

Feedback on queries raised at previous Walworth Community Council meetings

Question	Response
<p>Can details of the Sedan Way Green Link be submitted, as there is a problem with the proposed removal of four mature ash trees? The proposed new layout of Sedan Way would lead to the removal of the trees, most of which could be easily saved. Why are the proposals for this new road pedestrian unfriendly, and dangerous for children?</p>	<p>Awaiting a response from officers.</p>
<p>Can information about the total under spend, which the community council has at its disposal, be brought to the next meeting.</p>	<p>Please see pages 42-43.</p>
<p>Can senior officers in charge of various departments, including the chief executive, be invited to address future community council meetings?</p>	<p>The chair has noted this request. Senior officers will be invited, depending on the topics on the agenda at the particular meetings, and subject to their availability.</p>
<p>Victorian pubs are being bought up with a view to knocking them down, and residents are playing catch-up. How can the council and residents be proactive in protecting Victorian buildings?</p>	<p>Once the building has been sold, from a planning perspective, there are three Saved Policies in the Southwark Plan which may be applicable:</p> <p>Policy 1.7 Development within town and local centres - This stipulates among other things that new developments should be accommodated within the existing town centres and local centres. New developments need to be appropriate to the character and function of such town centres.</p> <p>Policy 1.9 Change of use within protected shopping frontages</p> <p>Policy 1.10 Small scale shops and services outside the town and local centres and protected shopping frontages – puts restrictions on changes of use, if essential services to the community are affected.</p> <p>For a copy of the Southwark plan and further details on the above</p>

	<p>policies, please also see http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/856/planning_policy/1241/the_southwark_plan.</p> <p>Other criteria could be used to save such a Victorian building would be: if it was a listed building, or if it was in a conservation area.</p> <p>The Localism Act 2011, the relevant part of which came into force on 21 September 2012, introduced the concept of “Assets of Community Value”</p> <p>What the act does</p> <p>It enables qualifying community groups to nominate properties to be included in the list of assets of community value. It requires the owner of a listed property to notify the Council if it wants to sell the property. It requires the Council to notify the property owner if a qualifying community group tells the Council it is interested in making a bid to buy the property (within 6 weeks of the owner’s notification that it wishes to sell). If the Council receives such an expression of interest, it prevents the property owner from selling the property within a period of six months unless the sale is to a community group. It gives community groups time to bid for properties.</p> <p>What the act does not do</p> <p>The Act does not automatically allow all assets that may be nominated to be listed – the Council must be satisfied that they fit the relevant criteria, and property owners have a right to appeal the Council’s decision to list. It does not assist community groups with acquiring a listed asset unless and until the owner decides to sell. It does not oblige a property owner to sell to a community group. It does not stop the owner selling the property to someone else, once the six week/six month period has passed, even if a community group has made a bid. It would not stop a property owner from demolishing a property, or applying for planning permission to change the use of a property. It only potentially delays a sale of a property.</p>
<p>Why has Peckham Town Hall been sold off?</p>	<p>The council has now completed an agreement to grant a long lease on the former town Hall in Peckham Road to a developer who, subject to planning, will provide student accommodation, affordable business and studio space, a cafe and new accommodation for Theatre Peckham.</p> <p>The council agreed a revised approach to office accommodation through a cabinet report in November 2010 (available on the council’s website). Building on decisions made by the previous administration to consolidate office based accommodation at 160 Tooley Street, this report recommended further consolidation of offices and the development of a large shared operational facility in the centre of the borough. The report also re-examined the</p>

	<p>business case for retaining the by then under-used Southwark Town Hall. While noting that a civic presence and strong civic identity remained important, the report recognised that the former town hall on Peckham Road had limited capacity to deliver a fit for purpose facility for Southwark residents. A particular shortcoming was public access to the building; Access and facilities for disabled people were acknowledged as poor and opportunities for enhancing public participation in the democratic process were also limited by the buildings design.</p> <p>The report examined the potential for refurbishment and looked to apply a long-term approach to decision making to avoid ongoing further essential expenditure in the medium term to deal with mechanical and electrical, structural and access works, and to provide a functional and accessible building. The capital cost of refurbishment was re-assessed as £9 million.</p> <p>Given the limited potential uses of the property, the ongoing revenue costs and the scale of investment required, the decision was taken to seek to dispose of the town hall building on a long lease. Disposal would allow the building to find a new function and open the opportunity for new investment that the council could not provide. Disposal has generated a capital receipt for reinvestment in council priorities. Finally, the council has pursued disposal options which will support valued local partners, including Theatre Peckham and through the provision of student accommodation, the Camberwell campus of the University of the Arts, London.</p>
<p>Can the council look into putting rail stops back onto the line which runs parallel to Walworth Road?</p>	<p>This opportunity to (re) create additional stops on the Thameslink line south of Elephant and Castle has been investigated previously as an option to increase public transport accessibility along this corridor. Feedback from Network Rail suggests that there are technical difficulties relating to train service patterns and infrastructure constraints that would make the re-opening of old stations very challenging. The viability of providing several stations in such close proximity to one another has also been questioned previously. Nonetheless, we continue to monitor the situation while focussing on other options to improve public transport in the affected area, such as an extension of the Bakerloo Line.</p>
<p>Can the following advertising boards be removed as soon as possible:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nando's – Newington Causeway. There are also a number of raised and loose paving stones paving stones along this stretch outside Alexander Fleming House. 	<p>The compliance and monitoring team are looking into the sites to establish the planning status of the advertisement signage. Officers will, in the first instance, visit all areas and assess, if they have not done so already. They will then discuss with the premises and agree a way forward, including immediate removal of any items that contravene the council's policies. Any items the council accepts (acceptable with regards to public safety and area suitability) will then be required to be licensed and managed within the council's terms and conditions. A further update will be provided at the meeting, if available</p>

<p>2. The Whisky Shop – Clink Street. It was supposed to be removed before the Olympics and the Diamond Jubilee.</p> <p>3. The boards in and around the recently landscaped area on Tabard Street, next to St George’s Church: Barber, Gym and Cafe. The cafe has four banners/signs on each side of the church grounds as it is.</p>	
<p>The meeting heard that the question in the agenda pack about the Box Park related to the Heygate Estate, and not Marlborough Playground, and therefore the response was wrong. An updated response should be brought back to the community council.</p>	<p>Approx. 48 shipping containers were placed on the site of the Former Petrol Station Site on Walworth Road shortly before Artworks submitted a planning application towards the end of April 2013 for a 'Box Park' on this site (application reference 13-AP-1224). Officers raised a number of concerns with the proposal and now Artworks have submitted a fresh application (reference 13-AP-2927) proposing the 'Box Park' on a site fronting Elephant Road. Consultation on this application has just started. The previous application for the Walworth Road site is likely to be withdrawn shortly.</p> <p>The containers were being stored on the petrol station site and, to officers’ knowledge, at no time have they been used for their intended retail / business use. Hence the 'Box Park' has not been operating without the benefit of planning permission.</p>
<p>“If the council and the councillors are very concerned about young people, and where they can meet, why not use the empty office: e.g. at the bottom of Brandon Street and also give priority to young people when a vacancy occurs, instead of renting it to churches [...] when the hub will have been a perfect area in the centre of the Walworth Road.”</p>	<p>Officers have looked at what options there might be within the council's portfolio of premises on Walworth Road and the top end of Camberwell Road. However, the Council in fact owns relatively little on the street and the likelihood is that retail space would need to be rented in, if this is an option that the Council would wish to fund. The party commenting on lettings to churches may be referring to privately owned and rented premises rather than those in the council's portfolio.</p> <p>Officers have made enquiries about the former housing office on Brandon Street. The premises are unfit for occupation and substantial expenditure would be required to return it to beneficial use on any basis. Therefore the short term plan is to demolish the building. A temporary use in the meantime would not be economically viable and would not be consistent with the objectives of the Heygate Regeneration.</p> <p>On 16 July the cabinet agreed a vision for the future development</p>

of the building which took account of the feedback received from the initial public meeting in April following the fire and the council's own service requirements. The following key priorities for the high level vision were endorsed by the cabinet and are to form the basis of consultation with the local community which is expected to commence during October.

- An enhanced library space.
- A space for the display of the Cuming collection and potentially a Southwark museum
- A flexible space that could be used for a variety of purposes including community and civic events, exhibitions and performances
- Facilities for marriage, civil partnership and citizenship ceremonies undertaken by the Southwark registrar's service

The consultation strategy has to be formally approved by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy and Regeneration. The draft however envisages consultation with a range of stakeholders including resident and tenants groups, schools, the Latin American community and the Southwark Youth Council.