

## **Peckham Town Centre Forum 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2010** **At the Bussey building, 133 Rye Lane, SE15**

**Present:** About 18 people attended the walkabout, and 22 people took part in the Forum meeting, including Cllr Nick Dolezal, new Lane Ward Councillor. Over five Forum networking meetings, a total of about 60 people have now participated. There are some 190 on the mailing list.

### **12.00pm Walkabout**

We assembled outside Peckham Library. There were several stops for discussions on key issues, with briefings from Eileen Conn, Michael Carnuccio, Benedict O'Looney and Jeremy Leach. The walk covered the High Street, the junction with Rye Lane, the Aylesham Centre, Morrison's + car park, Hanover Park / Rye Lane junction, central Rye Lane: cinema, station, Copeland Industrial Park, Choumert Market & street stalls, Rye Lane / Heaton Rd/ Peckham Rye junction, Discussion focused on:

- Changes to the street scene design to improve the pedestrian experience – including widening pavements & removing street clutter
- enhancing some historic buildings in prominent locations by cleaning and painting above ground floor level for some quick wins; funding to be secured through heritage sources once Conservation Area status granted.
- Impact and potential for the major developments both sides of the High Street, and in central Rye Lane opposite the station.

Detailed points in notes at Annex A.

### **2.00pm Bussey roof**

Participants assembled on the roof to view the town centre from above, and enjoy the magnificent views and discuss the different options for the buildings and land on both sides of the railway lines.

### **2.50pm Introductions**

Eileen reported that since the last Forum meeting in July, the virtual Steering Group for the New Peckham Experiment had been set up, the Town Centre Forum walkabout arranged, and a walkabout and meeting with Cllr Fiona Colley held. Fiona had agreed to explore what the Council could do to allocate in the Council a coordinating role for Peckham town centre in the absence of a town centre manager. There was a round of individual introductions, and an exchange about topics for further discussion in the Open Space.

### **3.20pm Open Space**

Open Space discussions on:

- **Feedback from the walk** – street scene, major developments and the PNAAP
- **Restoration of historic buildings** and next steps following on from the walk feedback
- **Central Rye Lane** – especially the multi storey car park and Copeland Industrial site
- **Food growing and mapping of sustainable initiatives**
- **Peckham Festival.**

In addition, there were some bilateral discussions. Reports on discussion in Annex B

### **4.25pm Feedback, key issues & actions**

See notes in Annexes A & B from the group discussions. Individual and bi-lateral actions will flow from the networking. The PNAAP Preferred Options Report will probably be available publically for consultation during February to April 2011.

**C4.45pm** The session was followed by further energetic bilateral discussions. For papers from this meeting see: [http://www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Peckham\\_Town\\_Centre\\_Forum/meetings#23rd\\_October\\_2010](http://www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Peckham_Town_Centre_Forum/meetings#23rd_October_2010)

### **Further meetings**

The next Forum meeting will probably be in New Year 2011

For background/history of the Forum: [http://www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Peckham\\_Town\\_Centre\\_Forum](http://www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Peckham_Town_Centre_Forum)  
Further information from Eileen at [e.conn@nutbrook.demon.co.uk](mailto:e.conn@nutbrook.demon.co.uk)

**Public Events in the Bussey Building**, 133 Rye Lane, SE15,

arranged by the Council as a preview of the Preferred Options for PNAAP

see: <http://peckhamresidentsnetwork.blogspot.com/2010/11/peckham-future-public-events.html>

- **Saturday 27 November 2010, 12.30pm to 3.30pm,**
- **Tuesday 30 November 2010, 6pm to 9pm,**

# NOTES FROM OPEN SPACE DISCUSSIONS AT PECKHAM TOWN CENTRE FORUM 23rd October 2010

## Feedback from the walk & discussion

**Peckham town centre walkabout**  
Saturday 23 October 2010

**ANNEX A**

### Peckham Square precinct

- Square is a major cross-route for pedestrians and cyclists. There are conflicts between the two that need to be resolved.
- The predominant pedestrian movement is the east/west movement
- Also need to consider how to make the square more of a destination and not just a thoroughfare.
- Shard tower is very prominent in views down Surrey Canal Walk.
- The square has a wind tunnel effect
- Criticism of unfriendly ground floor entrance to the Library and lack of public information display space.
- Some concern about high level of noise pollution from amplified music in the Square.

### Melon Road/Bellenden Retail Park precinct

- Significant listed P High St timber framed houses obscured by extended shopfronts. Consider what might be done to reveal them as key assets for the town centre – an example is Bow/Mile End Reference: Julian Harrup Architects 'High Street 2010' project in connection with the upcoming Olympics in the East End. This project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, the London Development Agency and Tower Hamlets Council.
- If Flaxyards site is needed to be safeguarded for tram need to think of temporary uses – opportunity for food growing?
- Unlisted historic buildings need consideration. Local listing? Remove shop front extensions? Eg. timber framed houses along Peckham High Street and 28-26 Rye Lane (above Barclays). A conservation area will help make clear to property owners and lease holders the historic significance of the buildings they use and their responsibilities to intelligently / sensitively maintain them.

### Peckham High Street, Rye Lane north and junction

- High volumes of traffic along Peckham High Street. Movement is focused on traffic flows and not pedestrian friendly. North-south crossing difficult. Guard-rail poses a barrier.
- Road width varies and this affects road user behaviour (speeds heighten as road widens)
- Pavement width is narrow and cluttered. Carriageway is very wide, encouraging speeding – could more space be reclaimed for pedestrian?
- Could there be an Oxford Street style crossing at Rye Lane junction?
- Cycle Superhighway planned for Peckham High Street. Designs being drawn up by TfL. How can this link in with other improvements?
- Traffic signals along Peckham High Street being synchronised on SCOOT system to improve traffic flows. What impact will this have on pedestrians?
- The dual carriageway from Peckham Hill Street to Queen's Road needs redesigning, perhaps road narrowed, pavement widened and the central reservation removed.

**Action: Alistair to send Michael Carnuccio details of cycle superhighway design work**

### Aylesham precinct

- Positive that there is space and light.
- There is very little greenery or seating. Need to create opportunities for greenery wherever possible.
- Open up windows on upper storeys (eg. Jones Higgins building and terrace above Barclays).

- Implementation of the new contraflow cycle lane is flawed and should be learnt from; the tarmac part at the top runs into obstacles and so is ignored by cyclists; the main straight section is too subtle and so ignored by pedestrians. Both problems lead to many near-collisions.
- Open up north-south links. Many people were walking through bus station between Aylesham and Peckham High Street.
- Create link through bus station and Bull Yard to Peckham High Street – this could be a short-term action
- Keep the bus station where it is
- Retain surface level parking? Surface level car parks create open space and allow you to see the sky. But could there be other types of open space on the site? Green space? Move car park underground? This could be feasible if there is a major development on the site.
- Need to consider access to local playing spaces for children and young people. These need to be accessible throughout area and accommodate a growing population.
- Aylesham Centre does not contribute architecturally to the area.
- There could be taller buildings in town centre. These would be in region of 7-15 storeys, mixed uses. A tall buildings study will help identify possible sites and appropriate heights.
- Need to carefully consider feasibility of second floor of retail on Aylesham centre – could be hard to attract occupiers as they prefer ground floor.

### **Central Rye Lane overall**

- Quality of shops is a concern – how can we tackle this?
- At the moment there is little control over changes to/loss of shopfronts and historic buildings. Conservation area would provide more protection to this. Would also provide access to English Heritage grants to improve buildings. Terrace seen from Hanover Park at Rye Lane junction could be a significant feature above ground level in short term.
- Should be a policy for more attractive ground floors. Make money available to improve ground floors/shop fronts.
- Make more of empty space above shops – housing. Link to empty homes officer.
- Rye Lane is very crowded. High number of casualties. Loading is a big issue – but what can be done to address this? What balance should there be between transport modes? There is little physical capacity to widen pavements along Rye Lane as carriageway is very narrow.
- Restrict private cars from Rye Lane?
- Old Tower Cinema arch: lights are not working, could do with a clean/paint
- Clean up terraces on either side of Tower Cinema arch
- Rye Lane has a section of severe congestion from Elm Grove to Choumert Road; South of Choumert Road the road seems less congested.
- Rye Lane full of potholes.

### **Cinema / Cerise car park**

- Can the building be reused without demolishing? Arts centre? Vertical farm? This could mean cinema wouldn't need to be moved. Need to consider impact on the cinema as a business if it has to move/close temporarily.
- Car park makes visiting the cinema convenient for families. Improve the safety of the car park.
- Frank's Cafe on top floor of multi storey and top three floors as sculpture gallery was good example of how building could be reused and provided positive press for Peckham.
- However the building does not contribute to townscape – can the two aspirations be reconciled?
- Market stalls currently obscure cinema. They could be rearranged so they face into Moncrieff Place.
- Who owns the buildings on either site of Moncrieff Place? These could be part of development with cinema/multi-storey car park site.
- Aspiration is to have active uses south of railway.

**Action: Michael Carnuccio to find out ownership of buildings flanking Moncrieff Place**

### **Station and between railway lines**

- Scaffolding business is a London-wide business – so do they need to be located here? What temporary improvements can be made to improve view from Rye Lane (the corrugated iron)? This site has great development potential as it is so close to the neighbourhood's transport hub.

- Aspiration for small improvements to be made to buildings that do not cost a lot of money but can have a major benefit – cleaning and painting of some historic buildings on Rye Lane. This could be short-term action while sites await decisions over redevelopment.
- Eg. clean up railway sidings
- As part of major refurbishment and development of the Copeland Industrial Park site, remove single-storey shop fronts between 133 Rye Lane and railway line, to create space and open up access to the area?

### **Copeland Industrial Park**

- Improve the walking and cycling environment around Copeland and Consort Roads

**Action: Michael Carnuccio to check if any changes to TfL aspirations for bus depot**

### **Rye Lane south precinct**

- Quality of shops is a concern – how can we tackle this?
- At the moment there is little control over changes to/loss of shopfronts and historic buildings. Conservation area would provide more protection to this.
- Choumert Market needs attention. Some shopfronts have been lost. Others are looking shabby. Street stalls block pedestrian access – should they be moved?
- Atwell Road has only public toilet in town centre. Need public toilet strategy – pay businesses to provide public access to their toilets – as is done in Brixton and Richmond?
- Rye Lane/Heaton Rd junction – should slip-lane be closed and a village green created? ? As the slip road is part of the one-way system for the approaching stretch of Rye Lane, it would need a wider rethink of the local roads.
- Conservation area boundary should be extended further south to include all shopfronts down to Peckham Rye.
- How can we influence businesses and get the type of shops local people want to see? What ideas do people have? Who else needs to be involved? Ask London Quadrant Housing what issues they have had getting tenants for shop units in Cooperative House?
- What facilities do people want to see in different parts of the town centre/Rye Lane? Need to capture new residents too. Eg. Cooperative House. Survey of all residents in immediate catchment area of the town centre of their shopping unmet needs?
- Vacant site next to Cooperative House needs to be developed to continue the terrace.

**Action: Michael Carnuccio to confirm proposed boundary of Rye Lane conservation area**

**Action: Michael Carnuccio to arrange meeting with Cooperative House residents**

### Feedback from walkabout/PNAAP discussion

- Need to identify opportunities for temporary use of spaces – eg food growing, greening. Would need to consider implications/costs of contamination, making sites safe. Consider Flaxyards and Eagle Wharf sites? Raised beds could get around contamination issue.

**Action: Investigate “meanwhile use” lease arrangements** – Pennines case study presented at Incredible Edible conference

- Vision for Peckham streets: clear routing of cycling and pedestrians, better north-south access, safer for pedestrians, less clutter, passing points in congested areas.
- Peckham is shopping destination.
- Human scale linking old to new.
- Improve road surface.
- Provide alternative routes for strolling – v – shopping. A strolling route away from Rye Lane linking Camberwell and East Dulwich? Easy to access and place to meet people.
- What are the simple inexpensive measures to bring benefits? Do the simple things first that add up to big benefits.
- Traffic calming throughout central Peckham?
- Redesign Peckham High Street? Make carriageway widths more consistent throughout and provide opportunities to widen pavements by for example narrowing the road at the junction with Lyndhurst Way and removing the dual carriage-way between Queen’s Road station and Peckham Hill Street.
- Examples include Kender Street triangle in New Cross. Walworth Road, The Cut, Longacre
- Need to consider implementation after the AAP is done.
- Preferred options should be clear on the level of growth that will take place in Peckham.
- AAP should act as a driver for investment and make the best use of assets.
- Desire for investment but needs to be managed - be clear how we want this to happen. Need to engage with investors and promote Peckham positively. Setting out a clear framework in the AAP will assist this.
- It needs to set a clear and simple marketing strategy.
- Preferred options report needs to include text promoting positive aspects – Eg. history, Peckham Experiment, Franks Cafe, Waiting room, etc....
- Ensure that we include cultural uses as part of the mix for Copeland Industrial Park site.

### Restoration of historic buildings and next steps

- Proposals for users of the Old Waiting Room are surfacing. A theatre group are interested but there are concerns about their preliminary proposals filling the space with a large self-contained structure, and not utilising it to best advantage. Ideas to find the most beneficial and viable kinds of uses need to be stimulated.
- CGS money has been obtained to make improvements to station forecourt and unblock windows on lower levels. Stair case to be reinstated – application for this due end of November.
- The shop on railway forecourt needs to be brought back into use.
- Pressure needs to be kept on the Dept of Transport and the rail companies to provide disabled access throughout station.

**Action: Michael Carnuccio to consider how consultation on Rye Lane conservation area will run alongside AAP conservation.**

### Central Rye Lane major developments

- The multi-storey car park had shown it could be used beneficially. The Hannah Barry Gallery has ideas about how the building could be restored and converted for permanent cultural uses rather than be demolished. This is a costly investment and it needs to be clear how to discuss them with the Council as owners before further work is done.

**Action: Michael Carnuccio to contact Hannah Barry to explain the process to talk to the Property Department.**

- There is an interesting example of a new multi storey car park that has been designed to accommodate cars and a variety of cultural and social uses: 1111 Lincoln Road, Miami Beach Florida. Designed by Herzog & de Meuron architects.

- There are a number of talented and committed people who live in or work in central Peckham who have specific expertise in re-development, architecture, conservation and urban design. We hope that when major developments come forward we could form an ad-hoc Peckham design review group to give support and advice to developers and Southwark Council.
- The success of the current cultural uses on the Copeland Industrial Park site has led to further proposals, but is not clear to the proposers what the Council's attitude is to such projects in terms of planning. The position is that there is no longer any threat on the site for the tram depot or other transport uses. The future of the site seems therefore more affected by the owners' long term plans. But the clear demonstration of the successful cultural uses in the Bussey building and the rest of the CIP site has showed that we should seek the Council to propose that the land there should be designated in the PNAAP for a mixture of cultural, as well as residential, community and commercial uses. That way any planning application for new buildings on the site for cultural uses would be within the planning policy. It also hopefully would encourage owners & developers to include quality cultural uses in their plans.
- These two major sites on the north and south sides of the railway line complemented the developments around the station across the other side of Rye Lane to the west. The Station Old Waiting Room, now being restored at the initiative of local community groups, was also transforming public awareness of the potential of central Rye Lane as a destination and cultural place to be.

### **Food Growing and mapping of sustainable initiatives**

- Lots of interest in finding spaces for community growing projects and private allotments, but very little info on where possible sites are and quite high barriers to making use of them (who owns it? how can I get in touch? how can I persuade them to let me/us use it?)
- If we're serious about temporary growing spaces on brownfield sites, council-owned scraps of neglected grass, etc. then we need clear buy-in from the relevant council departments so we don't get a situation where (for example) the property dept sell land off under our noses
- Various people are mapping food growing spaces including TTP, Tom Chance, Groundwork on behalf of Southwark Council for their food strategy, and across London by a long, long list of other groups. We noted that they are all separate and often overlap, so Tom Chance is looking at how the mappers in Southwark can pool their efforts in one place and make the results easily available for all

### **Peckham Festival**

- Plans for Peckham Festival to be held mid Sept 2011 were discussed; members of the local artistic community and Peckham Power have already expressed interest in taking part. Contributions welcome from others interested.

**Action: Mickey Smith** <[msmith@clfplanet.com](mailto:msmith@clfplanet.com)>