

Vauxhall SPD 'Mole' events comments report

1. Introduction

We took advantage of a number of pre-arranged community and residents meetings to raise awareness of the consultation and engage with local people.

2. Methodology

Using the key community stakeholder list we asked people to let us know if they wanted us to attend meetings during the consultation period and then liaised with respondents to ensure we attended a manageable range of events. In addition we asked whether we could be on the agenda for the North Lambeth Housing Forum and worked with the Kennington Oval and Vauxhall Forum to arrange a special forum meeting within the consultation timeframe.

The list of mole events was as follows:

- Tuesday 16 October, KOV Forum (6.30pm to 9pm)
- Thursday 25 October, Vauxhall Society AGM (7pm to 9pm)
- Tuesday 30 October, North Lambeth Housing Forum (7pm)

At the two forums, programme manager, Sandra Roebuck, did a presentation and took questions and/or comments from the floor. At both the KOV Forum and the Vauxhall Society we took an exhibition and held a mini roadshow prior to the meetings. At the Vauxhall Society AGM presentations were made on wider regeneration issues in the area by the Nine Elms Vauxhall programme manager and Transport for London. Sandra Roebuck was present to respond to any questions on the Vauxhall SPD.

Promotion of the events was principally through the channels generally used by the organisers. In addition we included the events in the following Vauxhall SPD promotional activity:

- Email updates to the VNEB mailing list, linking to online detail of all activity
- Posters and flyers distributed in the local area and Summary booklets distributed through mailboxes in Prince's, Bishop's, Oval, Stockwell and Larkhall wards which drive people to more information on the website
- Email updates and tweets from @Lambeth_Council and @LambethRegen prior to all events.

3. Feedback and participation

KOV Forum: Tuesday 16 October, 6.30pm to 9pm

Visitor numbers: approx 40

Visitor profile: most were living in the immediate vicinity, general impression was of owner occupiers and many were middle aged or retired.

Location notes: KOV is an umbrella organisation for a number of amenity and local interest groups so visitors tended to be well connected within the local area and well informed of the issues. There was a good representation from Friends of Vauxhall

Park and Vauxhall Gardens Estate Residents and Tenants Association (who provided the venue).

Themes and issues:

- The Friends of Vauxhall Park were concerned about the impact of high density and high rise development on the park – in particular overshadowing and intensification of use. They were keen to understand how they could use money from development to mitigate against some of these impacts.
- Some visitors raised the community-led proposals for the Tyers Street Linear Park and wanted this to be included within the SPD.
- People wanted more detail regarding the gyratory and there was some scepticism about the practicalities of creating a viable high street and re-routing the buses.
- People wanted to know how the council would be able to enforce the SPD – particularly in respect of building heights and the affordable housing policy. A few speakers wanted the council to be firmer in their discussions with developers.
- A question was asked about environmental sustainability, which led to a discussion on achieving BREEAM excellence and the new housing code level 4. A further discussion took place about energy and waste issues.
- A number of people were supportive of an improved retail offer and comments were made in support of focusing this in a retail heart. The workability of the high street was questioned and Vauxhall Square and Keybridge House were promoted as good sites for retail, even a shopping centre.

Vauxhall Society AGM: Thursday 25 October, 7pm to 9pm

Visitor Numbers: 65

Visitor Profile: Well-informed, owner occupiers of the Vauxhall/Kennington/Stockwell Area, the majority middle-aged and retired.

Location notes: The Vauxhall Society is a well established civic society, with many retired professionals, including architects and planners among its membership. Helen Fisher, Director of Nine Elms Vauxhall had been invited to address the AGM.

Themes and Issues:

- Open Space- Concern that the Linear Park was being reduced in size.
- Concern Ground surrounding the US Embassy would be prohibited from the public.
- Congestion- Concerns that dismantling the gyratory would result in worsening congestion
- Scepticism over dismantling the bus station and establishing a high street in its place.
- Concern over building height and the shadows tall buildings would cast over Vauxhall Park.

North Lambeth Housing Forum: Tuesday 30 October, 7pm

4. Evaluation

This method of consultation was expected but appreciated by local community groups attending KOV Forum and the Vauxhall Society. In this way attendance also worked to improve community relationships and make officers more accessible. In

addition we requested attendance at the North Lambeth Housing Forum to target consultation on a slightly different demographic – e.g. non home owners and people who may be less aware of developments. Attending this meeting did achieve this aim and people consulted in this way were less likely to be involved in other consultation activity than for the other two meetings.

Discussions at these meetings reflected views encountered at the roadshows but were an opportunity to encourage a more public debate and exchange of ideas. At the KOV Forum this was aided by the presence of a local ward councillor who could also contribute to the debate. In future consultations it would be worth considering videoing the presentation to post on the website and potentially encouraging a comments section.