PNAAP main modifications

This is my response in support of the main modifications to the Peckham & Nunhead Area Action Plan recommended by the Inspector following the Public Hearings in July 2013.

Policy 6 Business space, PNAAP 2 Cinema/Multi-storey car park, PNAAP 4 Copeland Industrial Park, PNAAP 6 Peckham Rye Station

I support the proposed modifications to these sections of the PNAAP and related ones to ensure consistency and soundness in the AAP in relation to the need to acknowledge Peckham’s role as a creative ‘hotspot’ and to build on this reputation, which is the justification for Policy 2 on arts, culture, leisure and entertainment. This is becoming a very significant strand of Peckham’s local economy, and its success is critical to realise the PNAAP’s vision and objectives. However it is still at an early stage of emergence and development, and needs to be supported and encouraged. So the proposed modifications are welcome.

These modifications include some to recognise and safeguard the artisans’ workshops in Blenheim Court because of their role in the creative network of enterprises in Peckham’s ‘hotspot’. These reasons apply also to the artistic and creative enterprises which have taken root along the sides and rear of Peckham Rye station. These are identified on the attached map at Annex A. This strand of the creative economy first appeared on the Peckham Rye station site in 2004 through the emergence of Bar Story in an arch with entrances in both Blenheim Grove and Dovedale Court. This was followed by the linked enterprise of the Sassoon Gallery in Dovedale Court. Bar Story frequently appears in London, national and international media as a significant part of the ‘hotspot’ reputation. The Sassoon Gallery behind Bar Story has now joined in 2013 with the new bar enterprise of Peckham Springs creating an innovative connection between a gallery for young artists and a modern cocktail bar with a growing London-wide reputation. In the last few months the Brick Brewery a micro brewery with refreshment facilities has opened in a further arch with entrances in both Dovedale Court and Blenheim Grove, and already has an enthusiastic following.

In the 1930s building alongside the station in Blenheim Grove and next to the micro brewery there are 6 shop units. The Sunday Painter has been established there for 3 years and provides an art gallery space showcasing emerging and mid-career artists, and developing as a commercial gallery, and also provides small art studios for hire. It has provided the space for the small new artistic and creative business Peckham Print Studios, a community membership screen printer, to become established in the last two years in the arch behind The Sunday Painter. Next door is the Peckham Refreshment Rooms a new restaurant established in 2013 and already with a London-wide reputation for its food and style. On Station Way, between these units and the historic station building, is an arch just restored to its 1930s fittings and returned to a café delicatessen known as Barry’s Deli. All these small creative enterprises fit in and alongside other kinds of small businesses – small office supplies, African bar/restaurant, and hairdresser in the Blenheim Grove building. These are part of the special character of Peckham town centre – small independents adding interest and spice to shopping and being in Peckham.

In Holly Grove, on the other side of the station building on this PNAAP 6 site, the Hannah Barry Gallery has just opened in November 2013 in its permanent gallery. The HB Gallery has been a significant contributor to the reputation of Peckham as a London creative ‘hotspot’ through the art shows in the Copeland site, and also as the initiator of Bold Tendencies which is responsible for the summer shows in the multi-storey car park.
This area of PNAAP 6 alongside and to the rear of the station building is a fundamental part of the growing reputation for Peckham as a creative ‘hotspot’. Individual enterprises are each making their own contribution to the scene. But together in this place surrounding the station sides and rear, the sum is greater than the parts as a significant part of the dynamic is the growing interconnections across four sites around the station that are now a ‘cool place’ to be. These parts of the Peckham Rye Station site and the new kinds of businesses which are taking root there are a key part of the ‘creative hotspot’ that the PNAAP says it will build on. The attached map at Annex B shows their close proximity with the PNAAP sites 2 and 4, and the latest site now contributing to the creative arts, performance, entertainment and social venue mix – the Peckham Liberal Club - which was recently registered as a community asset under the Localism Act. This co-location of these major sites encourages interaction for the enterprises, creative entrepreneurs and for their visitors. This provides a creative environment for business enterprise and for artistic and cultural initiatives which is a key part of why it has become a creative ‘hotspot’. Strengthening the encouragement and support for these kinds of small locally rooted enterprises on the station site is critical to continued development of Peckham’s emerging creative economy. It is important to note that these parts of the site alongside the station building, and to the rear of it, are not required for the creation of the new public square, and they are compatible with the development of a market space behind the station.

As the Inspector has recognised, the core of Peckham town centre around Peckham Rye station, multi-storey car park and Bussey/Copeland Park has provided a suitable lower cost environment for the growth of the artistic and creative strands of the local economy. Some have established themselves over many years such as the artisans' workshops in Blenheim Court, Bar Story and the Sassoon Gallery in Blenheim Grove and Dovedale Court, and the artists’ studios in the Bussey building in Copeland Park. Together these have provided essential foundations over the more recent years for a wider variety of enterprises such as theatre, dance and other performance arts, artistic workshops and studios, sculpture and artistic events programmes, innovative art galleries. The pace of change has quickened over the last year or so, and continues to be very dynamic, including on this PNAAP 6 site with more new creative enterprises being established in the arches to the rear of and in the buildings to the sides of the station building. These are as important in the overall dynamic of the creative industries in this ‘hotspot’ area as those on the Copeland site and Multi-storey car park site, and also need to be acknowledged and given some protection if the PNAAP is to be consistent and sound.

This might be achieved with an addition on these lines to the section 'We are making this designation because' on page 178 for PNAAP 6: Peckham Rye Station

*More new artistic and creative businesses are gradually locating and establishing to the sides and rear of Peckham Rye Station, adding to those already there, as part of the growth of the creative industries also taking place on the multi storey car park site PNAAP 2, the Copeland park site PNAAP 4, and the Peckham Liberal Club in Elm Grove. These together form the heart of the activity contributing to Peckham’s reputation as a creative ‘hotspot’. Improvements to the area around the historic station building need to avoid disrupting the existing and emerging clusters of artistic and creative enterprises along the sides and rear of the station to help foster further this innovative strand of the local economy.*

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ANNEX A


1. The Arches Studios
2. Sassoon Gallery and Peckham Springs
3. Bar Story
4. Brick Brewery
5. Muana Restaurant
6. The Sunday Painter
7. Peckham Refreshment Rooms
8. Peckham Print Studios
9. Barry’s Deli
10. The Old Waiting Room
11. Hannah Barry Gallery

Gateway to Peckham - different parts of Network Rail land, central Rye Lane west
Base map from Gateway to Peckham Cabinet report http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?id=27873
Boundary colours indicative not precise, produced by Peckham Vision 2013 as a discussion aid
ANNEX B

Peckham’s creative ‘hotspot’ * January 2014

A1. The Peckham Liberal Club - social, arts and entertainment venue

B1. PeckhamPlex Cinema
B2. Multi-storey car park / Bold Tendencies
B3. Frank’s Cafe

C1. The Arches Studios
C2. Sassoon Gallery and Peckham Springs
C3. Bar Story
C4. Brick Brewery
C5. Muana Restaurant
C6. The Sunday Painter
C7. Peckham Refreshment Rooms
C8. Peckham Print Studios
C9. Barry’s Deli
C10. The Old Waiting Room
C11. Hannah Barry Gallery

D1. CLA CAFE / Bussey - multi level warehouse venue for multiple performance arts, exhibitions, events, club nights, creative workshops, venue hire and more.
D2. Copeland Park - studios, work units and venues
D3. Safeshouse, Copeland Road - location hire

* This map shows the creative enterprises fueling the heart of Peckham’s hotspot in January 2014. The enterprises are clustered on 4 sites around Peckham Rye station. The Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan (PNAAP) refers to creative enterprises as part of Peckham’s reputation as a creative ‘hotspot’ to build on. The following is an extract from PNAAP (September 2012 - Publication / submission version):
4.2.11 Peckham has a positive reputation as a creative hotspot and is home to many successful businesses and organisations and a thriving multi-cultural arts scene. The area around Peckham Rye Station, along Blenheim Grove and the Copeland Industrial Park currently hosts a number of local artists’ studios, gallery space and entertainment uses.
4.2.12 We want to continue to build upon this reputation which will help to generate new jobs and contribute towards the vitality of the town centre by creating a more diverse offer for local people and visitors as well as creating opportunities for training and learning.

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