



**Station To Station Steering Committee Meeting
South London Theatre
11/03/24**

Present:

Stephanie Correia	Chair, formerly SRA
Melissa Chubb	Andrea Felice
Domani Beer	Otter Trading
Kim Hart	Norwood Forum
Philip Virgo	Community Safety Partnership
Artur Urbanowicz	Mercatto
DeDe Vaughan	Cenci
Leon	Local resident
Bex Law	South London Theatre
Guy Bridger	Taxfile
Bronwen Rice	S2S
Charlotte Ashworth	S2S
Alison Gibbs	S2S

Apologies:

Cllr Olga Fitzroy	Lambeth
Helena Rivera	A Small Studio
Nick Willoughby	Street Food Union

Item	Notes	Action
1.0	<p>KH and CA opened the meeting by outlining the history of the Site 18 site. DeDe from Cenci confirmed her business had been on the perimeter of the site since 1986 and it had been derelict/ 'a dumping ground' in all the time she had known it.</p> <p>CA thanked KH for her tireless work with local residents, making the case for the heart of our high street to be protected from a single developer. The example of Railton Rd in Herne Hill where businesses were displaced, most not returning, indicates that independent businesses usually do not do well out of these situations. S2S will represent the views of businesses, with stakeholders like Norwood Forum who can also speak up on behalf of residents.</p>	

Where are we now?

KH: as one part of the site (Old Laundry) is already being developed, the entire site being acquired by a single developer is now unlikely. Residents/businesses feedback via the Forum's/S2S's co-ordination may not effect change alone, but it did apply pressure, and in comparison with other sites in Lambeth, Site 18/19 had very high volumes of response. The other sites were not central 'heart of the high street' locations.

KH: the red line on the map does not mean that a particular plan, or height of development is in place, just that this is a site potentially open to developers. The fact that the site is in multiple ownership makes it complex to develop, and means there will potentially be many 'piecemeal' applications to monitor. This will make development very slow: Lambeth sees Site 18 as a project to be 'attractive to developers in 15 years' – this helps our case to minimise impact on existing businesses, if the process is piecemeal.

The plan has a commitment for at least 50% of the section of the Norwood Rd frontage within the red line to remain as retail, with potential for light industrial workspace behind. S2S's work has established the need for workspace in the area rather than office or retail space, and Lambeth's own policy sets out that workspace cannot be lost without being replaced 'elsewhere' (though it is ambiguous where 'elsewhere' is located). CA: If residential developments are above commercial space, there will be concerns about noisy/smelly workspaces. MC: development of luxury homes may be able to fund affordable workspace in the area.

The original development scenarios from Lambeth showed visualisations of taller buildings and the impact on existing buildings: these were not updated in the revised proposal, but the potential for a single block up to 75m tall remains on paper.

GB does not think there is any space for high rise development in the area, and that Lambeth should be focusing on the housing stock they already have. MC added that new residential developments will need new services, but very often these are standard national chains and little is done to explore what new services/businesses people want in the area.

PV would like to see more consultation of the many people who work from home (WFH) locally: these residents need meeting space and use local facilities, so it would be good to seek their views. Many WFH people use the spaces already available, but new developments which appeal to existing users, or current spaces which could be used better, would be a good thing.

KH: the stakeholder group wants to see a holistic response across the site. She noted that Norwood Planning Assembly had identified many micro sites across the whole BID area which, added up, would be a larger development area than Site 18 alone. Small scale developments would be likely to be much less offputting to local residents.

PV commented that some of the Norwood Rd retail units are owned by one family, and many managed by Stapleton Long. The B&Q site is owned by Lambeth: how keen are they to see a return on this investment?

CA feels that smaller rented units: newsagents, phone shops, garages etc will be vulnerable, and of those she's spoken to, most do not feel their landlords will act in their best interests.

Artur from Mercatto for example believes his business is potentially at risk should a development involve his unit. He would prefer to remain in a West Norwood location, as his business is now picking up post-Covid. The current work on the Old Laundry site is having an impact on the infrastructure of his shop, which is in poor repair. Any new plans will need to take into account the structural condition of the current buildings.

Other retailers on the parade own or have long leases on their properties and do not plan/want to relocate.

What can we do now?

The two parades of shops within the red line are potentially of heritage interest (the Norwood Society believe they may be the oldest surviving retail parades in the area) but the physical structure is in poor condition. Getting Local Heritage listing is being explored, this may not carry as much weight as Grade II, but can be an additional layer of influence.

Cabinet and full council signed off the plan, which means it goes to [Consultation 19 process, published Friday and continues until May](#): plenty of time to respond. However, stakeholders can only respond in two areas: whether the proposal is 'legally compliant' and its 'soundness'; the next stage is referral to a government inspector. An [online survey](#) is available and public responses will be important, but detailed legal scrutiny is also needed. The Forum used pro bono legal support for Windsor Grove site campaign, so have past experience in this area. Barristers are often willing to help as the experience in planning cases is useful for them (plus sense of community duty).

S2S and Forum will collaborate to look at budgets for legal support, and expert advisors. Norwood Action Group (NAG) will also be involved as

		<p>frame 'local employment' as opportunities for builders/contractors, but only in the short term.</p> <p>GB: have other BIDs had similar development threats, and how have they handled it? CA said that local BIDs had not got anything on a similar 'heart of the high street' altering scale, but elsewhere in the UK, there may be. PV noted that large scale developments in the past have sustained council planning depts, delivering a large share of their fees, but due to current economic situation many of these plans are now shelved and hence planning departments in local councils were being scaled back.</p> <p>Next steps: BID businesses need to let S2S know their feedback on the Site 18 review and how they feel potential developments will effect their businesses. CA and KH will continue to work together and potentially earmark budget if legal support is needed (and take to S2S directors for approval if needed).</p> <p>GB: what is the role of the BID here: advocating for existing levy payers, or drawing in future businesses? He feels previous developments in Tulse Hill, for example, have not delivered good quality commercial space, and the BID's remit is not to deliver affordable homes. CA: the BID's role is to support current businesses, but also to think about the high street of the future, and given the council's need to build more housing, residential plans (and the new customers they will bring) is part of this. KH: affordable homes would house new residents who could be potential future employees of local businesses.</p> <p>MC: a phrase summing up the BID's role would be 'Sustaining and building a flourishing business ecosystem in Tulse Hill and West Norwood'.</p>	<p>Action: CA to speak to British BIDs for similar case studies</p> <p>Action: CA to speak to businesses on the 2 x parades around any concerns</p>
2.0	Date of next meeting/event	Monday 13 th May, 5 – 6.30 pm. Location TBC	