

<b>Item No.</b> 6	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Regeneration and Leisure Scrutiny Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Town Centre good practice	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		Peckham and surrounding areas	
<b>From:</b>		Simon Bevan; Head of planning , policy and transport	

### **High Streets London Investment Benefits Appraisal, November 2010**

URS and Strategic Perspectives were commissioned by Design for London in May 2010 to undertake a study in to the benefits of investment in the high streets of London. This looked in detail at the effectiveness of both public and private investment that had taken place in high streets across London. Peckham was used as a case study in the report.

Key findings of the report:

- High streets with spare development capacity that can deliver new housing could benefit significantly.
- Investments in the physical environment have led to high streets acquiring a new image for themselves and gaining more widespread perceptual improvements.
- Development frameworks have assisted with marketing, management and coordination of investment and development opportunities.
- Improved public transport provision and infrastructure is widely found to be a catalyst for regeneration. TfL and Network Rail improvement plans should be used as opportunities to improve the public realm adjoining transport infrastructure.
- The case for public sector investment in lower value high streets tends to focus more on realising the growth potential of such areas, as their low levels of investment, poor image and lower land values tends to mean that fewer schemes are viable and fewer schemes comes forward due to a range of market failures.
- There is also a need for lower value high streets to bring together a critical mass of public and private sector investment so that the environment is sufficiently improved to create a virtuous circle of continued investment. The aim should be for initial public sector pump priming to generate private sector investment.
- Joint public/private remain critical in bringing forward large-scale mixed use development within low commercial value areas and this remains a key mechanism for leveraging private sector investment.
- Public sector can lend assistance to help establish Business Improvement Districts which have been shown to significantly improve high streets (eg. Waterloo Cut).
- Many high streets experience inefficient and unsuitable commercial waste removal that devalues the high street.
- Exploiting heritage assets and possible cultural angles could help bring in visitors. Heritage lottery funding sources could be used to help improve such features.
- Interim and temporary uses as well as items such as street festivals, celebrations and fairs promote high streets.

## **Potential case study centres**

### **Brixton, LB Lambeth**

- Like Peckham, Brixton is a Major town centre within a deprived area of London. It has good public transport access and on a main road.
- Changes are being led by the Future Brixton Masterplan, adopted July 2009.
- It has recently seen investment in the public realm by Transport for London which has included new public spaces and highway improvements. This has helped tackle pavement congestion and traffic.
- The markets have also been improved. Covered market Brixton Village is undergoing a renaissance, it has late opening hours and has recently been heritage listed.
- There is a new management structure for the town centre via the Brixton Town Centre Director.
- Brixton Pound initiative was introduced in 2009.

### **Dalston Town Centre, LB Hackney**

- Dalston is a Major Town Centre benefiting from the extension of the East London Line in June 2010. There is also a proposed Crossrail station. Like Peckham there is a strong creative sector, specialist ethnic food outlets. A number of conservation areas cover the town centre.
- Suffers from poor public realm, heavy traffic, concerns over safety and severance by railway lines.
- 'Making Space in Dalston is a Design for London funded £1m initiative to improve Dalston's open spaces and has been recognised by a series of awards including The Landscape Institute Awards.
- Kingsland Highstreet has been awarded £2m from Mayor and LDA for improvements in lead up to Olympics.
- Ridley Road markets have received £1m makeover.
- Regeneration guided by Dalston Area Action Plan

### **Woolwich Town Centre, LB Greenwich**

- Major town centre with good public transport links.
- Several projects are under way to spruce up Woolwich Town Centre, adding new housing, retail space, Council service centre and landscaped squares.
- In March 2010 the Council unveiled the second phase in the £6m regeneration of the town centre. To date pavements have been widened to create more space, trees have been planted and new crossings have been installed. The next stage of the Government and Transport for London funded project is the ongoing improvements to General Gordon Square and Beresford Square. The whole area is being pedestrianised and the market will be refurbished with new stalls and overhead lighting.
- There are also plans in progress to redevelop the housing estates.
- The redevelopment of the Royal Arsenal has also provided significant improvements to the quality of public realm in that area.
- The opening of Woolwich Arsenal DLR station in early 2009 is also ensuring that transport led urban design change is playing a key role in the town's renaissance.

### **Wembley Central, LB Brent**

- Wembley is a Major town centre with good public transport links.

- It has seen considerable investment to public realm, transport and leisure facilities through the regeneration of Wembley City.
- Wembley Town Centre Partnership has been established. This is a partnership between the council, businesses and local agencies. To date, the Wembley Town Centre Partnership has successfully introduced: CCTV cameras and radio link; improved festive lighting; year round hanging baskets; high profile events; design guide; visitors guide.
- Additionally, the Wembley Town Centre Partnership has been instrumental in providing public funding for major improvements to the station and public realm.
- There are a range of development opportunities and plans for a new civic centre.
- Regeneration is guided by the Wembley Masterplan (June 2009)