Peckham Vision

Town Centre Exhibition

Peckham Rye station: some ideas for future work

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Peckham Rye Station is the grandest example of High Victorian architecture in Peckham and its conservation in 1986 helped transform Peckham from a genteel suburb surrounded by open fields to a well-populated south London district. The station has seen better days so the Peckham Society and Peckham Vision have campaigned to restore many of its brick-edged windows and open some of the "lost" interior spaces.

We have campaigned to get the station Grade II listed and we hope to restore it to its role as a focal point for Peckham's Town Centre.

One of the main restoration issues with Peckham Rye is access to the platforms for disabled people and people with prams and trolleys. To resolve the large, disused Old Waiting Room, we need to get handicapped access to this room from the ground level.

These drawings suggest how access could be gained to three of the four platforms by the insertion of a new lift and the refurbishment of an existing one.
When the Peckham Rye Station was originally completed in 1865 it had a wide open forecourt. Three-storey carriages and cabs could pull right up to the station front. An ornate iron and glass canopy was nestled between the station's wings covering a series of entrance doors to the booking hall.

In 1935 the forecourt was completely built over with the present arcade buildings. At the same time a large department store was built on the east side of Rye Lane by the same Southern Railways Architects Department. This was all part of a comprehensive re-working of the station and its wider site from 1934-1936.

Since the station arcade was built, the Victorian Station front has been completely lost as a prominent architectural feature on Rye Lane. Today the Lane is very busy street, a consequence of more than 100 years of commercial success as one of south London’s prime shopping destinations. We think Rye Lane desperately needs a public ‘break-out’ space or Piazza in the heart of the town centre. We thought it might be a good idea to open up the forecourt as it was originally designed.

At present there are many local businesses that occupy the station arcade, so this scheme seeks to put back many of the shops proposed for demolition in a series of arches/pavilions that are set in front of the station’s existing railway arches.

The main scheme is to create the new station forecourt with an open arcade that recreates the Victorian Station front. The proposal is to create a new forecourt to the station in Rye Lane and to set a series of retail units into the station arches. These new shops follow the rhythm and geometry of the arches but are tall enough to create a double height retail unit. The idea is to create an attractive, but subversive, architectural setting to Grade II Listed Peckham Station and to put back some of the lost commercial space that Network Rail will have lost by opening up the forecourt. We thought archetypal geometry worked well with the Victorian Renaissance architecture and the strong forms of the railway viaduct.
T
he Peckham Rye Station is one of the great Victorian Renaissance Revival Buildings in Southwark. It was designed by the architect Charles Henry Driver (1832–1900) who was well known for his bold Renaissance Revival architecture. This Grade II listed building is one of his finest works.

In our designs for the opened up station piazza we want to celebrate the Renaissance architecture of the station and hope to create an urban space that is complementary but deferential to the Victorian station front.

Michelangelo Buonarroti’s (1475–1564) celebrated scheme for the Campidoglio in Rome offered us some clues in the design for the new Peckham piazza. At the Campidoglio, Michelangelo was confronted by a disparate series of buildings surrounding the Medieval Palazzo Senatorio, Rome’s City Hall on the Capitoline Hill. Michelangelo’s solution was to create a new classical arcade with a central square.

Our idea is similar. The geometry of the new railway viaduct is irregular so the two different lines curve in different directions and curve at the Cow Lane Bridge towards Nunhead. We are proposing a symmetrical framing of the railway arches that create a symmetrical arched setting for the Victorian Renaissance station.

Another inspiration from Renaissance Revival architecture is our use of arched forms to the shape of the proposed new piazza. This strong motif echoes the rounded headed windows of the Victorian station. We have taken the elevational geometry of the existing railway arches to form a new façade of the proposed piazza. These arched forms are easy on the eye, a contrast with the 19th century engineering structures, and complement the rhythm of the Italians station architecture.
The arched forms to the new shops are proposed to the Peckham Rye Station. Piazza are derived from the Victorian railway arches. A first we tried to extend the existing arches shapes out into the public space but we found they created low and heavy forms with limited scope for taller internal spaces. We next filled these arches with a story. This seemed to create an internal and external form that worked well. The shape was complementary, but different from the listed Victorian station.

As in Victorian railway architecture we would like to show how the building is constructed. We have chosen materials familiar from the station buildings and shops. A series of glass-laminated timber arches form the roof of the new shops. These arches are supported on a series of glass-laminated or concrete columns and masonry spine walls. The roof could be zinc standing-seamed, or crinkly tin - familiar from the railway station. A shaded glass screen or brickwork forms our proposal’s outer skin.

Proposed is a frame and number of different cladding options to the Piazza’s shops, so that different types of units can be accommodated. Some shops could be open like the greengrocer’s and others closed, like Jenny’s Café.

Panel 4
PECKHAM RYE STATION - FORECOURT STUDIES
BENEDICT O'LOONEY ARCHITECTS FOR PECKHAM VISION

WE LOVE SOUTH LONDON'S RAILWAY ARCHITECTURE

These paintings by Carol Wright [1998 - 1997] were painted in the 1950s. They show the simple mobility of Victorian railway architecture and its important role in people's everyday lives in South London.

Bold classical architecture at the Peckham Rye Station, built in 1905 by the ambitious London Brighton and South Coast Railway.

North side of the proposed station plazas showing the possibility of an open top.

With the main entrance opened up, an interesting visual relationship is set up between the Victorian station and the strong 20th-century architecture in Rye Lane.

Preliminary new study exploring basic forms, materials and details.

The American architect Louis Kahn is a strong inspiration for this. Kahn's work had pioneered and fundamental architectural ideas. His work at the Kimbell Museum in Fort Worth, or Modernism and 19th-century architecture together with the great contemporary works of the Romans.

Lions and lionesses inside a shelter make a place for people to rest, reflect themselves, and enjoy a stone seat in the heart of the park. This manual and self-parking could explore the relationship, slightly set of place, geometries of the coming moment when we build...
**Peckham Vision Town Centre Exhibition, The Old Waiting Room, Peckham Rye Station**

2nd – 4th August 2012

http://www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Old_Waiting_Room

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