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| Item No. | Classification: Open | Date: 2 February 2011 | Meeting Name: Regeneration and Leisure Scrutiny Committee |
| Report title: | | Update on town centre strategies with particular reference to Camberwell, Peckham and Walworth | |
| Ward(s) or groups affected: | | East Walworth, Newington, Faraday, Camberwell Green, Brunswick Park, Peckham, The Lane, Livesay, Nunhead | |
| From: | | Eleanor Kelly, Deputy Chief Executive | |

BACKGROUND

1. Southwark's Core Strategy, which is due to be adopted this year, seeks to maintain 'a network of successful town centres which have a wide range of shops, services and facilities, to help meet the needs of Southwark's population. Our centres will be well used because they are vibrant, easy to get to, friendly and safe.'
2. The Core Strategy designates Elephant and Castle/Walworth Road, Canada Water and Peckham as 'major centres' according to the hierarchy of town centres in the London Plan based on a number of criteria including the amount of retail floorspace. Camberwell is one of five 'district town centres', the tier below major centres.
3. The designation of Elephant and Castle/Walworth Road as an integrated major centre is an aspiration which will come about through the Elephant and Castle regeneration as they do not function as one centre at present. The Core Strategy proposes major growth in retail provision at Elephant and Castle and Canada Water and this is supported by the Retail Capacity Study carried out in 2009.
4. Other centres need to adapt to meet current needs – especially Peckham which has for many years been the borough's only major centre and Camberwell.

CURRENT POSITION: PECKHAM

5. The Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan will set out how we will make sure that over the next fifteen years we get the development needed to support a healthy, safe and prosperous community reducing inequalities within the borough.
6. The strategy, planning policies and implementation plan will cover:
 - town centre improvements including the type of shops, the environment and accessibility.
 - the type of development that can be built on the large sites providing clarity for developers to encourage them to develop
 - a new conservation area to protect historic buildings as part of new development.
 - the size and design of new buildings to make sure that they improve the local character

- the amount and type of new homes to increase provision of affordable homes and housing choice.
 - the impact of new development on the environment and traffic.
 - the community facilities needed to support a successful local community network
 - protection of existing business floorspace and promotion of new floorspace for small and medium sized enterprises.
 - protecting more open spaces
 - improving movement around Peckham and Nunhead on foot, by bike and public transport.
7. The implementation plan is important to make things happen including details of partnership working, consultation, provision of infrastructure and planning obligations. The AAP will help fund long term improvements by making sure that private developers contribute to public spaces, improvements to employment opportunities and upgrading public transport. We will be consulting on a set of proposals for bringing improvements to area, known as preferred options during the spring and summer 2011.
8. Improvements to Peckham town centre are also supported by the Nunhead and East Peckham Renewal Area. These include improvements to shop fronts in areas around the town centre: coordinated with the Improving Local Retail Environments (ILRE) scheme works have started to improve shop fronts in Meeting House Lane. Pilots are being developed in consultation with local traders and residents to extend shop front improvement schemes to Queens Road and Nunhead Lane/Evelina Road. More shops may be included if the renewal area funding is agreed.

Peckham Town Centre Forum

9. The Peckham Town Centre forum is a resident led and coordinated forum which meets on roughly a two monthly basis. The aim of the forum is to encourage the revitalisation of the town centre. It is open to all who are enthusiastic and with ideas and energy for revitalising Peckham town centre. The aim is to nurture a growing network of individuals who can contribute ideas and actions to imaginative new initiatives and to enable people with ideas to get together to share ideas and take actions.
10. Meetings of the forum tend to be shaped in a way to encourage people to come up with ideas and sell them to others who would be interested in supporting said actions. This means that the meetings are more action than issue oriented - even though issues do come up. So that during the introductions - people and/or groups who have a particular issue that they would like to pursue will introduce themselves and then hold a separate workshop about the issue and how to take it forward. There are generally 4 - 5 such workshops per meeting and the other attendees go to the workshops that they are interested in. Each workshop leader then takes notes etc. and hands them back to the coordinator. The forum also acts as a networking space for people with ideas to meet each other. The last meeting took the form of an urban design walk around the town centre.
11. Some emerging ideas were
- creativity,
 - entrepreneurship and commercial regeneration
 - local energy and food production
 - town centre physical fabric revitalisation
 - how all these matters relate to health and well being

CURRENT POSITION: CAMBERWELL

12. The core strategy sets the vision for Camberwell as follows:

‘We will continue to protect this successful town centre which has many small and medium sized businesses. Many of them are independently run which helps to give Camberwell a special character. Butterfly Walk shopping centre is the only large development site. However the focus is on improving current shops rather than retail growth or new development, particularly businesses in the town centre and along Camberwell New Road towards the Oval.’

Camberwell Development Team

13. Officers have been developing a coordinated approach to regeneration activity and joining up Council services in Camberwell. In recent years a range of reports and studies have identified the key areas for improvement in Camberwell. Furthermore, cross-border issues with Lambeth have been discussed at local community council meetings and priorities for action agreed. In response, officers have established an internal ‘development team’, whose purpose is to join up existing Council activity in Camberwell and align resources to key priorities. The development team is comprised of officers from economic development, planning, transport, community safety, housing, public realm, communications, property, and culture, libraries, learning and leisure. Economic development is leading on the coordination and facilitation of the meeting and reporting to Cllr Colley as the lead member.

14. An internal delivery plan is in place, which is comprised of workstreams under three main objectives:

A. Develop a strategic and coordinated approach

Initiatives, most of which are immediate or short-term, that will bring resources together in a strategic and joined-up way, including.

- Setting up the Camberwell development team
- Developing a delivery plan
- Developing a planning framework, including short-term public realm improvements and a Camberwell Action Area Supplementary Planning Document
- Establishing a profile of commercial property ownership
- Dialogue with businesses and building capacity
- Identifying opportunities across the delivery plan for cross-border working with Lambeth
- A communications plan to give clear and consistent messages about developments

B. Improve the town centre

Projects and services that are focused on the town centre area

- Streetscape management
- Opportunities for development of retail offer
- Night-time economy and potential for ‘purple flag’ scheme
- Shopfront improvements to historic buildings
- Establishing markets on Camberwell Green
- Quick-wins for public realm improvements

- Development of new Camberwell 'Space' in front of magistrates court to include library and other uses
- Transport improvements, including potential for significant changes to the pedestrian environment and bus interchange
- Refurbishment of Camberwell Baths and improvements to surrounding environs

C. Improve the wider area

Projects and services that will benefit the wider Camberwell area

- Transport improvements in targeted areas such as Southampton Way, Denmark Hill and Camberwell Road junction
- Development or relocation of existing employment and skills projects to the Thamesreach Academy, currently in development
- Housing regeneration schemes in East Dulwich, Champion Hill, Elmington, Wyndham and Comber estates
- Investment in schools and links with community facilities
- Targeted community safety initiatives on estates and activities of wardens/ PCSOs and Safer Neighbourhood teams

Camberwell Action Area SPD

15. A draft Camberwell Action Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be consulted on in September 2011 to guide development and changes in the Camberwell area. The SPD will provide detailed guidance for the area and expand upon the Core Strategy area vision for Camberwell. It is anticipated it will be adopted at the end of 2012. It will cover:
 - Vision for how Camberwell will develop, including what sort of uses we want to prioritise and their locations. The SPD can only provide guidance to the Core Strategy and cannot depart from what is prescribed in the Core Strategy. (It will not be able to change the approach to protecting/allowing changes of use or to the mix of shopping).
 - More detailed guidance for sites over 0.25 ha and under 0.25 ha that could be developed for housing with how much development we think could be built and when this could come forward.
 - Identification of all potential development sites that need detailed information on appropriate bulk, scale and massing and to provide guidance on this if we do not feel the design guidance in the Core Strategy is enough.
 - Focus on improving local shops and businesses, and encourage more small businesses in the town centre and wider action area.
 - Further detail on the character of the area that we are seeking (for the areas not covered by the Conservation Area).
 - Details and implementation of a transport strategy in partnership with TfL.
 - Highlight status of Camberwell Green as an important open space within the town centre that needs improvement.
 - Encourage creative and cultural industries as they add to the vibrancy of the area and provide employment.
 - Provide a robust framework for negotiating section 106 planning obligations to help ensure that all new development is supported by the appropriate infrastructure it requires to meet the social, economic and environmental needs that it generates.
16. However changes can still happen in the meantime, while we are preparing the SPD. We can agree and progress transport improvements (see below)

and other public realm programmes like the community project bank and then use the Section 106 SPD to fund these when development occurs.

Transport in Camberwell

17. The impact traffic has on the environment of Camberwell Town centre is of particular concern to the community. The area has historical issues in the area of road and pavements layout leading to severe traffic congestion, pedestrians being unable to cross roads safely, and insufficient space on the footpaths.
18. Work on progressing designs on improvements to the road and pavements in Camberwell town centre has now been confirmed with the receipt of £200,000 funding from TfL. The funding will go towards developing and testing proposals and consultation with the community. It is hoped that preliminary work in the area will attract further future investment from TfL and other sources, of nearly £7m.
19. The ultimate objective is to 'recreate the street' to combine highway layout changes and public space improvements, leading to a dynamic new space for the area.
20. Discussions are ongoing with TfL around options for better managing the bus interchange functions to ensure that the impact is lessened whilst retaining maximum access to public transport for the residents and businesses in the area. The hospitals are actively involved in the scheme development through the Camberwell Travel Plan Group.
21. Options include:
 - Camberwell Green Junction - reduce pedestrian crossing distance, review and remove pedestrian guard railings and review signal timings.
 - Denmark Hill - widen pavements; make crossing safer right up to Coldharbour Lane
 - Wren Rd - green/walking link to Butterfly Walk
 - Orpheus Rd - enliven blank walls

CURRENT POSITION: WALWORTH ROAD

22. The Core Strategy identifies Elephant and Castle/Walworth Road as a major town centre with existing retail floorspace of 69,000 sqm and states that we will enable the provision of around 45,000 sqm of additional shopping and leisure space at Elephant and Castle/ Walworth Road, focusing on provision of new non-food shopping and strengthening its role as a major town centre.
23. Lend Lease are bringing forward a planning application for submission in 2012 which will include proposals for new retail at the northern end of Walworth Road. An updated supplementary planning document is to be prepared for the Elephant and Castle which will incorporate Walworth Road and provide guidance on how an integrated shopping centre will be achieved. This is to be prepared during the course of 2011.
24. Walworth Road received major investment in 2007 in the form of the 'streets for people' project which aimed to give space back to pedestrians by generally improving the public realm with wider footways, tree planting and new street furniture. It also achieved improvements in road safety.
25. The Lip (local implementation plan) programme for 2010-11 includes £250,000 for improvements to East Street currently being implemented.

