

Neighbourhood Planning and The Gasholders

KOVF Presentation 5 February 2015

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Neighbourhood Planning: Background I

- Localism Act 2011
- Rationale - “They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead.”
- Has it caught on?
 - Nationally - 5.2m people in England now live in areas where neighbourhood planning is afoot.
 - London – slower than elsewhere, says GLA Planning Committee Report (Nov 2014), with 80 of London’s 1,200 neighbourhoods, that cover 624 electoral wards, expressing any interest in the process. One neighbourhood plan has so far been adopted and is now influencing the development of a local area.

Background II

- What it can't do

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot:

- Conflict with the strategic policies in the borough plan.
- Be used to prevent development that is included in the borough plan.
- Be prepared by a body other than a parish or town council or a neighbourhood forum.

Source: <http://www.planninghelp.org.uk/improve-where-you-live/shape-your-localarea/neighbourhood-plans/some-general-principles-for-neighbourhood-plans>

- What it can do

A Neighbourhood Plan can:

- Decide where and what type of development should happen in the neighbourhood.
- Promote more development than is set out in the borough plan.
- Include policies, e.g. design standards, which take precedence over policies in the borough plan.
- Let you spend a 25% share of Community Infrastructure Levy raised from local developments

Background III

- What a Neighbourhood Plan often covers
 - The development of housing and bringing vacant or derelict housing back into use.
 - Provision for businesses to set up or expand their premises.
 - Transport and access (including roads, cycling and walking).
 - The development of schools, places of worship, health facilities, and leisure facilities.
 - The restriction of certain types of development and change of use.
 - The design of buildings.
 - Protection and creation of open space, play areas, parks, gardens.
 - Protection of important buildings and historic assets.
 - Promotion of renewable energy projects, such as solar energy and wind turbines
- Who else is doing it?
 - Waterloo
 - Elephant & Castle and Walworth

Neighbourhood Planning: Formalities for KOVF

- Section 61F TCPA 1990 (inserted by the Localism Act 2011)
 - Constitution, membership and purposes – dealt with at AGM
 - Boundaries – the traditional KOVF area
 - How representative of its community
 - Geographical distribution of individual membership,
 - Business representatives on KOVF Board
 - Designation by Lambeth Council
 - Application by end February

Context

London is a densely populated city, Lambeth a particularly dense borough, at 113 people per hectare, and our two wards even denser, at some 29,368 people in 230 hectares, or about 128 people per hectare (2011 Census statistics). The two wards of Prince's and Oval straddle the separate Central Activity Zone (CAZ) and London Congestion Charge boundaries. The area has been clustered, with housing at the top end of the Nine Elms Vauxhall Opportunity Area, and the notorious Vauxhall Cluster of tall buildings, some running up to a planned eye-watering density of 1,551 units per hectare, in an open space deficiency area to boot. Few developments yield more than 20% affordable housing, many less, based upon confidential and unpublished "viability" studies. Along the Albert Embankment, the area has, in recent years, lost 30,000 sqm of employment floor space, only to receive back 5,000 sqm, and luxury flats in "iconic" buildings with "stunning" views, often sold first off plan in Malaysia and Singapore. We have areas of significant social deprivation and joblessness, interspersed with comfortable Victorian and Neo-Georgian conservation areas, long the haunt of economical MPs within the Division Bell area. Apart from Vauxhall, where a small Central Activity Zone frontage is struggling to be born, our retail centres are threatened by edge of centre approved Tesco's (3, in the case of Kennington!) over and above the current challenges of retail decline. And despite the need for jobs that our less skilled jobseekers can do, developers seek to eat away at our Locally Significant Industrial sites (including the iconic but now decommissioned Oval Gasholders) for residential development, even given Lambeth's "Restricted Transfer" status under the London Plan.

Neighbourhood Planning: So what are our issues? I

- A strategic aspiration to see provided **jobs for the skills of the people living in the area and truly affordable housing**. This is set in the context of changes to social and economic composition of the area and a growth in property development along the embankment. The population is becoming more mixed with a growing professional and a transient population and employment opportunities for lower skilled local residents are being eroded.
- There is **an aspiration for more, better and connected green public open space**, both along a north south axis parallel to the railway arches, and east west, picking up the prospect of a contribution to public open space from the redevelopment of the Oval/Kennington Gasholders. We hope to build on local initiatives already underway, such as those promoted by Vauxhall BID and VGERTA, and Friends Groups for our major parks

Neighbourhood Planning: So what are our issues? II

- **The impact of tall and overdense developments on the environment and social amenities and infrastructure**
 - Three main poles of growth – Vauxhall Cluster, Albert Embankment, and Oval/Kennington Gasholders, a development “opportunity”
 - The Vauxhall Cluster may be a lost cause in this regard, with heights and densities regularly violating plan policy limits, and planning committees invited by officers to consider each new departure as justified by the precedent of the last
 - All the more reason for concentrating on the Oval/Kennington Gasholders, to see if we can get it right this time – see diagram and wall plans. Need to bring all affected landowners to the table, including Tesco
- Because they are on a faster track than Neighbourhood Plan creation, we have to respond separately to the Vauxhall Gyrotory and Gasholder consultations, while making sure Neighbourhood Plan proposals are consistent

Neighbourhood planning: Where do you find the resources?

- Committed volunteers – sign up at the back!
- Lambeth Council support in kind – stand up Emer Costello!
- University College London Bartlett School of Planning – we (along with five other Neighbourhood Forums) have been adopted as projects by groups of 18 or so graduate students as part of their Master's Course in Urban Design – stand up representatives here tonight, and look forward to presentations by them on our issues here on March 11
- Government grants – DCLG support programme 2015-18 opens for bids April 2015 – but planning advice can burn money at the rate of £100 an hour!