

# VISIONING VAUXHALL

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP | 25 JUNE 2015

The first community engagement event took place for the Visioning Vauxhall project during the evening of 25th June. The workshop was held in the Carmelita Centre on Vauxhall Walk. The event was well attended with approximately 35 residents and representatives from local community groups providing their views.

A short introductory presentation provided an update on regeneration in Vauxhall and set out feedback from previous consultation. The workshop activities giving attendees the opportunity to set out their priorities and aspirations for Vauxhall's future character and public spaces. Residents and stakeholders were divided into small groups to discuss the key issues for Vauxhall, led by a facilitator from Lambeth Council or Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners.

A summary of ideas put forward in responses to each of the questions asked at the workshop is included below.



Lambeth

Allies and Morrison  
Urban Practitioners

## How do you use Vauxhall? What are your journeys through it and favourite spaces?

All of the workshop attendees either lived or worked in the local area and therefore travelled through the area to commute and in order to shop and socialise. A number of people commented that they used the green spaces for exercise, to relax in and socialise. Cycling was cited as a popular way to travel through Vauxhall but was felt to be unsafe, particularly around the gyratory.

A number of people identified their favourite routes in the area and these included: walking along the river and across Vauxhall Bridge, through the large parks including the Pleasure Gardens and Vauxhall Park, through the arches, around the Vauxhall Gardens Estate and across to the Tate.

Safety and traffic concerns at a few specific locations were identified. These included the crossing by Nandos, which was felt to have limited visibility; the crossing between the underground station and the railway station; the pedestrian crossing at South Lambeth Road, which was felt to be hard to cross due to its staggered nature; and Kennigton Lane and Durham Street were felt to be dangerous for pedestrians. The speed of cars at Tyers Street and the conflict between pedestrians and cyclists in the arches near the train station were also concerns.

*"My favourite journeys are the quiet walks between green spaces"*

*"I use the centre as an urban laboratory"*

*"I like the informal uses in the arches best"*

## How would you describe Vauxhall's identity? What are its gems? How do you see this changing in the future?

A series of words were used to describe Vauxhall's identity, including; eclectic, edgy, historical, liberal, gay, creative, interesting, diverse, confused, undiscovered, schizophrenic, multi-purpose, legible, multicultural and counter-cultural.

A number of gems were identified including the Royal Vauxhall Tavern, Brunswick House, the manufacturing history, the legibility of the transport, the variety of the different spaces and places, the view to the Tate, the trees on Bonnington Square, Pedlars Park and Vauxhall bus station as it is 'ironically Vauxhall'.

There were varied views on the extent to which Vauxhall was changing for the better or worse. Some considered the gyratory removal a positive step, along with the better use of the arches. It was felt that the green spaces in the area are now being looked after better and that the new swimming pool and cinema coming with new developments are positive.

However, others felt that the area would lose its soul with a new population and that the poor community would become disenfranchised. There was also a concern about the strain on transport services, the high rise development and the need to ensure that the new shops and services are open to all and appropriate for existing residents.

As change takes place in the area, attendees identified that it was important to protect spaces for manufacturing and for art; to protect the parks by ensuring lower building heights nearby; and to protect the historic buildings which help to give the area its character.

*"Don't want it to be another identikit high street"*

*"The diversity of people and ability to get along with one another is part of its identity"*

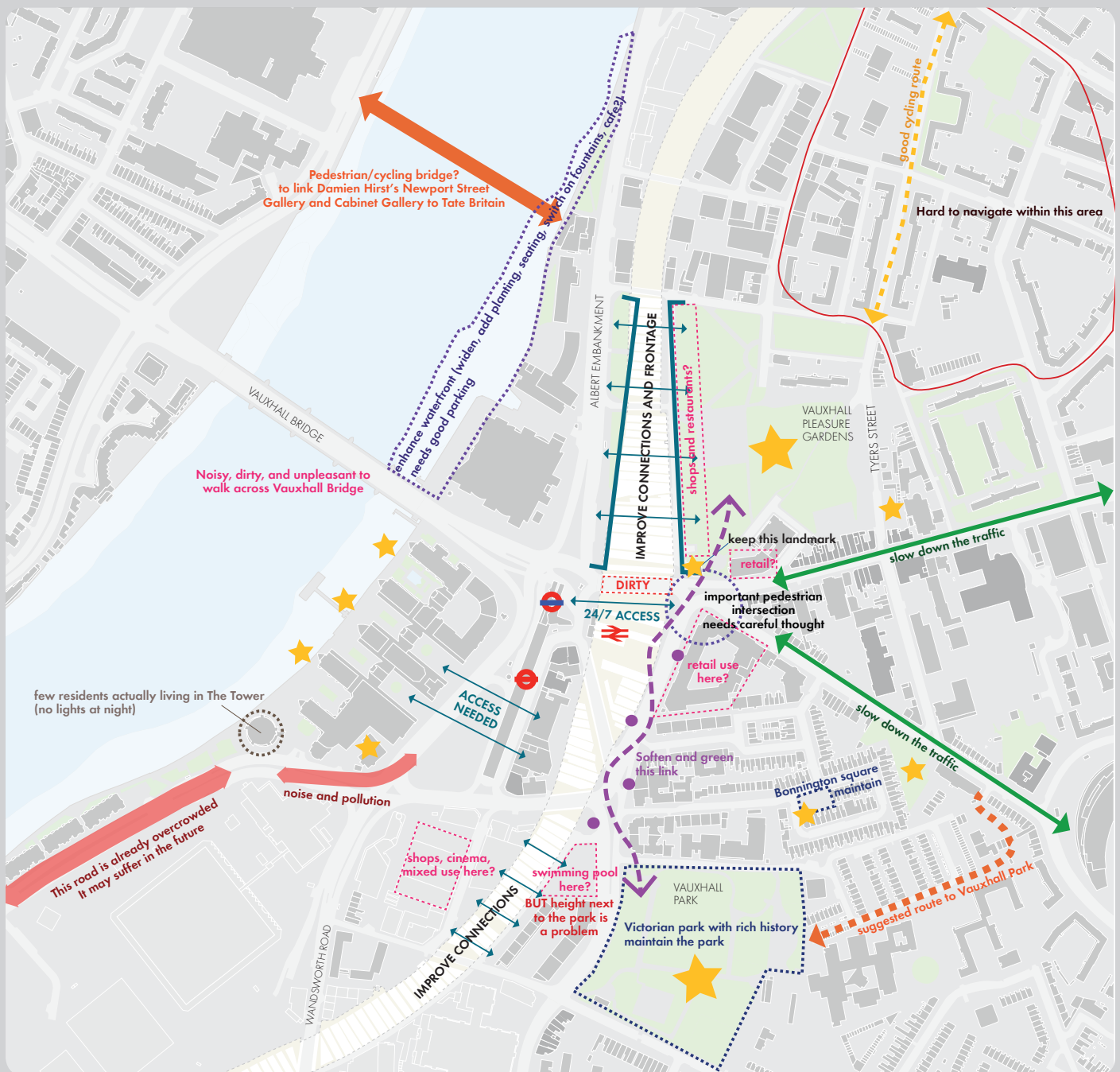
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## What would you change or improve about Vauxhall if you could?

A number of key priorities were identified by residents and stakeholders to improve Vauxhall. A significant number of people felt that the east side of the viaduct should not be ignored and that it has great potential. Improvements to South Lambeth Road were vital and many felt that pedestrianising this link was important, though this could have buses and taxis. Another priority was to strengthen and extend the green link from Wandsworth and between Vauxhall Park and the Pleasure Gardens. Improving the frontage at Goding Street onto Vauxhall Park was felt to be key in improving the area east of the viaduct. Pedestrian routes should be given greater priority including the routes to schools, along the river, across the gyratory and under the viaduct. Attendees also identified that traffic in the area should be less dominant and that traffic should be slowed.

Other ideas included a food market in Lambeth Place, a place to pick up internet shopping, redeveloping the existing parade of shops at Bondway and ensuring that any plans appreciate that Vauxhall is a collection of places rather than one homogenous place.



The above plan shows a summary of the key ideas recorded on the plan worksheets created by each group during the workshop event

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Are there any streets, spaces, or areas that you particularly like – in London or elsewhere - that you would like Vauxhall to be a little more like?

The following photographs illustrate some of the places mentioned by residents and stakeholders at the workshop:



"I like the arches at Brighton beach with independent businesses and galleries"



"Brixton market is inspiring"



"The streets in Groningen in the Netherlands are good because they prioritise bikes and pedestrians"



"Venn Street is a good example of shared space and a space for a food market"



"Like Paris, could we have a swimming pool in the Thames?"



"Kings Cross station has large, clean and attractive spaces for pedestrians"

How would you improve Vauxhall's streets and public spaces? E.g. Bondway, Albert Embankment, South Lambeth Road and the riverside? Describe your ideal station square.

Residents and stakeholders discussed possible changes to the following public spaces:

**Albert Embankment:** It was suggested that the most significant changes should be on the Goding Street side with new shop fronts, in the arches, as Albert Embankment is a less pleasant place to sit. Crossings to the riverside should be improved, including routes through the arches to the east of the viaduct.

**Bondway:** Groups were divided on how the bus station should be improved. Some felt that the bus station could be shorter with parts of it redeveloped but others felt that it should be retained as it currently is. There should be more shops and wider pavements, but not to the detriment of shops east of the viaduct.

**South Lambeth Road:** The priority here should be more space for pedestrians with many residents suggesting that the road should be pedestrianised with a new linear public space created. The link between the parks was felt to be important and the redevelopment or refurbishment of Cobalt Square to provide frontage to the street was identified as a priority for improving this area.

**Durham Street:** It was felt that these streets should also be changed to two way working. Others suggested that there should be a pedestrianised public space outside the school.

**The Viaduct:** The viaduct was felt to be a wall between the east and west sides of Vauxhall. Some business space should be protected for local and small businesses, with the arches carefully zoned so they can adapt as markets change.

**The Riverside:** Connections for pedestrians should be improved across the river including the environment on Vauxhall Bridge. Some residents suggested increasing the number of riverboats for commuting, including a tidal swimming pool, improving the pebble beach, creating new public spaces along the length, increasing the number of shops and restaurants and improving the quality of frontage on buildings such as MI5 and St Georges Wharf.

**"Spaces for people not cars"**

**"Increasing connectivity through the viaduct is important, it is currently a barrier"**

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## What do you like about the current transport interchange and bus station? Is there anything you would like to improve?

A number of key qualities about the existing bus station and transport interchange were identified as being important to protect:

- The existing bus station is very legible, easy to understand and feels safe.
- The station is easy to use. It is easy to interchange between bus, train or tube.
- The clustering of bus stops in one location is vital for any new design.
- The station should stay open and should not be enclosed by a building.
- Some felt that the bus station should be left as it currently is.

In order to improve the existing bus station and transport interchange a number of ideas were suggested:

- The network rail entrance to the east of the viaduct should be open 24 hours for the train and ideally also the tube.
- The weather protection should be improved in a new station.
- The quality of the public realm should be improved with higher quality paving, modern street furniture, tree planting and it should be well looked after.
- There should be better signage and information about the local area including a space for local businesses to advertise and publicise events.
- There should be new shops and things to do.
- Pedestrians and cyclists should be prioritised. There should be better and multiple pedestrian crossings across to the river and Brunswick House.
- The 'island site' should help to create a high street and protect the bus station from noise and traffic.

**"Create spaces for people to congregate and meet."**

**"Currently the bus station is a hell hole! It needs to be changed as a priority."**

**"I like the fact that it's all together which feels safe. It is also easy to change between the bus, tube and the train."**

## What additional shops and services would you like to see in the area?

A range of new shops and services were suggested by residents and stakeholders. Key services included chemists, banks and a local library. There was also a desire to see independent shops including butchers, greengrocers and fishmongers. Clothes shops including shops for children's clothes were felt to be needed in the area. A number of people mentioned that pop-up shops, craft shops and a food market would be assets for the local area.



Photographs taken at the workshop event on 25 June 2015

## Next steps

The ideas set out within this document represent community views from the workshop. The feedback generated will be used to inform proposals for the new transport interchange and bus station and removal of the gyratory. TfL will be consulting on these proposals later this Autumn.

The ideas will also be fed into the development of Lambeth Council's Visioning Vauxhall prospectus, bringing together all the views from those who live, work and travel in Vauxhall which will help inform the wider development of the area. A series of events will be taking place throughout the summer culminating in an exhibition in Autumn where the key images will be displayed to inform the final prospectus. Please sign up with Lambeth's [lovevaux.com](http://www.lovevaux.com) to receive updates and news of events - <http://www.lovevaux.com/about>.