

10. Summary and Recommendations

This programme of consultation consisted of a deliberative event targeted at an audience reflective of North Deptford's socio-economic profile, supplemented by a number of workshops which were aimed at key local residents groups and stakeholders. It revealed a number of recurring themes and issues, shared by different groups for different reasons. This section draws out the headline priorities for each group at this point in time and from their own perspective, which will assist the Council with ongoing and future negotiation with developers of sites in the North Deptford area. It will also help the Council make strategic and key local decisions on how to improve the provision of local services and allocate resources.

The following sections summarise the headline views expressed by the major groups consulted:

Residents

- Traffic flow improvements, particularly on Evelyn Street, and adequate parking for residents;
- Public realm improvements to enhance North Deptford's local environment and image;
- Maintenance of residential buildings to decent homes standards;
- Improved safety and maintenance of security equipment;
- Upgrades to existing green spaces and provision of new public spaces as part of any new development;
- In the medium to long term, provision of a greater choice of retail, community and leisure facilities, and establishment of revenue funding streams to maintain existing facilities; and
- Celebration of heritage assets to enhance local identity and pride in the local environment

Public and Voluntary Stakeholders

- Delivery of health and education services to meet current and future need;
- Provision of new youth and community facilities, funded by S106 through long-term funding arrangements such as a trust providing revenue; and
- Use of this report to inform anti-social behaviour and housing and safety strategies at Lewisham, facilitated by a meeting of heads of service at the Council at which the report is presented.



Businesses

- Public realm and business space improvements to make businesses centres more attractive to employees and shoppers, and therefore more competitive; and
- More employment in the area as part of any new proposals, and measures to ensure that local people have best access to it.

Youth

- Improved youth facilities and youth activities in the area;
- Wider choice of shops to serve the local area;
- Improved reliability of public transport, particularly regarding traffic congestion; and
- Improved green spaces with more leisure suitable for young people.

LDF options

All groups were generally supportive of regeneration and growth in North Deptford, although most had reservations which would have to be addressed at the same time. Residents were supportive of change which will bring a wider range of job prospects, so long as these are accompanied by appropriate training programmes. There was also considerable support for removal of industrial sites, particularly the Oxestalls Road site, due to the adverse impacts these uses have on the local residential environment in terms of pollution and traffic.

The public and voluntary sector workshop group was supportive of residential growth in the area, but had concerns about its impacts on local services, especially education and health.

The Cannon Wharf Businesses were supportive of redevelopment of employment sites for mixed use due to the vibrancy this would bring to the area, and the Triangle Traders were supportive of growth, so long as it included an adequate proportion of commercial uses to meet local need, and was accompanied by measures to help the Triangle Traders compete with new retail

development.

There was broad support for regeneration and growth among young people at the youth workshop, with many feeling that improvement could be delivered through long-term change.

Community benefits from major sites

- New pedestrian and cycle connections along the River Thames from Surrey Quays to Greenwich;
- New pedestrian and cycle connections to the River from Evelyn Street;
- New links through to Surrey Quays from Oxestalls Road via the Cannon Wharf sites;
- New uses on the Oxestalls Road site replacing the heavy industry and bring vibrancy to the area, particularly along Grove Street; and
- New community and shopping uses at the Convoys Wharf Site and a large public space, reusing historic buildings in the area.

Parks and open space

- Improvements to many of the greenspaces in the area, not just Pepys Park, with tidying, better security, maintenance and more planting as a short term measure; and
- In the long term, delivery of more leisure facilities and well organised activities to ensure that the parks are used much more by the local community.

Recommendations

Movement Traffic and Transport

Grove Street

For many residents, the poor quality of the pedestrian environment was the central point of concern. Much discussion with residents revolved around the importance of Grove Street. In the context of the major development sites in the area, a major opportunity to radically improve the environmental quality of Grove Street emerges. Grove Street is the key pedestrian link between Surrey Quays shopping centre and Deptford town centre.

Whilst there is concern about the already busy nature of Evelyn Street, the priority for local people in the context of potentially very significant local housing development is for a safe and attractive environment. It will therefore be important to seek to ensure that Grove Street is not seen as a through route. By continuing to focus vehicular movement along the Evelyn Street corridor, the Grove Street environment, particularly the central section opposite the Lower

Pepys Park, could become the focus of a major public realm investment programme with the aim of anchoring the Grove Street area as the heart of the community.

Public transport – bus routes

In terms of public transport links, there was support for Lewisham investigating improved links between North Deptford and Greenwich. Local bus services are critical in ensuring local people have good access to local community services and employment opportunities. There was an aspiration for new services (potentially ‘hoppers’) linking the area more directly with the nearby centres of New Cross and Peckham, and for new local bus routes connecting local streets into the network, ideally running through Grove Street.

Evelyn Street

Traffic congestion along Evelyn Street was clearly a priority for residents in North Deptford. Evelyn Street is a strategic route controlled by TfL, giving the Borough limited scope to influence its management and control. It should also be noted that during the consultation major road works were being undertaken on the route. However, working closely with TfL, there

may be scope for the Council to, through publicity and communication, help ensure that local residents and other stakeholders are better informed about the timescales and aims of traffic works, as well as measures being taken at a wider scale and by national bodies, to improve traffic flow in the North Deptford and south east London.

Long term

Should industrial sites be redeveloped for mixed and residential uses, in the longer term, pressure will grow significantly on the current transport network, requiring major transport improvements. The Council will therefore need to consider major transport improvements alongside measures to address current issues.

Physical Environment and Open Space

Short term

Residents were clear that improvements to North Deptford’s physical environment, its streets and public spaces, would have a direct impact on their everyday lives. Physical improvements could help address a

number of issues including crime and safety, under-use of communal spaces and lack of pride in the local area. Landscape improvements could present a cost-effective and high impact intervention – and could therefore represent an important quick win for the Council. Communication of existing landscaping initiatives would inform residents of the Council's current.

Resources are already allocated to making improvements to the Pepys Estate but the Council should consider the benefits of widening the brief for these resources. Street lighting and the provision of safer routes was a high priority for local residents and such improvements appeared to have a higher priority than the improvement of the area's open spaces.

Getting local youth groups involved in the process of designing the planned improvements to the area's open spaces should ensure greater value to them is given by local people thus reducing the likelihood of vandalism.

Long term

In the longer term, Lewisham should focus on maintenance and regular tidying of public and green spaces, including the revenue streams needed to fund this.

The issue of rubbish and fly tipping was also raised, and could be given further consideration as a Borough-wide policy issue.

New pedestrian and cycle routes should be a high priority in any redevelopment opportunities, particularly the chance to extend the Thames path from Surrey Quays to Greenwich, and other new routes between Evelyn Street and the River through potential development sites.

Crime and Safety

Many of the crime issues identified by participants related to maintenance issues. As with the public realm, the Council should investigate long-term measures to ensure sustained revenues for regular repair and upkeep of security provision, such as CCTV and lighting. In addition, it would be useful to establish links between local Wardens and landscape professionals as part of any landscaping improvement initiatives to establish how design could help reduce perception and likelihood of crime.

Much criminal activity was linked to a perceived lack of

youth provision in the area. Links should be promoted between youth organisations and representatives such as the Riverside Youth Club and local police and Wardens to investigate activities and initiatives which would help reduce crime through structured activity.

Community and Youth Facilities

Youth provision was a very high priority at all the consultation events and should therefore be a key focus for action, support and investment.

The single most common request regarding community provision was for increased funding to existing youth facilities. Lewisham Council should consider ways of increasing and sustaining revenue funding to existing and any new youth facilities to ensure that they are effective within the community. The Riverside Youth Club has strong links with local young people and these links should be utilised by other community agencies to encourage greater youth participation and constructive ownership of North Deptford.

Participants were also keen to see greater provision of community leisure facilities for older groups. This could

come in the form of new events at existing venues, potentially including the Riverside Youth Club and the 2000 Community Action Centre.

There will be significant investments made in the redevelopment of key sites in the area. These proposals are likely to include health and community facilities for residents. Consideration should be given to securing (limited) access for local people to any health/leisure facilities provided in the redevelopment of the major sites in the area.

In the longer term, additional community facilities, for example, a library, art gallery or fitness club, could be provided as part of redevelopment of the opportunity sites.

Community integration was a common concern regarding the opportunity sites. A starting point to address this, as suggested by participants themselves, would be to establish more community events, for example, farmers markets and festivals. These events would need to be firmly community-led, with the Council in a supporting role, in order to ensure ownership and buy-in from the local community.

In the long term, it will be crucial to ensure that new development is properly integrated with the existing landscape in terms of physical routes and character. This could be addressed through design briefs for major sites.

Education and training

Planning controls to deliver local training and employment

Provision of employment and training was a key concern, and further debate could usefully be established on ways in which existing employment opportunities are offered out. Given the construction opportunities presented by the major opportunity sites, there is a short-medium term opportunity to bring significant levels of work to the area, secured and controlled through the planning process.

Housing

Local perceptions and communication

The state of existing housing on the estates was a major issue at the deliberative event and at the estates workshops, and should therefore be seen as a high priority for the Council. Whether or not there is scope to address this directly through the redevelopment of privately owned sites will need consideration. However, there was a strong sense of resentment that the Council was spending or making money on the redevelopment of these sites at the expense of those who already live in poor quality housing. This is a communications issue.

Some cosmetic improvements to these areas could have great impacts for local people and significantly improve their quality of life. As with other issues, funding may be at the root of these problems, but it would be worth establishing further debate on the issue of poor living conditions, and on the future of the buildings themselves. Contacts with local residents made during this consultation could be followed up to establish a focus group to this end.

Business facilities and employment

In terms of new job provision in North Deptford, there was all round support for new employment uses and rationalisation of existing heavy industrial uses. However, the overarching concern in this regard was how provision of new employment in the area could meet the needs of the local population. This will clearly need further consideration in terms of the economic viability, necessary skills programmes which could accompany new physical development and further consultation with local employers and residents would be very valuable in this regard.

Affordable employment space was mentioned as just as important as affordable housing.