

# Burgess Park

## Time for Change





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# Executive Summary

Burgess Park represents one of the great challenges for Southwark. It is an under valued and under resourced space, cherished by some and avoided by others.

**The reformation of it is a huge task, and previous efforts to achieve it have been frustrated.**

The park has a significant role to play in the regeneration of a large area of south central London.

This report aims to define in broad terms the financial requirements for initial works to transform Burgess Park into a great park. This in turn will provide a positive benefit to the surrounding communities, **the increased desirability of the park acting as a catalyst for the regeneration of the wider area.**

This report does not attempt to act as a design blueprint for the park, but sets out common goals which, when achieved, will make a significant contribution in transforming Burgess Park and the whole area.

To deliver an outstanding park we have developed a strategy that identifies **key goals for change in the park**

and prioritising those which if implemented together will serve to transform the park and its perception to users.

We recognise that to deliver all the needed changes at Burgess Park would cost well in excess of £20m. The focus here is to identify a preliminary package which will change the desirability of the park and act as an effective first phase and catalyst for change.

**This work would create momentum** and a basis from which future investment can develop the other unifying structures and spaces realising the parks full potential and community benefit.

**To make Burgess Park a destination park,** iconic design will need to be combined with an increased number of permanent and transitory attractions that will appeal to a wider audience, and entice visitors back time after time.

Careful consideration has been given to the existing park and its qualities which will be enhanced. These include biodiversity and wildlife as well as a rich cultural and historical context. Important also is the removal of the redundant infrastructure increasing the amount of green space to aid the development of a more coherent park with a strong and unified contemporary identity.

Central to our vision is that the redeveloped park will **increase the diversity and numbers of park users.**

Greater use will change people's perception of the park as a safe, desirable place to go. This, coupled with a high quality maintenance regime delivering a well cared for and managed environment, will complete the transformation.

This report proposes key capital projects which, if undertaken, **will trigger the longer term regeneration of Burgess Park and the associated regeneration of the surrounding area.**



# Five priorities in generating sustainable change

We have identified five key elements in ensuring the delivery of a desirable park.

In addition to the five capital elements we have emphasised the importance of the associated management and maintenance implications of running a successful park.

# One

## Access to nature

A positive legacy of little used open space, undisturbed since the war has allowed emergent habitats to develop. Burgess Park now represents a large area of valuable ecological resource for London. It is our aim to promote this legacy. All areas of the park will have biodiverse, species rich habitats, wildlife and woodland for all to enjoy.

Burgess is at present a site of importance for nature conservation. We intend to deliver Metropolitan Importance Status through the delivery of these proposals. This would meet the aims of the London Plan report 'Improving Londoners access to nature' Implementation report (Feb 2008).

### As part of the enabling works we aim to:

- Create 0.5ha of new reed planting in the lake.  
*This represents 5% of the target for all London*
- Create 2 additional ponds in the New Church Road ecological zone of the park.
- 2 large stag beetle loggeries.  
*This represents 4% of the target for all London*
- Install 20 bat boxes - 10 around the lake.

## Boundary planting

The proposed reinforcement of the boundaries will incorporate extensive tree planting. These will form the edges and contribute to areas of woodland being mainly native species with specimens and accents only in more ornamental varieties.

## Area of deprivation:

Burgess Park is in or near some of the most deprived areas in London...





The map shows the location of Burgess Park central to areas of deprivation. Areas coloured pink represent the LSOA's in the 10% most deprived decile.

## Green links

Burgess Park comprises a large area of the aspirational green link that is proposed to extend from the River Thames to Peckham Rye Park in the very South of the Borough. The work here will deliver a more sustainable environment, encouraging an extensive nature corridor to extend into the heart of London.



Burgess Park creates a significant link in the proposed green corridor linking Peckham Rye to the south all the way to the River Thames and the Tate Modern to the north.

# Two

## Demolition of existing roads and paths:

To create an individual park identity it is essential to remove much of the remains of the past. The remnants of second world war bombing and site clearance trigger a feeling of decay. It is proposed that these old roads and paths are removed.

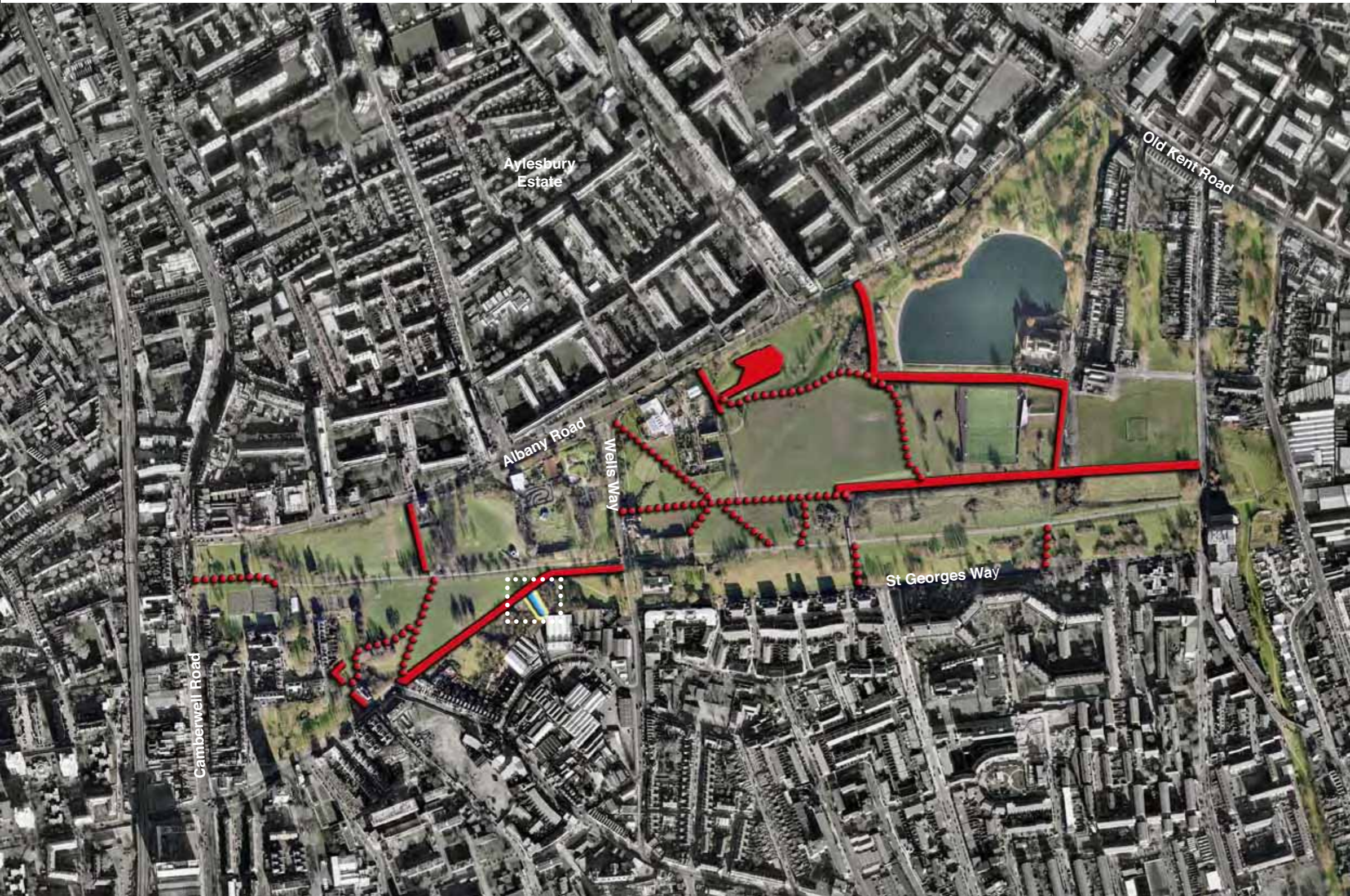
The road and path removal when considered with the proposed new paths will create over a hectare of new green space.

This work will increase the area of green space for habitat creation and recreation and create more coherent spaces.

This work will remove much of the redundant legacy of the past.



A typical road to be removed making way for a new habitat rich park.



## Key



Roads to be removed



Paths to be removed



Land acquisition to improve park legibility

## Three

### **Strengthening the boundaries of the park:**

Many of the existing spaces and boundaries of the present park are disjointed and illegible. The proposed boundaries of the park will not slavishly follow these existing boundaries.

**We have identified new park boundaries creating clear edges and entrances.**


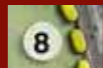
The new boundary will create a number of smaller spaces falling outside the curtilage of the new proposed Burgess Park. This will help strengthen the identity of the park and deliver protected Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) areas outside the park to serve the particular needs of their immediate communities.

To clearly distinguish the extents of the newly defined Burgess Park a variety of contemporary boundary treatments will be used.





## Key

-  Proposed park boundary
-  New local green spaces

## New local open spaces:

- 1 Small garden off Addington Square
- 2 Addington Square
- 3 Local pocket park surrounded by housing
- 4 Green entrance space
- 5 Cricket club
- 6 Green glade and path behind housing
- 7 Linked green glade and path behind housing
- 8 Local pocket park surrounded by housing
- 9 Green cycle path extending south towards Peckham

# Four

## Unifying Structures and Art

Like Kew and Parc de la Villette the use of unifying structures and art will fulfil a range of functions:

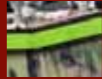




- Endow Burgess park with immediate points of interest and drama as a destination park.
- Improve welcoming and wayfinding for all.
- Accommodate amenities in the park; shops, cafes, information points, play facilities, workshops, meeting spaces, galleries, art.
- Engender a sense of place through positive reference to the historical and cultural context.
- Places for permanent and temporary art installations.
- Each structure will be a point of sustainable excellence and power for the park.
- Each new facility will be recognised art interventions themselves.

The work will be carried out in conjunction with the forging of links with local and international arts institutions to develop the role art can play in the regeneration of Burgess Park.





### Key

-  Proposed park boundary
-  Visual links
-  Chumleigh Gardens
-  Unifying Structures
-  Unifying structures as part of potential future phases

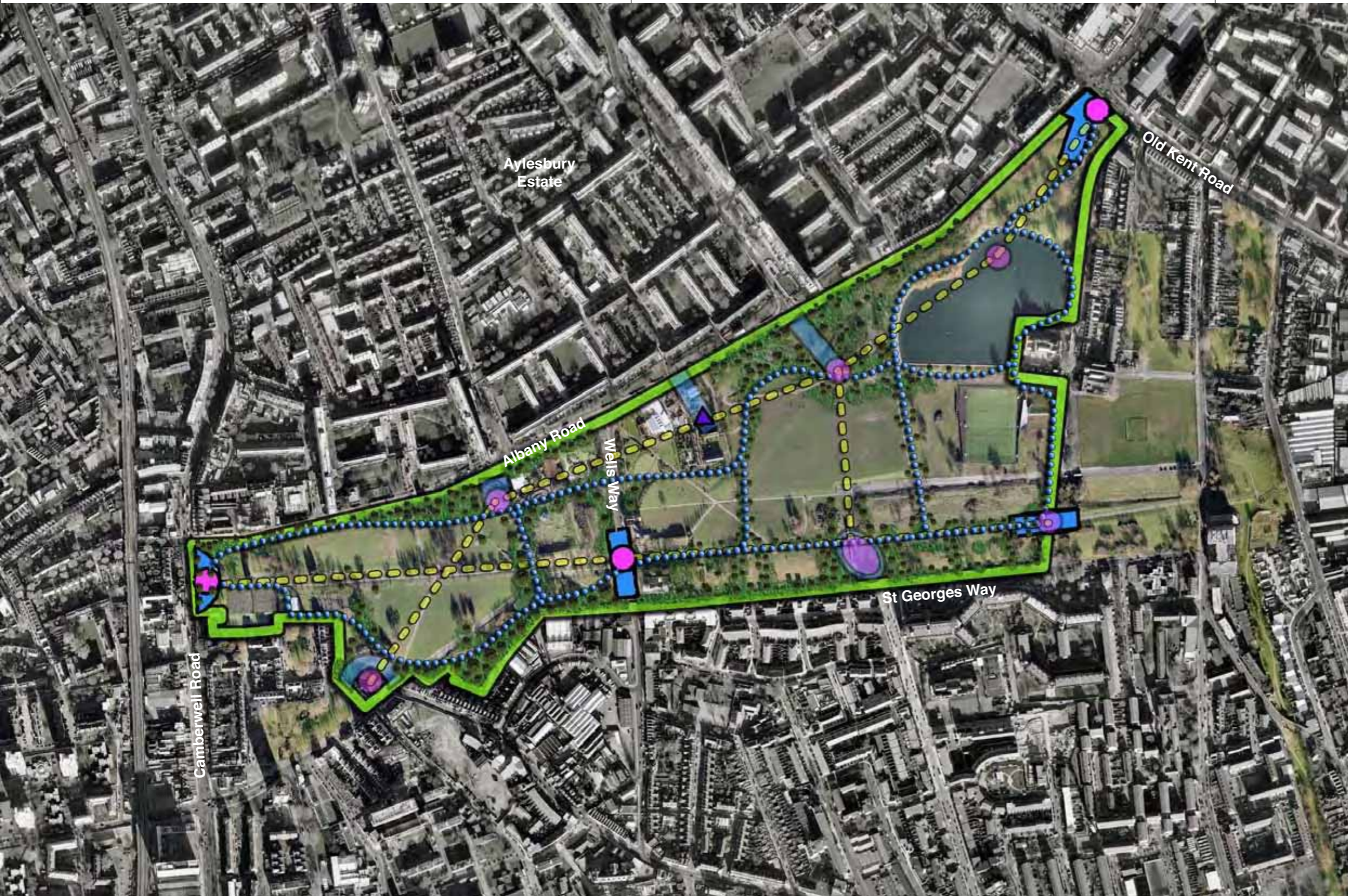
## Five

### **Inviting entrances, legible circulation and clearly defined boundaries:**









People's first impressions are important. The park must be inviting and immediately impress visitors with its sense of identity as distinct from its surroundings. Users must be aware they are entering a unique place. This effect must be supported through **high quality signage and legible circulation** which affords the opportunity to reach all the amenities and enjoy the park. The main and secondary entrances have been identified.

A new legible circulation route around the park has been developed.

A basic structure planting has been considered to help reinforce the boundaries and legibility of the park and to enhance biodiversity.



## Key

-  Proposed park boundary
-  Visual links
-  Unifying Structures
-  Unifying structures as part of potential future phases
-  Entrances
-  Entrances as part of potential future phases
-  Chumleigh Gardens
-  Proposed circulation paths
-  Proposed structural planting



# The enabling package

**One** The removal of paths and roads will reduce the imprint of the past and allow the new park to emerge. 1330m of road and 500m of path will be removed. Each will be turned back into biodiverse ecologically rich tree, shrub and grass areas as well as new paths for entrance areas.

The cost of this work is estimated at **£520,000**

**Two** To improve the integrity of the park we recommend that the fillet of land currently used as a vehicle yard be acquired or land swapped for a more convenient similar adjacent area.

The cost of this is estimated at **£50,000**

**Three** The creation of a new circulation path which establishes the new structure for the park. The path will provide a new access to all areas of the park allowing the opportunity to circulate around the park and view it as a destination rather than as a transitory space linking other places.

The cost of a new path will be **£850,000**

**Four** The development of **4 major entrances** to the park:

Camberwell Road

Old Kent Road

A new entrance in the park on Surrey Canal Walk

Wells Way / St Georges Way

**Five** The creation of the first three of the **unifying structures**. These interventions are crucial for creating a new identity for the park. These will provide a template for the development of others over the next ten years. Each new structure building on the identity of the park.

The first three structures will be those supporting the new entrances of the park where they can contribute to the first impressions.

The elements have yet to be designed. The briefs for the them will include their function and scale. Each will be viewable from other unifying structures across the park contributing to the parks legibility for users.

We have provided a budget for the creation of the **first three structures of £900,000**.

**Six** The planting of large numbers of trees to start the process of defining the new structure and boundaries of the park. The trees will be of a variety of native species promoting biodiversity and helping create differing characters for each area of the new park.

The cost of the tree planting is **£600,000**.

**Seven** The creation of the biodiversity initiatives of reed beds, new ponds, native planting and habitats for wildlife being integral to each proposed element of the enabling package.

The additional budget for these works is **£400,000**.

# Cost Summary:

1.	Demolitions Roads/Paths	£520,000
2.	Land swap/acquisition	£50,000
3.	Circulation path	£850,000
4.	New entrances:	
	Old Kent Road	£550,000
	Camberwell Road	£600,000
	St Georges Way or Wellsway	£410,000
	A New Park Entrance	£350,000
5.	Unifying Structures (3)	£900,000
6.	Tree planting	£600,000
7.	Biodiversity enhancement	£400,000
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£5,230,000</b>
	Professional Fees 15%	£784,500
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,014,500</b>

## Note:

The above budgets are all exclusive of VAT

## Calmington Road

The redundant street (Calmington Road) is to be removed and replaced with an attractive path amongst a rich habitat of colour and scent supporting abundant wildlife.







Calmington Road

**Camberwell Road Entrance.** The existing entrance sets the tone of the park; empty, unkempt, left over. The proposal is to remodel the entire Walworth Road frontage including the corner with Albany Road so the park makes a positive contribution to the street and sets a very different tone for the park, one of anticipation and desirability.

The proposal will include a playful water feature, new gates and railings and revised path layout to improve legibility. The entrance will be the site of a unifying structure (see 4).

The cost of this work is estimated at **£600,000**.



Camberwell Road will have an attractive and imposing entrance inviting the community to move into the park. The water and hard landscaping contribute to reinforcing and enriching the streetscape as well as providing a taste of what is to come within Burgess Park.



Camberwell Road Entrance

**Open Space Within The New Park.** With the enabling works completed, Burgess Park will be welcoming and desirable for all to safely enjoy.

An attractive open space for events which is safe, accessible for all, and well serviced will be a desirable destination for a diverse range of culture, music, art and dance.



The wide open grass bowl of the park is perfect for functions and informal recreation. This large open space will be enhanced with trees, shrubs and flower beds strongly defining the edges and entrances making it a legible and attractive destination.



Open Space Within The New Park

**A new park entrance.** A new entrance for Burgess Park will be created close to the existing cricket ground on the Surrey Canal Path. The entrance is on the line of the new park boundary establishing the idea of a park within a larger area of open space.

The proposal will include a new boundary and gates and the framing of a long view down the park's main axis inviting people in

The cost of this work is estimated at **£350,000**.



A new entrance to the park enhances the sense of place and quality of the area. The strong design, abundant planting and care in its management set a tone inviting the communities affection and use.



A New Park Entrance

**Old Kent Road Entrance.** The raised area at the entrance to the park denies any view from the pavement and the street into the park. The planting has further contributed to this sense of secrecy and separation. The park beyond the entrance is attractive leading to the lake and fountain.

The new entrance will create a **direct link between the Old Kent Road and the lake** within the park. A clear view of the fountain will draw people in. The proposal is to remove the raised land area and heavy boundary planting creating a level view of the open parkland beyond.

The cost of this work is estimated at **£550,000**.



The untidy Old Kent Road entrance denies a view of the park and lake creating a sense of forboding. The new entrance gives a taste of what the new Burgess Park can offer and provides a clear view of the lake inviting people in.





Old Kent Road Entrance

**Wells Way Road Entrance.** Wells Way passes straight through the Park. People using the road are unaware they have passed through Burgess Park. A new entrance here must make Wells Way users aware they are passing through Burgess Park.

The entrance must deliver a strong identity and awareness of the park for those passing through and entice people in at this central intersection.

The work will include the removal of overgrown planting, giving clear sightlines along the key axis of the park.

The cost of this work is estimated at **£410,000.**



The park is invisible to users of the roads that bisect it. All new entrances (as shown here) must provide a glimpse of the quality and character of the park so people recognise the contribution and the park is making in the neighbourhood and to the quality of everyone's lives.



Wells Way Entrance

**The Lake As An Enhanced Destination.** With the enabling works completed, Burgess Park will be welcoming and desirable for all to safely enjoy.

The lake will become a destination for relaxation, fun, and enjoyment. The water will attract fishing, playing, paddling and boating; whilst the surroundings will be for picnics, meeting, and discovering the wider park by walking, cycling or jogging.

The lake will also be an enhanced wildlife habitat supporting numerous native species of flora and fauna.



The existing lake provides a natural focal point in the park. Building on this with attractive paths, planting, a kiosk for refreshments and places to sit and relax will encourage wider usage. A grand fountain will reinforce this as a key destination in the park.



## The Lake As An Enhanced Destination

## Access to nature.

The creation of species rich wildlife areas throughout the park will improve access to nature and increase biodiversity. The image below is an example of how this could be achieved. These may be enlivened through the inclusion of small scale sculptural interventions.





Access to Nature

## New Church Road Wildlife Area

The removal of the redundant New Church Road allows the existing rich wild area to spill into the park creating a new welcoming green glade. Access to the area will be improved through new signage and removal of delapidated fencing







New Church Road Wildlife Area

## The financial benefits for the Aylesbury Estate regeneration:

Houses in close proximity to a desirable park are worth more than those that are not.

When values are compared between properties of a similar type those close to high quality public open space versus those which are not vary between 25 – 35% in value\*. People want to live near green space, especially safe, desirable open space, and will pay a higher price to do so. Interestingly the % uplift in value is true whether in a high value property area or one with low values.

The proposed work to Burgess Park is aimed at improving people's perceptions generally by having a first class park in the neighbourhood. The work will also help guarantee the maximum property value uplift for all adjacent development. This will benefit the Aylesbury Estate and all other areas bordering the park.

The benefits of the improvements to the park for the Aylesbury Estate regeneration are large as over 20% of the properties shown in the masterplan have a view of the park and 50% are less than a 3 minute walk away. Most of the masterplan area will be no more than a 10 minutes walk from the park.

Total proposed new homes is 5143.

20% with a view of the park

Unit size:	20% Private units	Sales values	With Impr Pk.	Increasd Sales
Studio	28 (141)	£125,000	£155,000	£840,000
1 bed	170 (847)	£155,000	£185,000	£5,100,000
2 bed	282 (1412)	£220,000	£275,000	£15,510,000
3 bed +	84 (423)	£260,000	£320,000	£5,040,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>564 2823</b>			<b>£26,490,000</b>

Note total private units in brackets.

\* Reference "The Value of Public Space" - CABE Space 2004

## A further 30% are within a 3 minute walk

Unit size:	30% Private units	Sales values	With Imp Pk.	Increase Sales
Studio	42 (141)	£125,000	£140,000	£630,000
1 bed	254 (847)	£155,000	£170,000	£3,810,000
2 bed	423 (1412)	£220,000	£260,000	£16,920,000
3 bed +	127 (423)	£260,000	£305,000	£5,715,000
Total	846 2823			£27,075,000

Note total private units in brackets.

Based on the values above, the uplift of a desirable Burgess Park on the income from private sale will be in the region of £53.5m.

Given the close proximity of the Aylesbury Estate within the same Area Action Plan(AAP) as the park it is understood that future infill improvements and increased revenue needs of Burgess Park will be supported through significant contributions and involvement from the Aylesbury Estate regeneration.

It takes time for the desirability and benefit of a park to become understood by local and wider communities. The establishment of the park in advance of the estate regeneration is beneficial and will maximise the benefit for the Aylesbury Estate.

Please note that the figures are not based on formal valuations and are indicative only.

**Sales values and information in this chapter have been provided by Savills (July 2008).**

# Background

## Farrer Huxley Associates

Farrer Huxley Associates have undertaken consultation for the development of Chumleigh Gardens in Burgess Park and written the design brief for the present proposals being developed by

Groundwork London. Farrer Huxley Associates are **passionate about realising quality attractive open spaces** for improving the standard of living for all the people in the community they serve.

## The Task

FHA were tasked to develop outline proposals for the necessary investment in Burgess Park to **trigger its sustainable development into a great London park.**

Much work and many plans, including the EDAW masterplan, have been developed for comprehensive improvements to Burgess Park. Much of this information has been taken into consideration in the production of this report which attempts to distil these complex issues down into one set of recommendations.

We believe it is possible for Burgess Park to move from a collection of differing spaces, some loved, some not, into a park with a singular sense of place where people will want to go and feel safe and enjoy its existing and future facilities.

Finally the timing of this report is relevant as the necessary wholesale redevelopment of the adjacent Aylesbury Estate is proving more difficult in the present economic climate. The emergence of **Burgess Park as an attractive and desirable space** for the estate as well as all the others on its borders will enhance the land values and therefore property values and aid the development of the estate.

# Historical Context

The idea that investment in public parks is undertaken to deliver higher property values by providing more desirable places to live is the basis of all great urban parks. The first notable example is Birkenhead Park designed by Joseph Paxton.

The park was built entirely with the intention of allowing the developer to create a desirable environment for people to live. After a visit to the park in 1850 Frederick Law Olmstead took this idea to New York and developed Central Park on the same lines.....

**Birkenhead Park** built in 1850 was designed to increase the **quality of life** for residents buying properties adjacent to it.



Birkenhead Park, Joseph Paxton. 1850

Note the proximity of new developer homes gaining maximum advantage from the park

...The idea has been used more recently in Paris. The development of Parc Citroen in a run down part of the city to the West of the Eiffel Tower has dramatically increased land values with commerce and quality housing schemes now wrapping most boundaries of the Park, paid for by the Citroen car empire.



# Parc Andre Citroen

provided the catalyst for new housing and commerce in a run-down part of Paris in the 80's



Parc Andre Citroen, Gilles Clement & Alain Provost 1982

Some of the development stemming from the park can be seen in the right foreground above.....

In the sprawling North of Paris is a recent example (1986) of the development of a park which has not only raised local land values but through uncompromising design and investment literally put a previously unknown part of Paris, 'La Villette' on the map.

Iconic **landscape structures** helped  
Parc de la Villette to develop a **strong**  
**identity** enabling it to put an unknown area of Paris  
on the map.....



Parc de la Villette, Bernard Tschumi 1986



# An approach to realising a great park

It is not our intention here to deliver a paper on what is required to create a successful park; Simply to identify **five objectives** essential for the transformation of Burgess Park.

We believe these objectives are enshrined in many of the previous studies on the park. The intention is to achieve their **delivery with universal support**.

Each objective is described with precedents of success elsewhere.

# One

## **A safe attractive desirable place for people to enjoy**

It is no coincidence that successful parks are enjoyed by large numbers of people, from neighbouring communities and from further afield.

It is this **high level of usage which contributes to the feeling of safety** allowing users to relax and enjoy the park. The use of Burgess Park by many, at all times is fundamental in ensuring people feel safe and can relax and enjoy the park.

All our objectives are aimed at increasing the desirability of Burgess Park. Central to users wellbeing is that they can relax and feel safe to enjoy the park. All the other objectives are designed to reinforce this basic principle.

Achieving this goal will dramatically increase usage and therefore the parks desirability as a destination.



An attractive and safe environment that provides spaces suitable for a multitude of activities - a vibrant active park.

# Two

## A park with a strong sense of place and identity

All great parks are destinations with their own character. The range and type of amenities in a park contribute to its identity.

At Hyde Park the Serpentine Gallery and the Diana, Princess of Wales' Memorial Playground and water sculpture, as well as Speakers Corner all help form its character.

At Kew the original arboretum has been enriched by a series of individual destinations in the park. The Pagoda, the old and new glass houses as well as the high quality visitor centre and café buildings all make Kew a world class park and arboretum attracting visitors from around the world.

The identity of great parks has been created and enriched over time as each of the amenities and visitor attractions have been built.

In 1986 at Parc de la Villette in Paris the creation and installation of 35 'follies' established a character of the park from its inception. They impose a strong visual identity acting as a framework for the other functions and amenities in the park.

As well as character and amenities a park must impose its presence on the wider area. It needs to have strong boundaries and attractive entrances to welcome and attract people in. The entrances need to portray the character of the park and clearly mark the boundary where people move from one part of the public realm to another.

It is essential that the park has a strong boundary. This clear division allows the park to have an individual identity independent of all around it. A park with a strong distinct identity will contribute positively to its local community.

**Here the biodiversity is a key distinctive feature which can be reinforced to provide the distinct new character for Burgess Park**



All great parks are destinations with their own character. Creation of strong individual facilities make the park recognisable.



Kew Alpine House, Wilkinson Eyre, 2006

At Kew the Alpine House helps reinforce the parks particular character.

At Burgess Park biodiversity could hold the key to its distinctive character.

# Three

## Burgess Park as a destination

A strong identity for the park will attract not only local and city wide visitors but national and **international visitors**.

In a large park this guarantees more users making it sustainable and safer and can **profoundly change the quality of life** in it's surrounding areas.



St James' Park, London

**A park with local, city wide, national and international appeal will hugely benefit the local quality of life...**

# Four

## A park which is well managed shows it is cared for

All successful parks provide an experience that **the park is cherished** by those that have responsibility for its management and maintenance. This in turn contributes to the feeling of security they feel.

There is **increased user pleasure and relaxation** in a space they know is protected by others

We intend to build on the biodiverse richness of the park and embrace community and voluntary support in the creation of a new park.



A beautifully maintained and managed park that is cherished will help people's feelings of safety and security....

# Five

## The provision of amenities and attractions which ensure a high level of usage

The greater the number of users in a park the greater the perception of safety. The number of users is directly related to the quality and number of attractions and amenities the park has on offer.

The range of facilities should cater for all types of users at all times of the day when the park is open. The facilities available and the management strategy should set the range of events and activities thus resulting in a concomitant decrease in the acceptability of anti social behaviour taking place.

In simple terms **the greater the number of facilities being used** and social functions taking place the **lower the level of anti social activity**.



Eden Project Cafe. Image courtesy of Ennor 2007

High quality well used amenities and activities will populate the park reducing anti-social behaviour and increasing the parks desirability.

The park must continue to attract new visitors. Additional funding must deliver high quality internal park spaces that enhance the overall character of Burgess Park.





Princess Diana Memorial, Hyde Park London, Gustafson Porter, 2004



# Conclusion

The proposals identified in this report provide a basis for the creation of a desirable park with all the ingredients for success. The challenge for Southwark is to find the funds for these necessary capital works and then always more challenging; is to develop a revenue stream and run a continuous programme of works to complete the improvements, as well as maintain and manage the park at a level which allows people to feel safe and relaxed to enjoy it.

This project represents the beginning of the challenge to transform Burgess Park. **The value of this work cannot be underestimated.** Speak to people who live near Parc de la Villette or Parc Citroen who remember what it was like before and the benefit is only too real, improving the quality of life for all.

The benefit at Burgess Park can go even further with the ecological impact of a biodiverse solution benefiting everyone.

Given the importance and necessity of regeneration around the Aylesbury Estate as well as on the other boundaries of the park it is now Burgess Park's **time for change.**





## Photomontage Viewpoint Locations

- 1 Redundant roads to be removed
- 2 A view into the park from Camberwell Road
- 3 The large open grass space central to the park
- 4 A possible new entrance reinforcing the park's character
- 5 A view from across the Old Kent Road
- 6 A view along Wells Way
- 7 A view of the lake from the direction of the Old Kent Road entrance
- 8 An area of mounded grass suitable for a wild garden.
- 9 The redundant New Church Road and wildlife area

## Location Plan







Farrer Huxley  
Associates

