

Present:

Residents: Rebecca Wilmshurst, Eileen Conn, Tony Whooley, Stephen Hodge, Eleanor Bennett, Clyde Watson, Derek Kinrade, Richard Olney, Rose Fenton, Robert Mills, Terry Harrison, Jennifer Chelley, Julia Middleton, Pim Conradi, Faye Carey, Charles Carey, Liam Tumulty, Eve De Mello, Sonia Kidson, D C Doyle. (17 Residents were from Rye Lane West: Adys Rd, Blenheim Grove, Chadwick Road, Choumert Sq, Danby Street, Holly Grove, Highshore Road, Lyndhurst Sq, Nutbrook St, Talfourd Road; 3 residents were from other Peckham neighbourhoods: Consort Rd, Nunhead Lane, Peckham Hill St.)

Also present: Cllr Gordon Nardell; Michael Carnuccio, Council Planning Dept.

1. Introductions

Eileen Conn welcomed everyone to this first exploratory meeting about neighbourhood profiles. It was primarily focused, for this meeting, on the streets to the west of Rye Lane, as it was arranged by the Bellenden Residents Group (BRG). But residents from other neighbourhoods in Peckham had been invited if they wished to learn how such an exercise might be done in their own neighbourhood. Particularly welcomed was the encouragement and support from Cllr Gordon Nardell, and the participation of the Planner Michael Carnuccio.

2. Neighbourhood Profiles

Eileen Conn said that the idea of developing a neighbourhood profile had evolved from the long experience of planning applications in the Rye Lane West area:

- ① there were numerous objections to developers' proposals and sometimes several renewed applications before the matter was settled. It seemed to be much better to try to give developers an idea before they started what local residents thought about their neighbourhood and thus what was likely to be the local response.
- ① this was not a statutory requirement and the Council had no process for dealing with such a suggestion at the moment. But the development of the Peckham (and now also Nunhead) Area Action Plan (PNAAP) gave an opportunity to see what might be done. The PNAAP had a focus on land use policies in the main Town Centre core, but the policies it would deal with covered the interests of everyone living in Peckham outside that core. There was an interaction between the two that needed to be accommodated.
- ① the idea was to see if we could write a profile of the neighbourhood to capture what we like about it, what we think needs to be improved, and also how the Planning system helps and hinders the whole process. We would start with the physical nature of the neighbourhood, though the process could and should eventually take in all the other issues affecting the neighbourhood.
- ① in some rural areas there was a well established process for community-led planning which covered any issue that they wished to take forward. In principle there was no reason why this couldn't happen in urban neighbourhoods, and to see this being developed alongside the PNAAP.
- ① this meeting was just the start of this process. It would help us to begin to see how we might write a description of our neighbourhood, and identify some of the issues we think need to be addressed, and how.
- ① the same process could take place in other neighbourhoods in Peckham where residents wished to arrange such a meeting. The starting point was to identify the 'neighbourhood,' that enough local residents identified with, to enable such an activity to get off the ground.

Local residents present then divided into small groups in relation to their streets, to discuss the nature of their neighbourhood from their own individual perspectives of living there. The notes from those brief discussions are attached. These were presented briefly to the whole group. Some highlights:

- ① There was a lot of appreciation of the nature of much of Rye Lane West neighbourhood – relative unity of buildings & architecture, low-rise, gardens back & front, trees, open spaces;
- ① There was a significant contrast of this with the very different nature of the environment and activity in the town centre. The change was very abrupt and there was little transition between the two. Some liked the contrast and some did not.
- ① Would like to understand more clearly the reasons for the sudden and noticeable demographic shift between the two areas.
- ① The shopping offer in Rye Lane was not diverse enough to meet the needs of the diversity of shoppers in the local catchment area. This had been recognized in the UDP which set out a Council policy to encourage a greater diversity of shopping over time. A Council retail study report was promised for January that would show who shops where in the borough including Peckham, and why they shop where they do and don't.

- ⌚ The close juxtaposition with the town centre had some negative impacts, eg:
 - residents whose houses were close to commercial premises, who suffered from the serious problems from poor planning and enforcement.
 - lack of a coherent strategy for the public car parks in relation to the controlled parking zone arrangements.
 - failure to realise the potential of Choumert Market or achieve basic hygiene.
- ⌚ There was consultation fatigue combined often with few results.

3. PNAAP (Peckham & Nunhead Area Action Plan)

Michael Carnuccio gave a very brief introduction to the PNAAP, now renamed to include Nunhead as well as Peckham. It is a long term plan looking 15-20 years into the future and has to be based on realistic plans for implementation. It covers major topics such as transport & traffic, new housing, streets and public spaces, types of shops, businesses & community facilities, heritage & design & scale of buildings, environmentally sustainable buildings. The proposed timescales are:

March–May 2009:	Issues & Options paper consultation
End 2009:	Preferred Option consultation
2010:	Draft Plan issued for comment/objections followed by Public Hearing, and approval of Plan

There was a general discussion which reiterated a number of the points which had been made in the previous discussion on the neighbourhood profile. Michael confirmed that any local residents who were affected by the PNAAP would be able to contribute, and in the next stage in Spring 2009 to draw attention to any issues and options they thought needed to be taken into account.

4. Future Action

- ⌚ **Neighbourhood Profile:** the comments made during the meeting would be written up and be circulated for further consideration and comment with those present. The options for developing the points into a written profile could be considered in that further exchange, and in discussion with Cllr Gordon Nardell (who had left the meeting earlier).
- ⌚ **PNAAP:** the next formal stage for the AAP would be in March when the Council published its paper on Issues and Options. In advance it would be possible to have further discussions on the issues raised from a neighbourhood perspective to prepare for this. This would depend on the capacity to arrange further meetings and residents' interest in attending. In the meantime there is an initial draft of the two key papers to read (Issues & options report part 1 and part 2) available on the Council website: www.southwark.gov.uk/futurepeckham
- ⌚ **Other neighbourhoods' action:** residents in any other part of Peckham & Nunhead who wished to have a local discussion about their own neighbourhood profile or about the PNAAP could invite the Planners and their ward councillors through Michael Carnuccio. Information about any further work in Rye Lane West would be made available to other neighbourhoods through Michael or directly from the BRG.

5. Close The meeting expressed its thanks to Mickey Smith and his CLF Art Cafe for the refreshments and the accommodation, to Michael and Gordon for taking part and being very supportive, to Eileen for arranging the meeting, and to all present for participating. The general consensus was that it had been a worthwhile discussion and it needed to be built on somehow.

Notes from the Group discussions on: what we like about the road we live on and its environs, what we don't like, and if and how the Planning system helps or hinders

Danby Street, Adys Rd, Chadwick Rd (north): 5 residents

Likes

- Trees, back gardens, biodiversity, wildlife (birds)
- The unity of the buildings: the low scale/2storey nature, 1870s style, they are the same proportions.
- terrace of houses on Chadwick Road
- quietness of the area
- not a lot of through-traffic in some streets
- transport links/trains
- neighbourhood friendliness - there are a lot of families
- Bellenden Road - there is a good balance of shops. Bookshop is a community hub

Not so liked

- paving over of front gardens
- loud car radios
- cars standing outside of GP with engines on, polluting

- Rye Lane shops could have more diversity
- rat running, roads not being safe to cross, in some streets
- poor pavements/cracks
- cars ignoring the 20mph limit, the zone not marked well
- street clutter outside shops and from street signs
- poor quality buildings - the EDF substation in the industrial estate could be relandscaped
- more allotments and "growing spaces"
- Peacocks garage parking cars on the street and making it difficult for residents to park

Planning system

- Process is erratic, need to widen the area of notification for applications. Site notices are too small to be noticed
 - Public's concerns are ignored
 - The cumulative effect of lots of small developments needs to be looked at, there is no over-view
 - can people input into AAP if they are outside the boundary?
 - need to develop sustainable living thinking - green spaces, growing spaces, transitions
- towns, consider long-term sustainability, eco-standards

Choumert Square: 3 residents

Like

- Village atmosphere : our communal garden gives this a focus
- Gardens are part of our 'architecture'
- Period style lighting – achieved with full Council consultation – a success story!
- Our multi-coloured houses – walls brightly painted, cheerful and welcoming
- The street paving – a community initiative in the 1980s and just recently repaired via a residents' initiative
- The layout and variety of our house groupings
- Everyone's front door opens onto the central thoroughfare, so everyone meets one another

Not liked

- Attributable to poor Council management/inadequate planning enforcement etc
- The ill-fitting 'juxtapositions' caused by poor planning enforcement within and around the Conservation Area:
 - this led to deviation from the agreed design of Quantock Mews: subsequent incompatibility with Conservation area and a tacky piece of work that already looks forlorn
 - noise/disturbance from surrounding retail plant, e.g. unauthorised refrigerators placed in back gardens. Council need constant 'nagging' to pursue this sort of breach
 - failure to meet/ total breach of health & safety/environmental regulations in poorly maintained retail outlets: rats, refuse, discarded rubbish, bad smells, etc all arise from this
- lack of cohesive strategy re Car Parks and car-parking. Especially angry about the imposed Choumert Grove Car Park charges: the Car Park seems under constant threat, yet is vital to the well-being of sustaining local shops and shopping and to support key places of worship e.g. All Saints Church, the Mosque in Choumert Grove
- problems for residents who have parking permits costing almost £100 a year: on Sundays, their paid-for residents' bays are choked up by erstwhile car-park users who enjoy free car-parking in residents' bays and dodge the charges they'd otherwise have to meet in the Car Park.
- Choumert Road Market could have great potential. As it stands, it desperately needs a total revamp and a firm hand re. hygiene.
- There's an exhaustion caused by the never-ending, non-conclusive 'consultation' processes invited by Planning applications. They are often left to drift. There's a risk that those consulted lose interest, and this leads to a sense of defeatism and disengagement.
- Some residents invest a HUGE amount of time in such matters – but for what results??? Who really wields the power locally? - Residents? - Councillors? - Officers?!
- Expectation management is poor. Schemes excite interest – then are suddenly abandoned.
- There's a lack of continuity in the Planning Dept staffing....again leading to issues drifting.

Blenheim Grove, Holly Grove, Highshore Rd, Talfourd Rd and Lyndhurst Square: 8 residents

- Don't like noisy car workshops along Blenheim Grove, but don't object to the arches being used as work spaces. Some of us weren't anti the car workshops.
- Need to establish what we consider to be appropriate use.
- Shouldn't oppose contemporary buildings if they enhance the look of the area, but we have to consider matters of subjectivity and value systems. This is complicated by a view that the planning dept isn't necessarily expert in design or architecture.
- Don't like mock traditional terraces or modern cube like blocks.
- Like the fact that there's only housing on one side of Holly Grove and most of Blenheim.
- Like the green and open spaces - even the 'derelict' ones
- Like the architectural diversity of the area and want to preserve good buildings.
- Like the lack of high rise
- Interested in the reasons for the sudden demographic shifts between Rye Lane and the Bellenden area of streets.
- Mixed opinions about liking the mix of light industrial, the character of Rye Lane
- How do we reconcile change with conservation?
- Like the trees
- Interested in how citizens can further be involved in planning

- Wonder about the good design and planning of council's own buildings?

Other neighbourhoods in Peckham: 3 residents

Nunhead Lane: 1 resident

- Likes - the quiet 'village-like' atmosphere, with no high buildings and lots of green areas close by, yet still so close to town (London!).
- Likes - the architecture in the area
- Does not like - overspill of parking on Sundays caused by visitors to nearby church called 'Rainbow Cathedral'.
- Does not like - having to lug heavy bags of shopping purchased at Sainsbury-Dog Kennel Hill-SE22 last bus stops (Nos P13 and 484 [?]) which is quite far away from Nunhead Lane, and would like them to go as far as Nunhead Lane.
- Does not want the area to become too over-crowded, or more than the occasional small retail shop.
- Wants - to be involved/consulted by LBS and all their Departments including Planning - on anything that relates to her own community and local neighbourhood.

Town Centre behind the Library: 1 resident

- Likes and wants to keep and have better recreation use of the open green spaces in PTC, i.e. from Peckham Square to surrounding 'Area 10' building along the Surrey Canal path.
- Does not like the drinking (cans alcohol) groups hanging out there.

Consort Road/Peckham High Street/Clayton Road SE15: 1 resident

- Likes - the excellent transport especially the P12, P13 buses and the two nearby rail stations.
- Likes - the local park - Cossall and its wild garden walk next to railway line.
- Likes - Surrey Canal Cycle route 22 and use all time for health and avoiding traffic when going to Walworth and East Street Market etc.
- Likes - the 'Peckham village' look/feel of the very old buildings remaining and thinks No 1 Rye Lane needs tidying up as a lovely building and a landmark of reaching Peckham (clock tower).
- Does not like the much increased over last 4-years, 24/7 noise (especially police car sirens during the night when no traffic) and excess fumes entering Clifton Estate into the green spaces via the wasted spaces/gaps underneath Lambrook House, and the traffic system design of PTC including the 100% residential short stretch of Consort Road T-Junction to Peckham High Street/Queens Road.
- Does not like - not being consulted by LBS when they stopped residential parking Saturday and now have to park in Nunhead as Woods and Gordon Roads full, and in any case cars including mine, are constantly vandalised, tyres slashed, windows smashed, locks vandalised, new cars set on fire and written off, on Clifton Estate, Woods and Gordon Roads.
- Does not like - PTC, Consort Road, Peckham High Street, being so dark and dingy at night as feels unsafe as cannot see people or what they are doing, clearly.
- Also, gives the world passing through on A202 - the impression that Peckham really is a dangerous 'ghetto' as portrayed on TV news every time there is another knifing, etc!
- Does not like - the 'dirty, scruffy down-town' image majority of shop fronts give and think they should be fined by LBS-Tourism, made to remove stickers, posters and scrubbed clean/painted in stipulated period friendly and uniform colours.
- Wants/Needs - residents of Clifton and Atwell Estates, have no Community Halls, and Nunhead and East Dulwich too far to walk, and do not want to have to cross over busy A202 to use Peckham Settlement or the new Wood Dene Community Hall - would like a community space of their own as per other nearby estates, i.e. Cossall, Puffin, Buchan where 'latch-key' children and young people can use/belong/have somewhere to go rather than cause nuisance on estates and surrounding areas (vandalise cars etc), plus residents can use for their own clubs, events, meetings, community get-togethers etc.
- Does not like - the non-diverse range of shops. So many mobile phone/african hairdresser/barber/food shops and unhealthy false nail shops do not cater for everyone.
- Would like - a more diverse range of shops and a healthy food cafe/deli.