Friends of Burgess Park - 22 August 2016

Response covering both of the planning applications for:

- **Mountview Academy 16/AP/2649**
- **Peckham Square and Peckham Arch 16/AP/3075**

Summary of key points

Surrey Canal Walk is part of Burgess Park and an important entrance into Peckham.

Friends of Burgess Park consider that the proposed redevelopments on Peckham Square provide a unique opportunity to improve the quality of the public spaces. Careful and thoughtful design across the whole area would improve the design of the public realm uniting the landscaping of Surrey Canal Walk and the square. We would like to see a high quality design which brings the green of Surrey Canal Walk into Peckham, provides a space for relaxation to enjoy nature as well as social events and active management of cycling and pedestrian movement.

We welcome the arrival of Mountview Theatre into Peckham and recognise that this will bring new vitality to the square as well as the additional benefit to local people. The proposed design looks inwards to the Surrey Canal Walk and Peckham Square and will help shape the square and the facilities available.

However, none of the individual planning applications make an overall assessment of the impact of these changes on the square. Whilst this is not a planning requirement it would be helpful to understand and get the best from these significant changes proposed to the buildings in this small area of public open space.

Restating points already made to the AAP and previous consultations:

1. Cycling through the square needs an alternative cycle route especially for commuter cyclists.
2. Design linkage needed between SCW and Peckham Sq needs to improve the quality of the public realm environment greening and linking to Peckham High Street
3. Management and maintenance of the environment, both SCW and the square needs to be sufficient for areas which are in high use.

Additional comments across the planning applications:

Peckham Square Cycling

4. **The space available will be smaller than currently so less room for pedestrians/cyclist. We want to see reduced numbers of peak time commuter**

cycling on SCW and Peckham Square through the better promotion and design quality of an alternative route.

5. The proposal for the development of the new square points out that there is a lot of pedestrian and cyclist conflict and identifies some conflict points. However, although it addresses the N-S route and plans to try subtle changes in elevation and paving to funnel cyclists N-S as far it does not deal with E-W route. Nor does it propose dealing with the tricky crossing points of cyclists and pedestrians.
6. Surrey Canal is too busy at peak times and Southwark Cyclists recommend the Sumner Rd route and suggest that better signage from the square to it is needed.
7. The management of cycling and introduction of these changes (i) signage for alternative route (ii) better signage of existing alternative route (iii) improvements to alternative route need to be introduced in advance of the Mountview Theatre opening.
8. We have met council officials and councillors several times with Southwark Cyclists and the fine details and actions needed to improve the existing situation (minimal cost) do not happen. It requires a co-ordinated approach across signage, information and education.
9. The current split pathway between pedestrians/cyclists which runs for a short distance before entering the shared path of the SCW should be removed.

http://southwarkcyclists.org.uk/an-alternative-to-surrey-canal-path/

http://southwarkcyclists.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Surrey-Canal-Path-Report-Jane.pdf

http://southwarkcyclists.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/LCN-22-Report-Sally.pdf

Peckham Square public open space

10. Moving the heart of the square back from the main road can be positive as it moves activity away from the road/air quality/ people crossing the road/narrow pavement.
11. Adding the proposed larger art gallery which will have public interface and add to the social and cultural offer meaning there is people activity in the square.
12. **Further details on the design intentions for the square and the linkage between the current grass area of SCW and the paved square would be welcome.**
13. The proposed plans do not how the proposed site footprint for the Mountview Academy - this does not therefore show the prospective new look in full.
14. We welcome the “tumbled setts” on the landscape plan to slow cyclists down but we object to the implied premise that the this will be a main thoroughfare for cyclist. An alternative route such as Sumner Road must be found. The route into the new Library Square seems very narrow for the footfall and too narrow to imply and present the entranceway to a key public open space in Peckham.
15. We welcome the wider pavement but note that it narrows considerably outside the Kentish Drovers.
16. We welcome the new trees proposed, but this does seem a lot and high density at the rear of the art gallery space. We note that the tree illustrations provided indicate a mature specimen and this is unlikely unless made a planning requirement.
17. We note that a planting and landscaping plan is not provided for the whole public space of the Library Square and consider linkage to SCW.

18. We note the lighting plan does not include the whole square or consider linkage to SCW and necessary lighting.

Mountview Academy

19. **We are concerned at the proposed site plan for the Mountview Academy which shows encroachment on open space and Metropolitan Open Land (possibly tbc).**
20. From the drawings it seems that some of the additional space will be used as the cafe outside seating space by Mountview Academy. As this is currently part of public open space we hope it will be a planning requirement that this is public seating. Not restricted to users of the cafe and linked to consumption of items purchased at the cafe.
21. **We are concerned about the impact of the Mountview Academy on the Library Square and public realm. We recognise this may be unintentional and that there may be mitigation which can be put in place.**
22. The Mountview cafe facing onto the square/SCW will increase public facing activity, we welcome a vibrant atmosphere for the square. At the moment there is a small amount of seating in the square. There is no play equipment and children frequently use the large round ceramic balls as play equipment.
23. We would welcome consideration of the linkage and connectivity between SCW and the square; consideration of play features (not necessarily play equipment).
24. **Impact of height of buildings on shadow and sunshine in the Peckham Sq and so suitability as a pleasant open area.** The report accompanying the planning documents only reviews the impact on nearby buildings. Loss of light to green open spaces is just as detrimental changing the character of the space and the habitat. In order for the square to be a pleasant space consideration is needed of sunshine/shade and wind due to large buildings.

http://www.wildlondon.org.uk/sites/default/files/spaces-wild-london-wildlife-trust-oct2015_0.pdf

25. We welcome the opportunity discussed at the informal consultation for public theatre access and potential for performances to take place within the square. This is not mentioned in the CIL agreement.
26. The alleyway between the library and the academy will need to be of suitable width and design that people feel safe using it.
27. Additional public seating of a high quality in Peckham Square is also required.
28. Currently there are some benches at the corner of the library. If these are removed replacement seating will be needed.

New accommodation

29. Tidying up the backs of the houses and shops around the square is a good idea. The proposals for the square as a vibrant space and the likely expansion of late evening activity means that the housing is likely to be exposed to noise front and rear.
30. Adequate measures must be taken in the design of the property to ensure residents quiet enjoyment of their homes is not compromised.