REVITALISE Camberwell

Initial consultation report

www.southwark.gov.uk/camberwell
Introduction

Revitalise<sup>5</sup> Camberwell aims to transform and improve Camberwell town centre. This scheme is being developed in partnership with Southwark Council, Lambeth Council and Transport for London.

It has long been recognised that changes are needed if Camberwell is to realise its true potential and the local community and Community Council have championed this cause over many years. The council and its partners are committed to creating a revitalised and transformed town centre – one with a definite boundary, improved access to public transport, improved conditions for pedestrians and one which provides a gateway to the area, whether that be for access to public services, health, retail or leisure.

We now have the opportunity to make change happen and to help make Camberwell a great place to live, work and socialise; an area we can all be really proud of.

To help to shape plans for Camberwell town centre we have been asking people for their thoughts and aspirations and our findings are included in this report.

Scheme boundary

The scheme boundary is shown in the figure below.

If you did not have the opportunity to put your views forward at this stage, we would still like to hear from you. Additionally if you would like to comment on any of the issues raised in this report, please contact us on the details provided below.

For further details on the scheme, please go to www.southwark.gov.uk/camberwell, or contact us on transport@southwark.gov.uk.

There will be further opportunities to be involved with formal consultation in Summer 2012.
This consultation ran from October to December 2011 and was the first step in the development of our plans for Camberwell. However, it did not start from scratch; the Revitalise^5^ Camberwell consultation builds on projects and initiatives including but not limited to:

- Camberwell Local Travel Planning Group
- The Camberwell Transport Summit 2007
- Vision For Camberwell Improving Streets and Public Spaces In SE5

The aim of the consultation was to capture the views of the community and identify aspirations and priorities for the town centre whilst raising people’s awareness of the Revitalise^5^ Camberwell project.

The consultation was launched on 31 October at Camberwell Community Council and was followed by a series of public events, all of which are detailed in this report. In conjunction with this we also sought input via surveys, paper and online, which were presented to the community, made available on the council’s website and distributed to local employees at the South London and Maudsley and Kings College Hospital.

We also surveyed all the businesses in the town centre, seeking their knowledge and experience of operating a business in Camberwell.

We have discussed how people feel about Camberwell with residents, visitors, shop keepers, businesses, children, young people and adults alike. They have told us what they like and don’t like and the changes they want to see.

We want to thank the many people who have taken the time to talk to us and given us their ideas and thoughts.
**Launch event, Camberwell Community Council, 31 October 2011**

The official launch of the Revitalise\textsuperscript{5} Camberwell project was held at Camberwell Community Council 31 October 2011.

At the meeting local community groups presented their ideas for a future Camberwell and this was followed by a short video, where local residents spoke about what they liked about Camberwell. These ‘likes’ included Camberwell’s shops and restaurants; that the area has a ‘buzzy’ feel to it; that the area is very arty and that the residents were friendly and there was a community feel.

Following this, officers outlined the project and explained how the community could get involved by participating in consultation events and completing the various questionnaires.

To get people thinking about the area, the audience and local Councillors took part in a Camberwell based general knowledge quiz. We also asked attendees to identify words which they associated with the area and then used magnetic letters to display them on a board.

There were 86 community members at the Community Council, including 21 young people from the Camberwell Youth Community Council.

**Have your say! 7 November 2011**

This session was an opportunity for a community discussion about current issues and future aspirations between members of the community.

Presentations were given from Southwark Living Streets, Kings College Hospital and the Camberwell Business Network. This was followed by a discussion about the key issues in the town centre. The group felt that the police should be involved at an early stage and that as part of the scheme we should consider designing out crime.

The attendance was lower than expected, but this could be explained by the event’s proximity to the launch of the scheme, as later events saw a better turn out.

*Clare (resident SE5 8)*

‘There needs to be more joint working between Lambeth and Southwark Councils’
Camberwell Farmers Market, 5 November, 3 & 17 December 2011
In conjunction with the monthly farmers market on the Green, a stall was set up for the Revitalise® Camberwell project. This provided an opportunity to engage with the community and for members of the public to ask questions and find out what was happening and how they could be involved. An important element to these events was the public survey, of which 74 were completed.

Louise (Resident SE5 8)
The thing I like about Camberwell is ...
‘Buzzing but quiet in surrounding streets’

Hollington Club for Young People, 30 November 2011
Young people attending the youth club were invited to comment on their feelings about Camberwell and mark their ‘likes’ and ‘dislikes’ on a map of the town centre. The age range of children attending was approximately 7 to 12.

Comments made included the following:
‘The park needs to get noticed!’
‘We need more bins’
‘Too much pollution’
‘It’s dark – need better lights’
‘Too many cars going in different directions’ (at cross roads)
‘Cars go too fast on Camberwell New Road’
‘Need an Astroturf football pitch – have to go to Burgess Park’

‘How well do you know Camberwell?’ Quiz, 15 November 2011
As part of their regular Tuesday night quiz, The Bear Freehouse, on Camberwell New Road, held a round testing knowledge of Camberwell.

Questions from The Bear Freehouse Quiz
1. How many bus routes serve Camberwell Town Centre?
2. Who links Camberwell, Campari and Ant and Dec?
3 How many papers did Danny use in his Camberwell Carrot?
4 Which 19th Century prime minister, famous for his links to Birmingham, was born in Camberwell Grove?
5 What are the two main colours of a Camberwell Beauty?
6 According to the Greater London Authority, the population of the Camberwell Community Council area was 37,400 in 2005. What is it predicted to be by 2029, nearest 2000?
7 What owes its name to a famous Victorian art critic?
8 After whom is Denmark Hill named?
9 In which country is there another Camberwell?
10 What is produced using the Bessemer Process, named after Henry Bessemer, who lived on Denmark Hill?

Answers
1. 15 2. Lorraine Chase (used to live in Camberwell, was in a Campari advert and was on I’m a Celebrity get me out of Here) 3. 12 4. Joseph Chamberlain 5. Red and White 6. 49,700 7. Ruskin Park (John Ruskin) 8. Prince George of Denmark (husband to Queen Anne, who came here to hunt) 9. Australia 10. Steel
As well as having the time to take part in the quiz, many people were able to tell us what they thought of the town centre via the public survey.

William (Visitor SW 9)
‘Lots of pubs and things to do at night but during the day there is a definite lack of cafes, [I’d like] coffee shops that are not horrid.’

Exhibitions at the Baths, St Giles Centre & Butterfly Walk, Nov/Dec 2011
The event at the baths was timed to coincide with the ‘silver swim’ and the ‘jelly babies’ sessions, in order to capture the ideas and opinions of parents of young children and older members of the community. There were lots of ideas and discussions including ways in which the buses could work in Camberwell and suggestions for improvements to pavements were key themes.

Butterfly Walk’s exhibition was unfortunately hampered by the very cold temperatures and being the busy last shopping weekend before Christmas. In spite of this, we were able to speak to many people who were very positive about the scheme and 12 even stopped to brace the cold and complete a survey.

Donald (Resident SE5)
‘Too much traffic.... Tube in Camberwell, I use the bus but would prefer to use the tube. Do up the properties, make it look better.’

Bus on the Green, 26 November 2011
As the name suggests, the Revitalise bus came to Camberwell Green. People were welcomed aboard our Routemaster bus and took the time to give us their views about Camberwell.

Other activities such as sitting in the driver’s seat and interactive voting also took place on the day along with a balloon release attended by local councillors, Transport for London, the safer neighbourhoods team, the Camberwell Youth Community Council and members of the community.

Resident SE5
‘Keep the library [Camberwell] needs something for children-cinema or skating rink or athletics facilities’.
**Walking tours and workshops**

A number of ‘walkabouts’ around the town centre were held as part of the consultation. This gave people the opportunity to show us problems first hand and discuss the changes that they wanted to see. These ranged from daily issues such as litter and crowded pavements to ideas and aspirations for the re-imagining of spaces within the town centre. There were two walkabouts, one on a Saturday morning and one on a weekday evening. An additional event was held with Camberwell Youth Community Council that specifically targeted the views of young people.

As part of the activity (incorporating a Space Shaper1 exercise) we invited people to walk around the town centre with us and then asked them to mark any issues or opportunities on a map. Numerous ‘Hotspots, Hangouts & Possibilities’ were identified and provided a valuable insight into specific issues across the area.

‘Hotspots, Hangouts & Possibilities’ were defined as follows:

- **Hotspots** - places of perceived conflict or places where key negative issues are present
- **Hangouts** - places and their qualities which were most successful
- **Possibilities** - records specific ideas for improvements

1Spaceshaper is a practical toolkit to measure the quality of a public space before investing time and money in improving it.
We were very pleased to be joined on the walkabout by two students from Camberwell College of Art. As well as giving us their own views of the town centre, they also contributed some sketches based on their observations during the walkabout and following workshop.

A wide range of views were expressed across the two workshops and full details can be found in the Camberwell Spaceshaper report which can be downloaded on the council’s website, www.southwark.gov.uk/camberwell.

A summary of ‘likes’ and ‘dislikes’ from the activity is included below.

‘Likes’ focussed on a number of key themes:
• The ‘buzz’ & vibrancy of the place and its diversity
• Connections, transport and accessibility both into and out of the centre
• Key green spaces such as Camberwell Green & St. Giles Churchyard, and businesses & facilities which overlook them
• The historic character of the townscape
• The vibrant and diverse nature of the businesses, social and leisure opportunities

‘Dislikes’ can be summarised as:
• Traffic congestion leading to noise, air pollution and road danger
• Poor pedestrian environment in terms of standards and upkeep, dirtiness and clutter
• Fears for personal safety especially in the more run down areas of the town centre and particularly at night time
• Run down, uncared for buildings and landscape
• A lack of parking and some lack of accessibility generally
Camberwell youth community council, 12 December 2011

We have been working closely with the Camberwell Youth Community Council and on 12 December we held a walking audit and discussion with the group. The group identified the following key issues:

- Need to improve street lighting, particularly near Milkwell Yard, Love Walk, Grove Lane and the walkways leading to the Allendale Close area
- Too much dog poo
- Alleyways felt dangerous and were often dark

The group were keen to continue to be involved in shaping the project.
Summary of Surveys

As a part of all of the consultation activities identified above people were invited to complete the Revitalise Camberwell questionnaire. For those who could not attend any events a questionnaire was available on the council’s website, as contained in appendix 1.

In recognition of the importance of capturing the views of the local business community, we produced a second questionnaire aimed at this group, as contained in appendix 2. As well as talking to local business people who attended consultation events, we also went door to door, visiting as many businesses in the town centre as possible.

General public survey

Of those who completed the survey and supplied their post code data (214), 74% (159) lived in Camberwell (SE5), 13% (28) were from other parts of Southwark and the remainder were from outside Southwark.

Firstly, people were asked to describe their overall impression of Camberwell on a scale from very positive to very negative and the results of this question are summarised in the following chart.

Considering all respondents to this question, the picture is mixed. While 35% were positive or very positive about Camberwell and a further 37% felt more neutral, a significant minority (28%) had a negative overall impression. Further analysis shows that those people who live in Camberwell tend to be more positive about it than those who don’t (39% positive or very positive compared to 24%).

Postcode Data

www.southwark.gov.uk/camberwell
We asked people to rate the importance of different themes, such as parking and bus services, and then to select one theme as their overall priority for improvement.

The street environment came out as the highest priority overall with 37% of all respondents considering this the top priority for improvement. Traffic congestion was the second most highly prioritised, followed by sense of security.

As well as collecting responses via the questionnaire survey we also asked people attending consultation events to stamp our special edition old style tram ticket in order to indicate their preference and what postcode area they lived in.

We also asked where in the town centre people would prioritise improvements. We did this by dividing the proposed scheme area into a number of different sections; the four main roads leading to the main junction in the town centre and the central junction itself.
The resulting priorities are shown in the adjacent diagram. Camberwell Church Street was considered highest priority by 27% of respondents, followed by Camberwell Green (23%) and Denmark Hill (22%). Camberwell New Road and the main junction were highest priority for 11% and 17% of respondents respectively.

Camberwell Church Street was considered a higher priority for local residents than by those from outside the area, who considered Camberwell Green to be more important.

One of the questions asked which other place people would like Camberwell to be more like. 14% of people named Brixton as such a place.

Likes and dislikes

People were also asked what they liked and disliked about the area. The ‘like’ that people referred to most often was the range of shops, with 69 people noting this. Interestingly, the ‘dislikes’ also included the types of shops with 71 people naming. The element disliked by most people however is the traffic congestion with 81 people saying they disliked this.

The following two pages reflect how often certain themes came up when people talked about likes and dislikes.
Likes

- Close to the City
- Public transport
- Pubs
- Shops
- Cafes
- Buses
- Restaurants
- Camberwell Baths
- Community
Dislikes

- Appearance
- Litter
- Dirty
- Drink/Drug abuse
- Unsafe
- Traffic
- No tube or train
- Shops
- Dirty
Business survey
Local businesses are the lifeblood of an area like Camberwell; providing services and employment for the local community and drawing people in from further afield. In Camberwell the diverse range of local businesses, many of which are small businesses, help to give the town centre its unique feel, which has been borne out by the responses to the general survey.

In a bid to engage with the local business community a more focused questionnaire was hand delivered to 153 businesses in the town centre area, with a 31% completion and return rate.

A copy of the questionnaire can be found in appendix 2.

Over half of the respondents reported issues with deliveries, specifically with parking and loading bays.

Comments
Food retailer, Denmark Hill - ‘Sometimes deliveries cannot be done due to parking availability. They have to return to their depot with goods for the trade.’

Retailer, Camberwell New Road - 'Not enough space for loading bay and parking for customers. Just 1 space for more than 20 shops, but always occupied by D badge holders.'

Business owner, Denmark Hill - ‘Clients do not have anywhere to park as this business has a lot of elderly/disabled clients they have great difficulty trying to find parking nearby.’

Charity, Camberwell Church Street - ‘Loading only at certain times, 20 minutes sometimes not enough. People have been fined.’

Respondents were asked to consider a number of issues that might affect the trade of their business and rate them according to how negative they thought each of these affects would be.
The issue that most businesses strongly agreed negatively affected their business was parking, followed by security and the appearance of the local area.

In order to help address these concerns, the respondents were then asked to consider what could be done to improve the local area for businesses and asked to rate which factors would be most likely to help improve trade.

The change that most businesses agreed could improve the area was a general improvement of the appearance of the local area, together with shop front refurbishments.

Comments

Pharmacy Camberwell Church Street – ‘Hanging baskets with seasonal flowers, white washed buildings, more dustbins for litter.’

Food retailer, Denmark Hill – ‘Bus stops should have lights on them so it can be safer while people are waiting for buses.’

Business owner Denmark Hill – ‘The look & feel of the high street, make it more of a destination - remove some of the junk shops. The pavements are unsafe & uneven.’

Restaurant Camberwell Church Street – ‘The environment needs to be tidy & full of choice to attract people.’
Comments continued

Estate Agent, Denmark Hill – ‘Poor selection of shops - Not a great retail experience. Very expensive for business permits but find it difficult for staff to find spaces. Lots of drunks & junkies loitering.’

Beauty Therapy, Camberwell New Road – ‘We need more free parking.’

Public House, Camberwell Church Street – ‘Empty shops nearby. Strong smell from bins of other businesses. No recycling for flats on Camberwell Church St. Street clean team during the day are very good.’

Charity Camberwell Road – ‘Camberwell Road, the southern end near Camberwell Green, is a run-down dilapidated area that requires substantial investment.’
Summary
In this report we have tried to summarise the many and varied views we have received from the community as part of this initial consultation. In summary, we have drawn out a few broad themes that have emerged from this work.

People are passionate about Camberwell
Many people have told us how much they love Camberwell, but most also agree that there are issues that need to be addressed. Camberwell has a strong sense of community and people want to get involved in the Revitalise\(^5\) Camberwell project. Those who live in the area feel more positive about Camberwell than visitors to the area do. One in ten people (12\%) of Camberwell residents that answered responded that they would like Camberwell to retain its character and be an improved version of itself.

The quality of the public realm is a key issue
When asked to prioritise improvements to Camberwell, many people thought that changes to the street environment were particularly important. This could cover a wide range of factors, from day to day management issues such as street cleaning to wider issues about the design of the street and the interaction between different users.

Street improvements are welcomed by local businesses
The general appearance of the area is a key issue for local businesses. Parking and loading issues are frequently commented on as negative factors.

We estimate that over 1,000 people have taken part in this consultation, whether by attending one of our events or filling in a questionnaire form. Many people have asked to be kept informed about the Revitalise\(^5\) Camberwell project and many of those want to be actively involved.

This initial consultation is the first step and foundation for the Revitalise\(^5\) Camberwell project. Beyond this project, the findings reported here will also provide a key input to wider policy development for the area.

Please help us to Revitalise\(^5\) Camberwell by continuing to give us your views and engage with us as the project develops so that we can help create the Camberwell you want to see.
Appendix 1

General Survey
Appendix 2

Business Survey

Would you be interested in being a local business member?

Other Comments:
If you have any further comments about this survey or in particular, issues related to Camberwell town centre that you feel are not currently captured by the questions, please let us know in the space below.

We are keen to keep in touch with you and would be grateful if you could provide the following contact details:

Name:
Address:
Telephone:
Email:
Website:

1. How many times a week do you feel that the area is well attended by businesses?
What time of day do you normally arrive (a.m. or p.m.)?
When does the delivery vehicle load your local stores?
Do you have any plans for future business?
Please comment on your answer.

2. Thinking about how often you face the following obstacles affecting your business, please rate your agreement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree:
- Too busy
- 1 hour ago
- Too many customers
- 1 hour ago
- Too many customers
- Too busy
- 1 hour ago
- Too many customers
- Too busy
- 1 hour ago

Please specify any other issues that effectively impact your business, or add any further comments about issues identified above.

3. Thinking about what you can do to improve the local area for businesses, please rate how important the following are to improving your business, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) or both.

4. Thinking about how often you face the following obstacles affecting your business, please rate your agreement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree:
- Not enough customers
- Too busy
- 1 hour ago
- Too many customers
- Too busy
- 1 hour ago
- Too many customers
- Too busy
- 1 hour ago

Please specify any other issues that effectively impact your business, or add any further comments about issues identified above.

5. Thinking about what you can do to improve the local area for businesses, please rate how important the following are to improving your business, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) or both.

6. Please suggest three things you REQUIRE about the area.

7. Please suggest three things you NEED about the area.

8. What single most important issue you have identified that should be taken seriously and dealt with.

www.southwark.gov.uk/camberwell

REVITALISE
Camberwell

Camberwell Town Centre business survey

Did you know that Southwark Council are planning a major project to transform and revitalise Camberwell Town Centre?

www.southwark.gov.uk/camberwell

www.southwark.gov.uk/camberwell