Job creation to be tailored to local needs and developed over a long-term basis in tandem with a neighbourhood business strategy.

• Encourage future adaptations and proposals for these buildings to have appropriately scaled active frontages through high quality detailed design proposals.

• Opportunities for engaging the University within the local community to be promoted. This can be promoted through consideration of active frontages and integration within vacant shop spaces – a new “shop window” of learning within the Borough.

• Strategy and studies required to understand the impact of tall buildings on St George’s Circus, together with requirements for how the impact is demonstrated - specify parameters for connection at ground and street level, on the ground’ and how any proposals will interact with the public realm.

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Rockingham Area

Recommendations

• It was noted that the Rockingham character area consists almost entirely of the Rockingham estate, and that while the SPD mentions an aspiration to improve the area several times there are few concrete proposals for improvement. A key concern is that without these detailed proposals the area will lose out in the competition for developer funds, and that detailed work is now urgent in developing a community-led vision for the area.

• Most of the SPD proposals focus on movement through the estate, rather than improving the estate itself.

• There is only one development site identified in the area (the Hand in Hand pub).

• The value of the large green spaces within the estate were seen as a key asset, and a strong desire was expressed to ensure that these spaces are adequately protected by policy.

• The value of the Rockingham community centre was emphasised, given the wide range of groups who use it, and proposals to improve the centre and for supporting the user groups were identified as important.

• Developing links across the New Kent Road to the Heygate site and Central area are important - the road forms a major obstacle to movement and reduces interactions between the Rockingham area and the rest of the Opportunity Area

• Improving existing housing was a key priority - whilst two blocks are being upgraded over the next six months, there is no clarity over the medium term plan which is dependent on funding. There is a perception that this is taking a lower priority here than other areas.
Housing, Community & Sustainability

Definitions of Sustainability

• Strikingly, personal definitions of ‘sustainability’ clustered strongly around the themes of community - continuity into the future, families, relationships, homes and affordability. Purely environmental aspects, though important, were not uppermost in most people’s minds.

What makes for a strong community?

• In pinpointing the essential components of a strong community there seemed to be, broadly, three interlinked aspects - relationships, place and home. ‘Community’ involves a combination of knowing each other - as neighbours, friends, family and people in the same vicinity - and places where we can interact - public realm, streets, shops, community buildings, meeting spaces and workplaces. Locally-organised activities are important, as is space for spontaneity. Examples included lovely personal stories about street parties and neighbours looking out for each other. Sadly, this kind of living seems to be dwindling - people no longer know many neighbours.

• Families are important - children attending the same school, doctor’s surgery, parks and so on cement communities together. Therefore the low proportion of 3 bedroom [or more] homes in the SPD and developers’ proposals for the central areas of Elephant & Castle will not promote strong community. People are concerned that the proposed large numbers of small flats will lead to high levels of private rented accommodation, and short-term residents with no commitment to the area. To foster community, there needs to be a balance between the stable and transient populations.

• New development cannot create an instant community. It is an ongoing process. We need to build bridges between diverse groups of people to avoid fragmenting our communities. The SPD and future planning policy should ask for clear evidence that new development is actively promoting community and participation.

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Housing, Community & Sustainability

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Housing, Community & Sustainability
(cont’d)

What does Sustainability mean for you?

What does Community mean for you?

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Housing, Community & Sustainability
(cont’d)

Homes

• Real affordability is a major concern. The proposed percentage of affordable and social rented units is too low. A redefinition of the word ‘affordable’ was called for to relate to actual modest incomes, perhaps using the average income in the borough. Former residents cannot afford to return to the area, and existing residents and their families are being excluded because of price. Some people felt strongly that the current redevelopment proposals are gentrification, which emphasizes physical housing rather than homes for communities.

• People are worried about the shortage of larger units for families and lease arrangements, particularly high numbers of ‘buy to let’ properties. Both of these have negative impact on community [see above].

• Is demolition and redevelopment really sustainable? Should we not be refurbishing? The old Unitary Development Plan [1995] contained a clause about not demolishing structurally stable houses - this clause could be reinstated in the SDP, giving a positive bias towards refurbishment.

Green Spaces

• The area is deficient in open space [predicted at only 0.61 hectares per 1000 people]; main roads and railways create barriers to accessibility. In addition to taking every opportunity to create new spaces, the quality of existing and proposed spaces is vital, as are pleasant green connections between them.

• Smaller green spaces, e.g. on estates like the Rockingham/ existing Heygate, have enormous potential, but often fall below the radar in planning terms. The SPD should acknowledge these in calculating losses, in protecting the quantum of open space and in identifying improvements.

• There is strong support for spaces for growing and gardening. It is important that landscape is accessible, though the proposed split between public and private space needs further clarification. Spaces must be well designed, to encourage people to meet and linger outdoors. Sun path and wind studies must be undertaken a pleasant microclimate without overshadowing by high buildings

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Community Facilities

• The SPD should require an assessment of need, provision and existing and future demographics, as a robust ‘evidence base’ for any new community facilities – for instance, there is no point in new schools if there are few family homes [though the group opposes this]. The projected age profile must also be considered.

• If school places do increase, new schools must be provided - there is no space for schools to expand on their small sites. Schools should also be available for community use out of teaching hours.

• Suggested community facilities include - schools, surgeries, dentists, community centres, Crossway Church, playgrounds, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, open spaces, nurseries, leisure and cultural facilities, libraries, theatres, cinemas, affordable retail and markets.

• The SPD must stress that proposed facilities are an improvement on the existing, not just a replacement. They must be affordable for the community to use. Refurbishment should be considered before new build or replacement.

• There is a strong suggestion that planning policy and the SPD should have a responsibility to safeguard and protect local communities and assets.

• Local shops and businesses are crucial. The SPD must give careful thought as to how to create local jobs for local people, providing the income necessary for a sustainable community and also reducing travel to work. Physical design must improve connections between shopping areas, creating a safe, sympathetic and accessible pedestrian environment and reducing the severance of the major roads.
Environment and Transport

• It was felt that the carbon calculation as used in the regeneration process is wrong, as it omits the embodied carbon in existing buildings and its release into the atmosphere due to demolition.

• Heavy traffic, air quality, noise and pollution are major issues. The SPD should require robust evidence of the impact of regeneration proposals in these areas; for instance, will the opening up of the Heygate edges reduce environmental quality in the interior of the site? The traffic problem is perceived as mainly due to vehicles passing through Elephant & Castle, principally the 26 bus routes. Bus stops and interchanges need improved, and buses themselves must become more ‘green’. Are some routes underused at certain times of day?

• There is enthusiasm for district heating/ Combined Heat & Power systems, particularly if they can export to other parts of the neighbourhood, for renewable energy, retrofitting existing buildings, reducing water consumption and innovative schemes for recycling, re-use/ ‘upcycling’ and waste.

• Generally, there is a desire to reduce car usage and minimise parking, and a belief that a car-free development will outweigh parking spaces as a selling point for future development - though some disagree. Walking and cycling are seen as essential for a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.

• Trees and green space are important in reducing the Urban Heat Island effect. The SPD must demand evidence that tall buildings do not have a negative effect on microclimate, particularly sun-path/ shading studies and ground-level wind patterns.
Latin American Businesses

Introduction
The Latin American presence in Elephant and Castle core area comprises four clearly identified zones: Elephant & Castle shopping centre, the Arches in Elephant Road, the Arches in Eagles Yard and Tiendas del Sur in Newington Butts.

These shops sell Latin American products but critically they are also part of an social network and support system for many Latin Americans living in London. Economically these shops are also important because they provide employment and income for many families in London and contribute to the variety of offers in the area. Latin Americans are not only participating in the economy of the area, but transforming it and in the process creating a Latin place in London. This presence is important because it contributes to London’s cultural diversity - precisely what makes London a multi-cultural world class city.

Identity of the Elephant and Castle
There is a strong support for the recognition of E&C core area as a ‘Latin Quarter’. The E&C is a place where Latin Americans have invested economically and emotionally. There is a sense of attachment, a sense of ownership in the transformation of Elephant & Castle into a ‘thriving Latin Quarter’. For Latin Americans the Elephant and Castle is a place, a destination, not a passing through route. Some organisations feel that this recognition could be achieved with the creation of a square or the presence of an architectural piece or artistic manifestation in a site that reinforces the character of the area as Latin. This will certainly contribute to heighten the sense of belongingness that Latin Americans have established with Elephant & Castle.

Overall
Business continuity has been a concern from the start of the regeneration process, including sustainability of businesses until the demolition of the centre, the position if they decide to exit early, whether they will be entitled to any compensation, and their ability to return to the centre after the redevelopment.

[Summarised from the response to the SPD prepared by Patria Román-Velázquez, City University London) and discussed at the workshop.]
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Latin American Businesses
(cont’d)

Issues relating to Latin American retailers in the area
There is uncertainty about the process and about what will happen to the businesses in the area. In the case of E&C shopping centre, there is confusion over St. Modwen’s plans and motivations for the shopping centre. The process has taken too long - ‘nothing seemed to happen’ - which drives the current apathy and lack of engagement by some retailers. They are simply tired - but also resigned to whatever would happen.

Length of Lease for retailers in the shopping centre as long term leases come to an end remains critical. Renewal is on short term basis (no longer than 5 years). There is still uncertainty about terms of contract and their entitlement, and this has been the case for some years.

Capacity Building. there is a need to support businesses through training and facilitation of knowledge that it is geared towards the specific needs of minority ethnic businesses.

There are signs of transformation in the Arches (Elephant Road and Arches behind Strata). Negotiations have taken place and Latin American retailers next to Strata have been engaged to some extent. This is a business community in transition and with the right support and commitment by those involved it can fully transform into a ‘thriving Latin Quarter’. It is clear that the information they have received about the regeneration has been fragmented and not necessarily from official sources, to the point that it can be dismissed as rumour.

The lack of follow up about the process was also mentioned as a shortcoming of the process. Retailers commented that in various occasions they have been asked to fill questionnaires, but the process seems to end there. Filling questionnaires does not amount to participating in the consultation process; it is yet another exercise of superficial accountability by the institutions involved. The credibility of the information received has been put into doubt and involvement in the consultation process queried, so there is a need for a constant link between retailers, the council and developers. This will be crucial to guarantee business involvement in the delivery and phasing of the development for the area.

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Latin American Businesses
(cont’d)

Issues relating to the Railway Arches
The regeneration of the railway arches is mentioned as one objective in the theme of town centre regeneration. This is clearly welcomed by all, but the document is not clear about what exactly this means and how will the process be managed. The following points are of concern to the Latin American businesses in the area:

• Who is in charge of the regeneration of the arches and what support will be provided to existing businesses?
• How will the process be managed?
• How will businesses already operating in the arches manage during the construction process?
• If some arches are opened up to provide access to the front of the shopping centre, will this involve the disappearance of some of the retail space now available?
• If a new mix of land uses is to be introduced will it reduce the number of spaces for some of the most frequent current activities: e.g. retail, food, entertainment. Does a future “mix of uses” imply less of some areas of current trading?
• Protecting current tenants from excessive rent increases in the next few years as the area is transformed. Business owners fear steep increases in rent will force them to move from an area they have been investing in for c20 years.
• Business owners are worried that landlords may favour established ‘household brand’ shops, displacing current tenants in favour of chain retailers. They would like the first option in the future to be tenants.
• Over the last two years Latin American businesses in the arches have invested in the premises. The retailers need reassurance about the alternatives available to them during the regeneration process: relocation costs if needed, compensation, entitlement and sustainability of businesses whilst construction goes on and after redevelopment.
Latin American Businesses
(cont’d)
Issues relating to the Shopping Centre
It is likely that some displacement of businesses will happen during the changes to the shopping centre. This process needs to address the following issues:
• How will this process be managed?
• How to achieve minimum disruption from the development process?
• Clarity over S106 funds - are these available for relocation of businesses?
• A clear definition of affordable space is needed.
• Percentage of affordable units in the shopping centre and Heygate site is unclear.
• Rent value at “40% below market rate averaged over a 5 year period” does not take into account the different types of small businesses in the area.
• Five years are not enough to assess the viability and success of businesses. The council should have long term commitment in support of small businesses that will contribute and enhance the distinctive character of the area whilst ensuring a variety of offers.
• Uncertainty over the five year period - when will the period start? Is there a set date for this period? Is it from the start of a business in the area? For how long will this provision exist?

Social and Community Infrastructure
A statement in favour of supporting proposals for the provision of social and community infrastructures is not enough. The council should provide, make available and manage spaces for community uses and other cultural events. Local voluntary organisations and community groups are in need of space to meet and provide services for the community they serve and it is imperative that such a space is provided by the council under the current scheme.

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Green Links/Routes

The SPD focus on Green Links was welcomed. The discussion focussed on the following issues:
- Identifying and Defining Green Links/routes
- Identifying Their Characteristics.
- Key Criteria For 2 different types of Green Link/Route.
- Designing An Example Green Quiet Route on Rodney Place.

Identifying and Defining Green Links/Routes.

The discussion concluded that there should be a hierarchy of green routes consists of 3 different types of Green Routes: Green Links, Green Quiet Routes and Greened Main Roads. They might be defined as follows:

- **Green Links.** These link green spaces together by extending the amount of green between the two with “pedestrian pathways” and “woodland edges”. In Salisbury Row Park the green link is the meandering path through the park that few cyclists use. These links improve wildlife by providing migration corridors.

- **Green Quiet Routes** are lightly trafficked roads and streets (such as Brandon Street) used by cyclists with trees and other planting designed to slow car traffic and to improve and green the overall environment. Green routes have mix of slow moving motor vehicles, cycles and pedestrians and creating them can involve widening or building out pavements and planting more trees and other forms of greenery.

- **Greened Main Roads.** Roads such as Heygate Street & Harper Road should also be part of the network, perhaps with further tree planting. On these streets, the perceptions of car drivers and how they see these roads can be changed with greenery. Planting should be combined with carriageway narrowing, footway build-outs and other measures to slow traffic, combined with a 20 mph speed limit. However the category should also include trunk roads such as the New Kent Road, already heavily planted with mature trees. The mature trees along these routes are key to local biodiversity. Roads such as St Georges Road should be considered within the green network owing to their heavy tree cover and overlapping canopies.

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Green Links/Routes
(cont’d)

Identifying the Characteristics of Green Links.

• Southwark aims for 60% tree cover on all streets in the SPD area. This forms a baseline for the green links, but higher levels are needed on designated streets.

• Avoiding conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and cars by good design; the adoption of the three categories of Green Link identified on the previous slide is crucial to making this work.

• In Salisbury Row Park cyclists and pedestrians rub along well: cyclists tend not to enter the park itself, mainly only people on foot. In Chatham Street and Darwin Street there is no problem because there are clear pavements and overall there are no long stretches of road so vehicles (whether bicycles or motor vehicles) move at low speeds.

• Formal road crossings need to be wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists.

• There may be potential to close off some roads around Rodney Road to stop rat running and create more areas for play - perhaps extending the green of Nursery Row Park into the southern part of Orb Street.

• Delivery could be through partnerships between the council and the community:
  • The council would need to deliver the hard surfacing in a project, and possibly materials such as earth, plants and mulch/compost. Costs would be kept low by simple specifications (e.g. substantial wooden edging for footway build-outs and planted areas, as in New York and some other London boroughs)
  • The local community could then help to create and maintain the planting in the area. This would be through gardening days, working with children perhaps at local schools and through local volunteer green groups as already occurs in local parks including Victory Community Park.

• All green links should be identified distinctively and recognisably without extensive signage clutter.
Green Links/Routes
(cont’d)

Key Criteria for two Green links.

Between Victory Community Park and Nursery Row Park

- **Green Link**: pedestrian route crossing a greened Rodney Place (see example on next slide) through masterplan area and into Content Street and across the forthcoming Stead St developments.

- **Green Quiet Route**: Via Balfour Street (note could close Balfour Street north of Munton Road except for access.) South of Munton Road significant road capacity could be better used with heavy planting of trees including larger species, planters, landscape strips and bushes, or extending Victory Community Park.

- At Orb Street junction major opportunity to extend green corridor between Nursery Row Park and Salisbury Row/Victory Community Park. Excess road capacity would be better used by wider pavements and more crossings for both cyclists and pedestrians alongside planting of large tree species in this area. Key opportunity to integrate the green space just south of the Salisbury Estate car park into the junction to increase the amount of usable green space that is accessible to people in the area.

- Accommodate parking for shops on Rodney Road set into the pavement (as on the Walworth Road), and consider removing Wadding St by using Stead St for both directions.

Green Quiet Route: North-South along Brandon Street and Portland Street as Green Commuter Route

- Reduce vehicle speeds through upgrading the current cushions to full width sinusoidal humps or tables as has been done at the junction with East St market to slow vehicles down significantly. Consider stopping through car traffic at East St (Brandon St) and further south near Liverpool Grove/Michael Faraday School.

- Frequent new build-outs into the carriageway (with trees/planting on the build-outs), with linear community encouraged gardening where space allows along the road and/or privacy strip in front of homes which again could be greened.

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Green Links/Routes
(cont’d)

Workshop design An Example Green Quiet Route on Rodney Place.

Create a wide pavement on the western side which is wide enough both for cycles (two way) and pedestrians.

Create green (finger?) crossing over the New Kent Rd to link to Falmouth Rd and Bankside Urban Forest and Rockingham Estate and link to Greened Main Road on New Kent Road.

Widen pavement and inset parking into it (as on Walworth Rd) so becomes part of pavement when not used by cars.

Northbound carriageway is duplicated by Heygate Street. A one way road (two way for cycles) allows significant greening.

Widen pavement and extend park (outside fencing) and fill space with trees (including fruit trees) and grass and planters.

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Neighbourhood planning

Introduction
• There are high expectations about Neighbourhood Planning at the Elephant and Castle but may different takes on what it is, isn’t and what it could do to the planning of the area.
• The workshop focused mainly on process, ideas for content, the role of the Council, representativeness, relationships between the forum and the council, how to ensure decisions made are democratic and, at the same time, the address the concerns and interests of everyone.
• The workshop benefitted from the presence of John Corey who coordinates the Bermondsey Neighbourhood Forum.
• Whilst there is no clear picture of what the procedures and contents of a neighbourhood plan should be, some key steps were identified as themes for the discussion.
  • who is the neighbourhood (the forum, how it is formed, by whom, the constitution, how a community become designated as a forum)
  • where is the neighbourhood (the area, its boundaries, its relationship with its neighbours)
  • what is the neighbourhood (what can go in a neighbourhood plan, compliance with other plans)
  • how could the council help and influence
  • how can the plan generate change (role of developers and the business community)
Neighbourhood planning
(cont’d)

Who is the neighbourhood?
• A dominant theme in the discussion was about inclusivity and what can be done/who can guarantee that the forum is representative of all the people and all their needs; what are the check and balances in place? Other also raised concerns about the mechanisms for decision making within the forum, membership, how to involve businesses and people that work in the neighbourhood.
• The council has the role of facilitator, but the discussion highlighted concern over the level of influence or control over the shape of the forum the council may have. It was agreed that the role of the council as guarantor of the representativeness is no substitute to an effective and open participation and dialogue of all interested parties.

Where is the neighbourhood?
• Boundaries were a major source of discussion: it was acknowledged defining them is not an easy task.
• The area inside the boundaries of the SPD is very diverse; the group agreed that there isn’t just one need or interest that can be used as guidance to select the neighbourhood boundaries. The exercise and effort to identify these boundaries on the SPD map proved a good example of the kind of negotiations and compromises the forum would have to make if and when it is designated.
• Ways/criteria for deciding where to include and where to exclude that were discussed focused on these:
  • Consistency of problems and aims
  • Geography
  • Social relationships
• Many participants felt that the network of main streets was separating people and neighbourhoods from one another and contributing to areas at the north and south of New Kent Road and at the East and West of the northern roundabout to feel disconnected, and the neighbourhood plan would be a key way of addressing this lack of connectivity.
• It was agreed that it was unclear how to deal with boundary issues.
Neighbourhood planning (cont’d)

What is the neighbourhood?
• The discussion focused on what can go in a neighbourhood plan, and how to comply with other plans.
  • A neighbourhood plan cannot say “no” where Local plans have already said “yes”. However it can say “how” and “where”. It is unclear if the neighbourhood plan can say “yes” (or “more of”) where the council has said “no”. This is particularly important for housing.
• Economic growth and job growth was a key interest, but there was a concern how they can be fostered through a neighbourhood plan if none of the existing plans have addressed this successfully. For example, how could a neighbourhood plan attract employers? Commercial development can be facilitated through neighbourhood development orders but the plan does not guarantee new jobs will go to local people.
• Using the neighbourhood plan to reknit the area together were thought achievable through a design strategy and selecting sites that could help to achieve a more connected sense of the space.
• Another proposal was to use the neighbourhood plan (and the future community infrastructure levy) to promote more and higher quality of public space and public infrastructures. The neighbourhood plan could give detailed guidance of what kind of public spaces and public infrastructure it wants.

How can the council help and influence?
• The council has a duty to support (but not to finance) residents who wants to develop a neighbourhood plan. This is to ensure that the designated neighbourhood forum acts on behalf of all in the neighbourhood area and the council will also pay and host the referendum to vote for the adoption of the neighbourhood plan. This can be a significant cost.

How does the plan generate change?
• Plans do not generate development but can guide attract and control it. The workshop discussed this theme, questioning the role developers should have, and what kind of negotiation would be possible. The essential role of developers (positive and negative) was not denied. It was also discussed how the community can become a developer through acquiring assets of community value, but financial resources are a concern.
Neighbourhood planning
(cont’d)

Summary
• The workshop agreed that the process of Neighbourhood planning is as important as the outcomes. The plan is as good as the process that generates it. It is representative if it is prepared collectively.
• The objective of the workshop was not to reach agreement but to raise awareness of the opportunities and hurdles that a neighbourhood plan and its forum would be involved in.
• The main points arising from the discussion and agreed at the end were as follows:
  • although there is a suggested list of steps for a Neighbourhood Plan, and the council will try and make sure those steps are followed, a neighbourhood plan is very much a creation of the community and it can start from the creation of a forum, as much as from the selection of the neighbourhood area or from the problems that an existing community wants to address.
  • a neighbourhood plan is not the solution to everything that is not right in an area, and in the case of Elephant and Castle the neighbourhood plan cannot prevent planned development from happening.
  • a neighbourhood plan can be approached as an opportunity to ensure that the development that will come, fits the needs of the neighbourhood and of the people that live and work there. This can be achieved if the neighbourhood plan has policies for improved design quality, sets standards for open spaces or streetscapes, identifies areas and sites for local services.
  • once a neighbourhood plan is adopted, all applications will have to meet the policies in the neighbourhood plan. However, as for all other planning applications, the council will make discretionary decisions to grant or refuse planning permission also to developments that do not fit within the provisions of the plan. This is because neighbourhood plans do not change how planning works. With neighbourhood plans, residents are able to add an additional layer of control over development including increasing opportunities for some development to take place how and where it is needed.
Next Steps

• At the Visioning event held by the Elephant Amenity Network in June 2011, a wide and diverse range of ideas and recommendations were identified and reported: it was agreed in some areas action was required and in other areas things that must be avoided were identified. However it was recognised in many areas that further discussion and debate was needed. In particular this included:
  • Implementation of a truly participative “placemaking” process to encourage the creativity, energy and knowledge of local people in shaping the rapid change at the Elephant and Castle
  • To develop participatory working groups on area-wide themes such as housing and sustainability
• The workshops that are reported here represent a natural next step in this process, with detailed workshops both on the character areas identified by Southwark’s SPD within the Opportunity Area and on cross-cutting themes.
• The development of the SPD continues to an artificially-fast timescale driven by private sector developers, to whom a huge part of the opportunity area is being offered by the council. However the implementation of the masterplan, as well as many developments in the rest of the SPD area, will take a period of 10 to 15 years to arrive, and the opportunity is here to influence and shape the future of the Elephant and Castle.
• To achieve this influence, this document represents a further step to the development of a neighbourhood plan, an aspiration which the Elephant Amenity Network has already discussed with Southwark Council and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Corporate Strategy.
• It is anticipated that this neighbourhood plan will initially focus on a two smaller areas within the overall Elephant & Castle, namely the Rockingham area and East Walworth. Next steps will include:
  ▪ The definition of the boundaries of these two sub-areas - noting that East Walworth includes parts of the SPD character areas of Heygate St and Brandon Street, whilst discussions at this workshop identified a range of changes to boundaries to ensure that key features (such as East Street Market) did not straddle boundaries.
  ▪ Development of a set of objectives for the two sub-areas (social, economic & environmental)
  ▪ Detailed definition of needs within the two sub-areas drawing together existing indicators plus new research
  ▪ Development of funding applications to assist in preparation and presentation of plans.

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Overall Vision

• The Elephant & Castle area has long been a place of movement in south London; historically the cross-roads that people passed through north to the river and its many bridges, the City and the West End and south to residential London and Kent and Surrey. After the war, accommodating movement turned into domination by movement as the “Piccadilly of the south” and its communities, shops and entertainments were erased by roads and roundabouts.

• Now at the start of the 21st Century the Elephant area should again be a place both for the thousands who pass through and the thousands who live locally; reconnecting what had become isolated communities living around the Elephant and in Walworth; ensuring that these communities and neighbourhoods can be genuine participants in devising solutions to the big issues we face.

• We need to create a housing stock that caters for single people, couples and families of all levels of income and includes generous levels of social rented housing. Employment is needed to address the high levels of deprivation in the area and to help younger people to remain; the independent and smaller businesses which can create higher levels of employment and keep the spend in the local area need to be nurtured; a mix of shops, independent traders and street markets is required to meet the needs of the diverse communities in the area. Our diverse secular and faith communities need to be supported with the facilities that meet their needs. Finally the whole area needs to be knitted back together with a network of streets and roads that encourage people to walk and cycle; our patchwork of open and green spaces need to be protected and linked by pleasant routes high in biodiversity that offer a contrast and balance to our inner city life.

• Over the next 20 years we want the Elephant area to become a thriving inner city neighbourhood that meets that needs and aspirations of its existing residents and those who will settle here in the future.

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## Attendance log

Apologies for errors and omissions. Please note that this attendance log includes some who attended specific parts of the event.

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<th>Attendees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clementine Blakemore (Architectural Association)</td>
<td>David Nip</td>
<td>Carol Hustler (East Walworth Green Links)</td>
<td>Norma Lawrence</td>
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<td>Adrian Glasspool (Better Elephant)</td>
<td>Beverley Ogwang</td>
<td>Simon Courage</td>
<td>Andrew Richardson</td>
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<td>Vally Wilson (Rodney Road Traders)</td>
<td>Amanda Sewell</td>
<td>Sanna Wennberg</td>
<td>Lorraine Hilton (East Walworth Green Links)</td>
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<td>Antonio Pena (Friends of Nursery Row Park)</td>
<td>Jim Beedell (Friends of Nursery Row Park)</td>
<td>Peter Wright (Salisbury TRA)</td>
<td>Jerry Flynn</td>
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<td>Lita Kawajigashi (Notting Hill Gate Community Group)</td>
<td>Celia Cronin (Victory Community Garden)</td>
<td>Steve Lancashire (Balfour St Housing Project)</td>
<td>Annie Lennox</td>
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<td>Katherine McNeil (dialogue)</td>
<td>Charles LeFevre (Rockingham TRA)</td>
<td>Steve Crawford</td>
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<td>Luke Miller (Friends of Nursery Row Park)</td>
<td>M Tubbs (Henshaw St TRA)</td>
<td>Yerson (Telefono de la Esperanza UK)</td>
<td>Simon Hughes MP</td>
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<td>Bethany Ritter</td>
<td>Simon Childs (LCC)</td>
<td>Alianza Iberoamericana</td>
<td>Cllr Claire Hickson</td>
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<td>Budoor Bukhari</td>
<td>Richard Lee</td>
<td>Escuela Gabriel Garcia Marquez</td>
<td>Cllr Darren Merrill</td>
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<td>Hayley Gewer</td>
<td>Al-Issa Munu (Rockingham Community Association)</td>
<td>Patria Roman-Velazquez (City University London)</td>
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<td>Catherine Barber</td>
<td>Sard (Henshaw St TRA)</td>
<td>Corrine Turner</td>
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<td>Seeta Rajani</td>
<td>Martha Nubia</td>
<td>Andrew Richardson (Bankside Residents’ Forum)</td>
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<td>Elena Besussi</td>
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<td>Nora Nogradi</td>
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<td>Mara Ferreri</td>
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<td>Jamie Baxter (FOAC)</td>
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<td>C Burgos (Latinamerican UK Forum)</td>
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<td>Santa Pedone</td>
<td>A Kokumo</td>
<td>Isaac Bigio (Minka News)</td>
<td>Tim Cutts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeremy Leach (Southwark Living Streets)</td>
<td>Juliana</td>
<td>Gagan Bains</td>
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**London Borough of Southwark**
Thanks

We are very grateful for everyone who spared the time to come and contribute their ideas. We would specially like to thank Norma Laurence, Beverley Ogwang, Amanda Sewell and Vally Wilson for working flat out providing everyone with refreshments throughout the entire day, and to the Reverend Peter Stevenson for allowing us to use the wonderful Crossway Church as our venue. Thanks also to Katherine McNeil for taking photos of the event, and to all the workshop leaders for their detailed notes of the sessions.

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Appendices

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Central Area SPD proposal notes

• Draft SPD proposals:
  • Redevelop shopping centre and expand its appeal to a larger catchment.
  • Provide a range of unit sizes and affordable retail units which are made available to existing occupiers displaced by development.
  • Provide a range of arts, cultural, leisure and entertainment uses, inc. food and drink uses which make a positive contribution to evening economy.
  • Support the growth of the London College of Communication.
  • Strengthen links between the shopping centre and Walworth Road ensuring that it becomes a key shopping axis.
  • Require developments to be mixed use and introduce active uses at ground level wherever possible.
  • Ensure that development opportunities provide opportunities for existing and future SME businesses.
  • New leisure centre.
  • Improve bus, tube and rail interchange
  • Increase capacity in the Northern Line station.
  • Replace subways with surface level crossings.
  • Improve east-west pedestrian connections by providing direct links through the shopping centre site and railway viaduct.
  • Activate and soften key public spaces around the central area and provide a new civic space at the front of the shopping centre.
  • Use tall buildings to signal the regeneration of the area, help define gateways into the central area and create an interesting skyline. Potential sites for tall buildings include the shopping centre and leisure centre sites.

• Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:
  • No mention of need to finish the Walworth Road project in the northern section.
  • Need to create safe and pleasant north-south crossings for pedestrians and cyclists to move from the Walworth area towards Borough and London Bridge.
  • To increase the space for bus passengers waiting in the area opposite the Tabernacle building.
  • Development Sites in the Area.

• Development sites identified
  • 13 Former London Park Hotel
  • 14 Leisure Centre
  • 15 E&C Shopping Centre inc Hannibal House

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Heygate Area SPD proposal notes

• Draft SPD proposals:
  • Use the redevelopment opportunity of the Heygate development site to create a vibrant new quarter at the heart of the Elephant and Castle.
  • Provide around 3000 new homes in the character area including approximately 2,500 homes on the Heygate development site.
  • Provide a range of retail opportunities including:
    ▪ large format stores on Walworth Road and New Kent Road frontages
    ▪ smaller affordable units on secondary routes,
  • Mix of business, leisure and community uses on the Heygate development site.
  • Improvement in public transport services.
  • Strong links between the shopping centre and the Heygate site through opening arches in the railway viaduct.
  • Introduce a choice of north-south routes through the Heygate site.
  • Market square and new public park in the heart of the Heygate site.
  • Maximise the number of trees on the Heygate development site which can be retained.
  • Enable interim uses of the Heygate development site
  • Provide a tall building at the northern end of Walworth Road which together with Strata helps define a gateway into the central area.
  • Buildings on the Heygate estate and 50 New Kent Road development sites should help consolidate a cluster of tall buildings.
  • Provide a district CHP/communal heating system for the Heygate development site which has the potential to link to the shopping centre and leisure centre.

• Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:
  • Meadow Row (not mentioned) as an important cycling link to CS7 and other cycle routes to the north.
  • Streets can be made active without reliance on parking of motor vehicles.
  • Courtyards should be at ground rather than podium level.
  • Mention needed of Balfour St as a green route and what the aspirations are for the links between the Phase 1 development and the existing homes and buildings that lie along that street

• Development sites identified
  • 16 50 New Kent Rd (Oakmayne Plaza)
  • 17 Surdaw House
  • 18 Heygate Estate
Brandon St Area SPD proposal notes

• Draft SPD proposals:
  • Maintain the area as a predominately residential area, with some supporting local pubs, small shops and the school and church, and some light industrial use.
  • Enable East Street market to thrive.
  • Create better linkages to the Heygate Street area and Walworth Road.
  • Conserve or enhance the character of the area, particularly the listed buildings.
  • Improve the public realm at the junction of Orb Street, Stead Street, Rodney Road, Balfour Street, Wadding Street and Rodney Place, taking advantage of the setting of the proposed locally listed Peabody buildings and the views towards the listed Lady Margaret Church.
  • The shops on Rodney Road which should be retained or re-provided to provide some focus and a sense of place.
  • Ensure that the building heights of new developments relate to the surrounding buildings, which are predominately 3 storeys in the proposed Larcom Street conservation area.
  • Improve the setting of Nursery Row Park and enhance its value and contribution to nature conservation.
  • Improve green routes to Burgess Park

• Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:
  • Need for clarity as to the purpose of and character of green routes.
  • Improvements at junction of Orb St need to be made clearer.
  • Little mention or attention given to the role of and future of East Street market

• Development sites identified
  • 29 78-82 Brandon St
  • 30 98 to 104 Rodney Rd
  • 31 Stead St Car Park
  • 32 90-96 Brandon St

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Walworth Road Area SPD proposal notes

• Draft SPD proposals:
  • Ensure that development provides a mix of uses including active uses at ground level wherever possible.
  • Ensure that there is not an over-concentration of student developments in the north of the character area.
  • Reinforce the character by improving shop fronts and redeveloping buildings which are of a low architectural quality.
  • Maintain the important views which add to the character and identity of the area, especially the view of St Paul’s Cathedral.
  • Provide new public spaces next to the old town hall and at Carter Place if a new scheme is submitted to provide relief from the busy environment on Walworth Road.
  • Support improvements in library services.
  • Support NHS Southwark to provide improved health facilities on Larcom Street.

• Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:
  • Walworth Road project needs to be completed in its southern section in the area around the Gateway estate to benefit those living on the Aylesbury Estate.
  • Protection is needed for the following buildings along the Walworth Rd (currently omitted from either local listing or being of townscape merit):
    ▪ Walworth Road - the newsagents north of NatWest bank and buildings above Bagel King and Chicken Cottage.
    ▪ The buildings on East Street at its junction with the Walworth Road (which includes the Halal meat shop).
  • Little mention or attention given to the role of and future of East Street market.
  • Improving the retail mix. How to use SPD to improve the balance of the Walworth Rd retail offer and address negatives such as payday loans and betting shops.

• Development sites identified
  • 24 Kwik-Fit
  • 25 John Smith House
  • 26 Police Forensics Lab & Hotel, Amelia St
  • 28 Chatelaine House
  • 33 York House
  • 34 237 and rear 221-223 Walworth Rd

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Railway Corridor Area SPD proposal notes

• Draft SPD proposals:
  • Retain business uses and support the introduction of residential on upper floors.
  • Reinforce the continuity of the retail frontage on Walworth Road.
  • Encourage a range of town centre uses in railway arches.
  • Ensure development makes a positive contribution to the public realm and helps to create a more consistent character.
  • Ensure that the building heights of new developments relate to the surrounding buildings.
  • Ensure that development provides pedestrian and cycle routes which link into the surrounding area. Use development opportunities to improve east-west links and open up routes through the viaduct as well as a continuous link alongside the viaduct.
  • Conserve or enhance heritage assets including the Manor Place Baths and its setting, as well as the settings of John Smith House and the Pullens conservation area.
  • Reinforce green routes and improve green infrastructure throughout the character area.

• Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:
  • Major improvements needed on Hampton St and Steedman St to address their narrow cluttered, broken and filthy pavements.
  • More detail is needed concerning how to deliver the proposed pedestrian routes that run along both sides of the rail corridor.
  • Protection is needed for the following buildings adjacent to the Manor Place Depot (currently omitted from either local listing or being of townscape merit):
    • The Victorian terraces at the southern end of Penton Place on the east side and Penrose Street on the northern side and southern side east of Penton Place.

• Development sites identified
  • 19 Castle Day Centre
  • 20 Day Nursery & 20 Steedman St
  • 21 2-8 Steedman St
  • 22 T. Clarke Building (Stanhope House)
  • 23 Newington Industrial Estate
  • 27 Sorting Office & 31 Amelia St
  • 35 Manor Place Depot

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Pullens Area SPD proposal notes

• Draft SPD proposals:
  • Maintain the area as a predominately residential area.
  • Create better linkages through the area and with Walworth Road, the central area, Kennington Park Road and Newington Butts.
  • Improve the existing open spaces and green routes between them.

• Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:
  • Thought and mention needs to be given to Dante Road which is an extremely poor environment with large amounts of dead carriageway at present.
  • More detail is needed concerning the proposed green route along Longville Road, as it will be only too easily forgotten unless specific attention is drawn to it.
  • Both should receive s106 contributions from the adjacent former London Park Hotel which will impact significantly on these streets.

• Development sites identified
  ▪ None
West Square Area SPD proposal notes

- **Draft SPD proposals:**
  - Maintain the area as a predominantly residential area.
  - Create better linkages, including green routes through the character area and with the central area.
  - Maintain and improve the existing open spaces.
  - Ensure that development conserves or enhances the character and appearance of the West Square conservation area and the proposed Elliott’s Row conservation area and their settings.

- **Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:**
  - The creation of/permission for contraflow cycling along Geraldine Street would open up cycling routes in this area that can make use of Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park.

- **Development sites identified**
  - None
Enterprise Quarter SPD proposal notes

• Draft SPD proposals:
  • Continue to support the economic and business function of the Enterprise Quarter, in particular, but not only, London Southbank University.
  • Ensure that development opportunities provide opportunities for existing and future SME businesses.
  • Promote provision of active uses at ground floor, particularly on Newington Causeway and London Road.
  • Promote the redevelopment or refurbishment of underused land and buildings through development which demonstrates high quality architecture and which helps create a more consistent townscape.
  • Require active frontages at ground floor wherever possible.
  • Transform the environment around Keyworth Street, Ontario Street, Thomas Doyle Street creating traffic free public spaces.
  • Improve the public realm at key gateways into the university, including at the junctions of Borough Road/Southwark Bridge Road, Southwark Bridge Road/Newington Causeway and London Road/Ontario Street.
  • Reinforce the character of main roads through tree planting and public realm improvements.
  • Improve linkages into neighbouring areas and join up with existing programmes such as the Bankside Urban Forest.
  • Create new links, including green routes through the area which integrate with existing public spaces.
  • Reinforce the heritage of the area, particularly around St George’s Circus.
  • Enable a cluster of tall buildings on Newington Causeway. Heights should diminish moving northwards along Newington Causeway. Elsewhere ensure that building heights relate to the context of the area.

• Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:
  • Newington Causeway acts as a tremendous block to pedestrian and cycle movements owing to its motorway like appearance. Real investment is needed in this road in order to reduce capacity and vehicle speeds.
  • Clear statement needed about active frontages on the east side of London Road. South of the Georgian terrace this is a particularly threatening but significant frontage owing to the bus stops that run the length of this road.

• Development sites identified
  • 1 Erlang House & Hill House
  • 3 113-119 Borough Rd & 123-132 London Rd
  • 5 St Georges Chapel, Borough Rd
  • 7 Site rear of 103-108 Borough Rd
  • 9 57-87 Newington Causeway
  • 11 Eileen House, Newington Causeway
  • 2 Erlang House car park
  • 4 Site bounded by Rotary St, Thomas Doyle St and London Rd
  • 6 London South Bank University, 103-108 Borough Rd
  • 8 Newington Triangle
  • 10 89-93 Newington Causeway & Avonmouth House

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Rockingham Area SPD proposal notes

• Draft SPD proposals:
  • Improve wayfinding and ensure that pedestrian links are make to the south in particular, across new Kent Road into the Heygate development site.
  • Make sure infill development respects the form of surrounding buildings and reinforces the streetscape.
  • Take opportunities to make good use of housing amenity spaces and improve green routes through the area.
  • Improve the retail environment on Harper Road.
  • Improve facilities at the Rockingham Community Centre.

• Issues To Consider For The Character Area/Missing From Draft SPD:
  • There is a clear community demand for improvements to community facilities throughout the area. Little description of this in the SPD.

• Development sites identified
  • 12 Hand in Hand Public House, Meadow Row
Neighbourhood planning - what is it?

- **Neighbourhood planning** is a set of new planning tools introduced by the government to give local communities more powers to decide what happens where in their areas. It is not yet being applied in the Elephant & Castle. These tools are additional to existing plans, policy guidance or development documents, and do not replace them.

- The most important instruments are **Neighbourhood Development Orders** and **Neighbourhood Development Plans**.

- Other tools are being introduced that will help deliver (make happen) the neighbourhood plans. These are **Community Right To Build** and **Opportunities To Secure Community Assets**.

- A **Neighbourhood** is not defined and neither are the area and composition of a neighbourhood fixed. The **Neighbourhood Forum** identifies the **Neighbourhood Area** and its boundaries. The **Council(s)** will approve it and **Designate** the area as a Neighbourhood. Neighbourhood areas are not bound to wards or even **Borough boundaries** - particularly relevant at Elephant & Castle which is at the boundary of four wards in Southwark and very close to the border with Lambeth.

- A neighbourhood plan is a set of **policies** and provisions in relation to the development and change of use of the neighbourhood area. The plans must comply with the local plan (Core Strategy) policies, targets (for housing, jobs, etc) and area designations. They must also comply also with all planning documents sitting above the Core Strategy (London Plan, National Spatial Strategy, EU directives). They can concern one or any number of issues: from green spaces or transport only to a broad range of themes and problems usually provided for in local development plans.

- Once the neighbourhood plan is adopted, all **planning applications** submitted for development and change of use in the neighbourhood area will be assessed against its provisions. The plans are likely to consist of a vision for the neighbourhood, a set of objectives (social, economic, environmental), local infrastructures and service needs, design guidance, a programme/schedule of actions and a programme for monitoring.

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Neighbourhood plans - how do they work?

• **Neighbourhood Development Orders** remove the need for *planning applications*, by automatically granting permissions for certain uses and developments in certain areas. Without a planning application there is no consultation; however it is the community that promotes and proposes the orders. They can be an incentive for certain developments and uses and can facilitate the process.

• A **Neighbourhood Forum** is the body responsible for initiating and preparing the neighbourhood plans/orders. Any group of local residents, community organisations, business groups, even people who can demonstrate an interest in living in a neighbourhood can initiate the process to become a forum. The minimum number of members of a forum is 21 (this may change during future parliamentary debates.)

• Before designating the forum, the Local Council must assess that the organisation or group of residents has a **constitution**, aim to foster the **wellbeing** of the area and that membership is open to all those living, wanting to live and working in the area.

• Once designated, the forum can begin preparing its **Neighbourhood Plan**. This plan does not ensure that development will come forward - but only that, when it does, it will occur according to the principles of the plan.

• Development can come from developers. Community organisations and Neighbourhood Forums can engage developers during preparation of neighbourhood plans.

• Under **Community Right to Build Orders**, some small scale development that meets local need can be brought forward by community groups without a traditional planning application. These orders must be approved by referendum (50% +1.)

• Existing neighbourhood forums in Southwark currently include:
  • Bermondsey Neighbourhood Forum ([http://bermondseyforum.org/](http://bermondseyforum.org/))
  • Bankside ([http://www.betterbankside.co.uk/brf](http://www.betterbankside.co.uk/brf))

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Jargon Buster - Planning

The Core Strategy
• This is the most important local planning document. The Core Strategy sets out the long term planning objectives for the borough (10-15 years) and the strategic planning policies that are needed to deliver these objectives. It is subject to independent examination.

Supplementary Planning Documents
• These provide further detail to support a policy in the Core Strategy. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) can be issue based (e.g. “affordable housing”) or area based. They are not subject to independent examination.

Masterplan
• This outlines the preferred development for a large site or area, and the overall approach to its layout and design. The masterplan provides detailed guidance for subsequent planning applications.

Outline Planning Application
• An application for planning permission which does not include full details of the proposal, usually only sufficient detail to identify the principles of the proposal; details not submitted at this stages are called “reserved matters”. Details of the reserved matters are then submitted to the local planning authority at a later stage.

London Plan
• The London Plan is the Mayor of London’s strategic planning document. It sets out a social, economic and environmental framework for the future development of London. It provides the London wide context within which individual boroughs must set their local planning policies.

Opportunity Areas
• These are large scale developments providing at least 5,000 jobs and/or 2,500 homes. Dependent on good public transport accessibility, they provide significant increases in density and should provide social infrastructure to support growth. An Opportunity Area Planning Framework is developed in partnership by the Mayor and Borough. Across London there are 33 Opportunity Areas, of which the Elephant & Castle area is one.

Central Activities Zone (CAZ)
• This is the area of Central London where planning policy promotes financial and business services, specialist retail, tourist and cultural uses and activities. It also recognises residential and more local functions.
Jargon Buster - Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood Planning
• A set of new planning instruments introduced by the Localism Act to give local communities more powers to decide what happens in their areas. The most important instruments are Neighbourhood Development Orders and Neighbourhood Development Plans. These instruments are additional to existing ones and do not replace existing planning documents.

Neighbourhood Development Plan
• A set of policies and provisions in relation to the Development and Change of Use of the Neighbourhood Area, ultimately a few pieces of paper with maps and lists. It can include any or a number of issues that can make a difference: Green spaces, design, which uses are more favourable, where to put new social infrastructure and which are needed most. It must comply with existing plans and national guidance.

Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)
• An NDO extends permitted development rights - i.e. what can be developed or have a use changed without having to apply for planning permission. This can be seen as a way to attract certain types of development.

Neighbourhood Area
• The area and composition of a neighbourhood are not given. The Neighbourhood Forum identifies the Neighbourhood Area and its boundaries in the Constitution. The council will approve it and designate the area as a Neighbourhood. Neighbourhood boundaries are not necessarily based on wards or even borough boundaries.

Referendum
• Neighbourhood Development or orders do not take effect unless there is a majority of support (50%+1) of those who vote in a referendum for the Neighbourhood Plan. The local authority is responsible for organising and paying for the referendum.

Neighbourhood Forum
• An organisation or body can be designated by the local council as a Neighbourhood Forum if it meets the following criteria:
  • It is established for the purpose of promoting or improving social/economic and environmental wellbeing of an area
  • Its membership includes min. 21 people each of whom either lives or works in the area or is an elected member
  • It has a written constitution.

Constitution
• This must include the scope and aims of the forum, who the members are, how to become one, how the Neighbourhood Forum is to be managed, and a map of the Neighbourhood Area the plan covers.
About the Elephant Amenity Network

• The Elephant Amenity Network has been in existence since March 2009 when a new “Elephant & Castle Regeneration Charter for Community Inclusion and a Better Quality of Life for All” was launched by local people and businesses. This charter has the following principles:
  • Principle 1: Open Masterplanning
  • Principle 2: Benefits for All
  • Principle 3: Housing that Really Is Affordable

• Since that time we have been organising a coalition of local groups and people that includes Council tenants, leaseholders, shopkeepers or market traders or amenity groups (who wish to preserve local open spaces and parks).

• From this we hope to be able to present a more united voice from the local community about what we think and desire from the millions of pounds of regeneration that seems destined to happen at Elephant & Castle and in other places close by in North Southwark.

• We welcome input from everyone within an interest in the area and the regeneration.

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Report assembled by Luke Miller - any errors or misrepresentations are entirely his responsibility