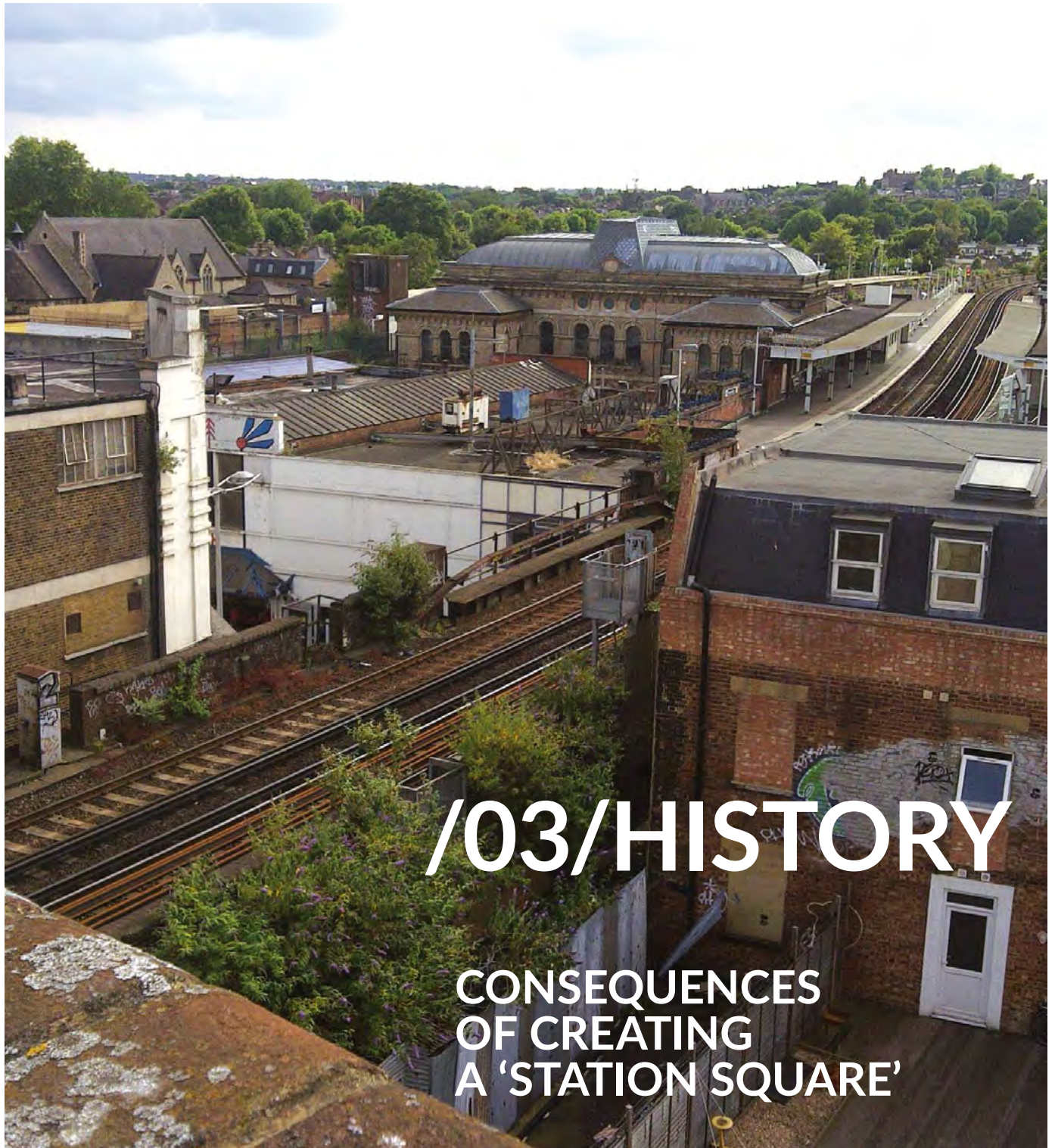


PECKHAM CODESIGN WEEKLY

PECKHAMCODESIGN.ORG



/03/HISTORY

CONSEQUENCES
OF CREATING
A 'STATION SQUARE'



www.peckhamcodesign.org
December 2014

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CHANGE

THIS IS THE THIRD PECKHAM CODESIGN WEEKLY

Peckham town centre is changing

Peckham town centre is changing. Over the coming years, public investment will be made into historic buildings along Rye Lane, the station environment and the new square. These and other changes in Peckham are described in a strategic planning document, the 'Nunhead and Peckham Area Action Plan', currently in the process of being adopted by Southwark Council. CoDesigners and local groups have raised concerns over the disconnect between the development of planning documents and the development on the street. "Planning is slow, the street is fast."

Through CoDesign meetings and discussions and the online Commonplace map we heard that people fear the consequences of investment and development. People are worried that the diverse and thriving Peckham 'ecosystem', a network of independent businesses, creative people and organisations, will be damaged or erased.

In the context of this changing urban landscape, the Peckham CoDesign WEEKLY is highlighting what currently exists, what is valued, what's missing and what people wish for. This WEEKLY edition focuses on the history of change in the centre of Peckham, addressing change in the built environment as well as giving space to personal histories and opinions.

*Ulrike Steven
(architect)*

Join the WEEKLY editorial team

The CoDesign WEEKLY editorial team is an evolving group of local residents and we welcome new contributors. Until the 4th of November, editorial sessions took place in the CoDesign Shop at the station entrance and will now continue at All Saints Hall on Blenheim Grove on Tuesdays at 7pm. Come and join us!

Is the WEEKLY editorial team representative?

No, the WEEKLY editorial team is unfortunately not representative of the Peckham community. While all members of the editorial team live in Peckham, the group does not as yet include people from all sections of the community that make Peckham what it is. The WEEKLY is aiming to represent a broad range of local views and experiences from different parts of Peckham. Please contact us if you feel that your point of view has not been included in this series of publications.

Editorial team

The third Peckham CoDesign WEEKLY was produced by a team of volunteers:

Kwame Afriyie (architect), Yelena Chernyakova (graphic designer), Alex Christie (photographer), Andrea Cippitelli (drawings), Eileen Conn (Peckham Vision), Charlotte Fereday (service designer), Dan Harder (graphic designer), Florence Harry (sixth-form student), Hamish Harry, Tina Jadav (Greater London Authority), Adam Khan (architect), Michelle Male Shaw (architect), Sven Mündner (curator), Benedict O'Looney (architect), Amy Poulson (architect), Ash Sakula team (architects), Veronica Simpson (journalist), Ulrike Steven (architect), Tracey Suen (designer), Benjamin Vaughan (illustrator), André Viljoen (architect), Asher Wolf (photographer)

Themes for forthcoming issues

No.1 / Culture

No.2 / Play

No.3 / History

No.4 / Nature

No.5 / Commerce

No.6 / Peckham in the Dark

No.7 / Public Space

No.8 / Made in Peckham

ALL CHANGE PLEASE

THE CONSEQUENCES



One of the most interesting discussions raised during editorial meetings has been about how proposals for the space in front of the station will contribute to the wider future development of Peckham. The consequences of improving the station entrance need to be considered beyond the immediate impact on the existing 'square', and seen in relation to a wider view about Peckham's future development. If taken forward in one direction the new entrance could provide the perfect open door to development that ignores Peckham's current and future population. It is undeniable that as the need for housing increases in London, Peckham will become a more desirable place to live. The Mayor of London's 2050 infrastructure report suggests that London needs 1.5 million extra homes. Clarity about the scenario for which the reworking of

the station entrance prepares is critical. On the one hand it could pave the way for a completely disconnected generic speculative development, perhaps unaffordable, or perhaps more of the crudely designed and badly built development that is appearing adjacent to Rye Lane. On the other hand it could welcome development that improves the environment for the diverse groups of unlikely partners – in all senses of the word: human, architectural and ecological – that we already have while also welcoming more.

Andre Viljoen (architect)

PLACEMAKING BY CURATION

There is no doubt that places change and change requires investment. To successfully animate spaces, there is equally little doubt that places must meet the needs of the people inhabiting them and businesses operating in them. The crux is to identify a strategy that squares up the needs, operating conditions and investment.

Peckham Town Centre is currently in a phase of rapid change. The Co-Design process uncovered that residents are not averse to change and improvement, but value the diversity of the place, the existing architectural fabric and the offer from independent businesses. Meanwhile, trade activity is picking up and creating more and more jobs, especially small startups in the creative and craft sector and more recently in the hospitality industry. Blenheim Forge, Ali Baba Juice and MeLange nail parlour are just a few examples of new businesses, alongside many flourishing older ones such as Khan's Bargain, Il Mirto and Bar Story.

Most of these businesses bring excellence to the table and are known beyond Peckham for what they do. They were established with private investment from savings and loans and they create a substantial number of jobs for local people. The positive impact of these businesses on the neighbourhood is multifold: most of the business owners and employees are local residents who spend a considerable amount of their income back in the local economy, and their council tax reinforces Southwark's budgets. At the same time, these businesses are operating very close to the demands and needs of local residents, because they live in the area and their private investment is on the line. These businesses will by default also make sure that their physical environment is optimal for their trade: they are investing and often know what the

most efficient way is to do so, simply by virtue of their in-depth knowledge and their limited resources.

The building 12-16 Blenheim Grove is one of many examples of how this process manifests itself in a very successful way. Populated by a mix of tenants (The Sunday Painter gallery and artist studios, Bobby's Professional hairdresser, a bar, a corner shop and the Peckham Refreshment Rooms) the trade activity is very high and the building hosts approximately 50 employees, independent artists and business owners.

Instigated by an enlightened landlord, the tenants and landlord decided to improve the facade of the beautiful Art Deco building. All parties paid their share and The Sunday Painter executed the works to keep the cost down. The effect was astonishing: little were residents aware of the architectural heritage before the renovation. Afterwards the resident businesses saw an increase in trade. What did not happen was an external multi-million pound investment that was recouped by a heavy uplift of the rent, which would have risked making the place unviable for the small businesses with their 50-odd jobs.

There are many other Art Deco treasures around the station and up and down Rye Lane. Many of them could undergo a similar change and benefit local residents, stakeholders, businesses and the local authority.

Sven Mündner (curator, creative industry and commercial strategy advisor)

Further Reading:

Change of communities: Sharon Zukin, *Naked City*

Mayor's Strategy for London's Creative Industries:

www.london.gov.uk/priorities/arts-culture/london-cultural-strategy-group/cultural-metropolis

Successful change and improvement of an area through business activity and curation in London: www.betterbankside.co.uk/





Cities need old buildings so badly it is probably impossible for vigorous streets and districts to grow without them... for really new ideas of any kind — no matter how ultimately profitable or otherwise successful some of them might prove to be — there is no leeway for such chancy trial, error and experimentation in the high-overhead economy of new construction.

**OLD IDEAS CAN
SOMETIMES USE
NEW BUILDINGS.**

**NEW IDEAS
MUST USE OLD
BUILDINGS.**



List of businesses in building 1 (left):

Ground floor:
Peckham Refreshment Rooms
Mirana London
African restaurant
Money transfer

1st floor:
Sunday Painter
12 artist studios
Peckham Print Studio

List of businesses in building 2 (right):

Ground floor:
Hair Salon "Peace"
Beauty Salon "Wintana"
Hair & Beauty Salon "Divine Destiny"
Hair & Beauty Salon (African products)
Hair products and extensions
Mobile phones
Grocery store
Vacant unit (under refurbishment)

1st floor:
True Christian Bible Church
Prince Daniels Training Academy
Church of Good
Pak Packaging

*Jane Jacobs, urban analyst,
The Death and Life
of Great American Cities, 1961*



I WAS GLAD TO MOVE BACK TO PECKHAM

CODESIGN INTERVIEWS PAT BECKFORD

Patrica Beckford is 55, born in Paddington of Jamaican parents who moved in 1966 from Camberwell to Peckham, where family houses were more affordable. Pat's parents still live in Peckham and she saw the first brick of her own house laid twenty years ago in McDermott Road. She is a part-time pastoral worker for Southwark Council Music School and is Treasurer of Aaine Women's Group, which took part in Black History Month in October.

www.homelessuk.org/details.asp?id=UK17042
aainawomensgroup@gmail.com

What is Aaine Women's Group?

A charity funded by Southwark Council and others, providing 250 female members, of all backgrounds and religions, with support and information on welfare rights, housing, immigration, domestic violence, health, educational and employment opportunities, plus well-being activities and a crèche. It helped me 24 years ago; since then I wanted to help other women with children. It's hard to find premises, we've just moved. It's important for Aaine to stay in Peckham — this is where our core group is and people can walk there. For BHM Aaine women are getting together and enjoying contributions from their cultures, like the henna.

What does Black History Month mean to you?

For me it's making people aware that we have a history in England. Even before the slave trade, black people lived in England and London especially, but sometimes you're made to feel like you've only just come here. I mean I was born here, y'know? We've made a contribution to this country from abroad and in England.

I think the council can do a very good all-round BHM... Last year I went to African Yoga, which was really good. The year before they did different things, like the Rites of Passage, about African history from bein' a youngster to an adult... interestin,' growin' up, you're not really a teenager; you have to grow up quickly, y'know. The youngsters (early 30s) did talks



in the Library pods in 2012. Southwark try and do interactive events, instead of just exhibitions. Carl Campbell danced at one event with the Recycled Teenagers, a dance troupe in their 60s. He's been goin' probably over 30 years, my children danced with him, I used to dance with him. I'm probably becoming a recycled teenager myself soon!

What changes have you noticed in Peckham over the past 50 years; what buildings stand out for you?

I've got used to the Library now; the view from the lift is very good on a clear day. About twenty years ago the council bulldozed the five high-rise North Peckham estates, built in the 60s-70s, with the bad external links, it wasn't safe; around where Damilola Taylor got stabbed. I was at secondary school when they were knocked down. Some of my



school friends lived there but we all mixed well. There are better houses now, with more green space and parks for kids.

At the Lister Clinic there was a Jumbo warehouse, where you could buy bulk wholesale. I remember the disused Lido and public toilets, now a nursery, which moved to Rye Park. We had C&A, Burtons, BHS and M&S. They all started to go when we lost Jones and Higgins, a massive department store that extended from the corner of Rye Lane and the High Street, up to the shoe shop, or the former WH Smith. Sainsbury's was where Clark's is and had old-style Victorian tiled counters, then they opened under the multi-storey car park. We lost Woolworth's nine years ago and Ratners became H. Samuels. Sainsbury's were disloyal — they said they wouldn't leave, we've got used to not having them now.

The dynamics of the different nations have changed here too. It was mainly West Indian, now it's more mixed, there are a lot more Nigerian, Ghanaian, Sierra Leone and Eastern Europeans. I would say in the last five years, we've had a lot more young, British people from out of London move to Peckham.

Why do you think there are changes?

Us livin' here didn't really encounter the troubles, they stemmed from the media. They have so much sway in how an area will grow or go down. They blamed Peckham for being involved in trouble, even if it happened in Camberwell.

What do you think about the Station?

It needs a good facelift, a lot of cleanin' and it needs openin' up. It needs ideas, greenery, up-keepin'.

The bus stop used to be right in front of the station — you could run from the train and catch it.

What don't you like about Peckham?

Some of Rye Lane needs tidying up. Loads of Community Officers were employed but then got rid of. The council has let it go downhill and sold off lots of properties to shopkeepers who are basically sellin' the same things. There's too many meat, fish and hairdressers' shops. I'd like more diversity of local family-run businesses, I don't want the chains again but something better to offer on a smaller scale — no M&S and Sainsbury's.

What makes you smile about Peckham?

Meetin' all the different nation people, especially on a Sunday, finishin' Body Pump n' Stretch (at the Pulse) n' walkin' down Rye Lane and seein' them in their Sunday best, ha, ha, ha, ha.... all their costumes 'nd doin' shoppin' still, you know. Nigerians and Ghanaians have the most colourful outfits.

What might make you ever want to leave Peckham?

When my son was born (he's 22) I moved to Rotherhithe waiting for a bigger council house. It was less friendly and I felt like an outsider. Oh I was glad to move back to Peckham. I'd only leave if I'm movin' out of England ha, ha, ha, ha, otherwise no... I wouldn't leave Peckham.

Even if your house was worth two million?

No.

Photos and Interview by Michelle Male Shaw

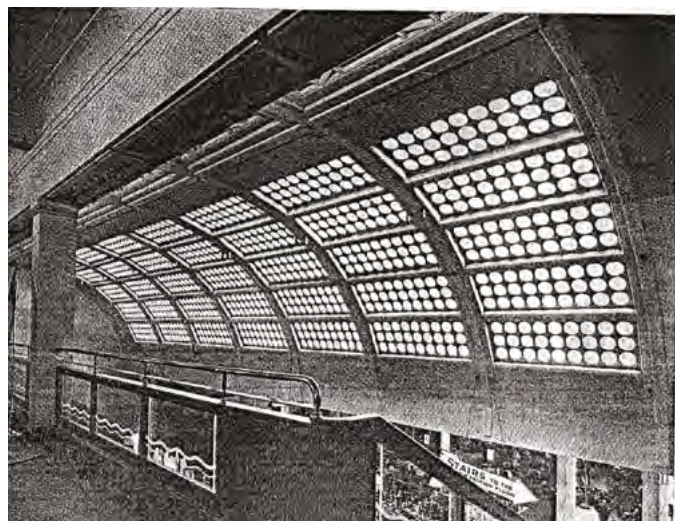
RYE LANE'S ART DECO QUARTER

SAVE IT

The central part of Peckham's Rye Lane has a remarkable cluster of Art Deco buildings, markers of the commercial vigour and enterprise of Peckham's business which made Rye Lane south London's premier shopping destination in the late 19th and 20th century.

These buildings also wonderfully demonstrate how quick London's commercial architects were to adopt the new modernist architectural culture making waves on the Continent and in the United States. Peckham's Art Deco Quarter comprises more than six buildings in the central part of Rye Lane, with a further three demolished in the last decade along the Lane.

This ensemble includes the arcade and buildings around Peckham Rye Station, the former department store opposite at 117-125 Rye Lane, Holdron's department store and show rooms at 135 Rye Lane and, on Bournemouth Road, the former C&A store at 72-74 Rye Lane and the former Marks & Spencer store at 54-58 Rye Lane.



The Art Deco Peckham Rye Station development *Southern Railway architects, 1935*

The central group in the Peckham's Art Deco Quarter are the two-storey buildings surrounding Peckham Rye Station, the arcade and the three-story former department store on the east side of Rye Lane. These buildings were designed and built by the Southern Railway in-house architects under the direction of James Robb Scott (1882-1965). This team is perhaps best known for their striking Moderne-styled Surbiton and Richmond stations, which share some of the architectural detailing found in the Peckham Rye group. Robb was also the architect for Waterloo station, built a decade before. In this group, 10-16 Blenheim Grove have recently been refurbished to local acclaim. The distinctive horizontal masonry banding at the first floor, and the 'Crittall' windows, unite this group of buildings on both sides of Rye Lane fronting on to Station Way, Holly Grove and Blenheim Grove.

Rye Lane was a vital shopping area in the mid-1930s and this new ensemble around the Peckham Rye Station shows how the Southern Railway looked to intensify the use of their land around the station along with making significant changes to the Victorian station building. Between the completion of the station in 1865 and 1935, Rye Lane had evolved into a regional shopping centre. The development around the station reflects this change.

The most prominent member of the station group is the former department store at 117-125 Rye Lane facing the station arcade. This building is faced in Portland stone. Unfortunately recent overpainting obscures a jazzy chevron frieze at a high level. Tall flagpoles accented the building's chamfered corner and central 'towers'. 117-125 Rye Lane has been identified for facade restoration under the lottery-funded Townscape Heritage Initiative.

Khan's Bargain/Holdron's

135 Rye Lane. T.P Bennett and Sons, 1935

The ne plus ultra of Rye Lane's Art Deco Quarter must be the 1935 extensions to Holdron's department store, just south of Peckham Rye Station, at 135 Rye Lane. Like Jones and Higgins at the North End of Rye Lane, Henry Holdron ran a successful department store, building it up from a single shop on Rye Lane in the 1880s: by the 1930s it occupied most of the east side of Rye Lane from the station south to Bournemouth Road. By 1935 Holdron's had been acquired by Selfridges, and they set about modernising the store. The fashionable modernist commercial architects T.P. Bennett and Sons were commissioned to look at a series of options for renewing and enlarging the sprawling Edwardian premises, which included two internal shopping arcades. Several designs were presented to the people of Peckham and the striking faience-clad building we now see on Rye Lane was the popular choice. This was the first phase of a plan to rebuild the entire Rye Lane frontage. The building is faced in buff terracotta over a steel frame. Inside this deep-plan building is a semicircular ferro-concrete vault that filled the middle part of the shop floor with daylight. This is soon to be restored.

The architects T.P Bennett's are well known for the listed thin shell concrete domed Poultry Market at Smithfield; the listed former Saville Theatre, now Odeon, on Shaftesbury Avenue, and the now demolished Doulton's pottery headquarters on the Albert Embankment in Lambeth.

Former C&A (Modes)

72-74 Rye Lane. North, Robin & Wilsdon architects, 1930

This attractive red-brick building with cast stone detailing was one of the first Moderne-styled commercial buildings on Rye Lane. It created retail space, vertically, over several floors on an island site along the west side of Rye Lane. The design is by a Scottish practice that built a number of C&A department stores across the UK. There is a near-identical C&A building at 180-190 Lewisham High Street. (C&A vacated the Rye Lane store in 1971; it is now a McDonald's restaurant.)

Former Marks & Spencer

54-58 Rye Lane. Robert Lutyens, architect, 1934

To northern extent of this Art Deco Quarter is marked by the elegant former Marks & Spencer at 54-58 Rye Lane. This building was designed by Robert Lutyens, the son of the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens. Its façade is modern-style classicism and is formed from modular cast stone system which was used at a number of M&S stores across the country. Robert Lutyens is best known for his listed black granite Marks & Spencer on Oxford Street, built on the former Pantheon site. (M&S closed in 1990.)

Notes

Significant recent Art Deco losses in Peckham include:

- The RACS (Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society) at 176-178 Rye Lane, built by the architect Percy Westwood in 1928. (Largely demolished in 2009.)
- The Peckham Odeon, Peckham High Street.
- Peckham Bus station/garage designed by Wallis, Gilbert and Partners. (Demolished circa 1995.)
- Co-operative House at 259-267 Rye Lane, built by the architect S.W. Ackroyd in 1932.
- Kennedy's sausages, Rye Lane. (Demolished circa 2007.)

There are probably enough extant details on the other surviving Southern Railway stations to reconstruct the lost details on the Peckham Rye Station arcade.

Benedict O'Looney M.Arch RIBA

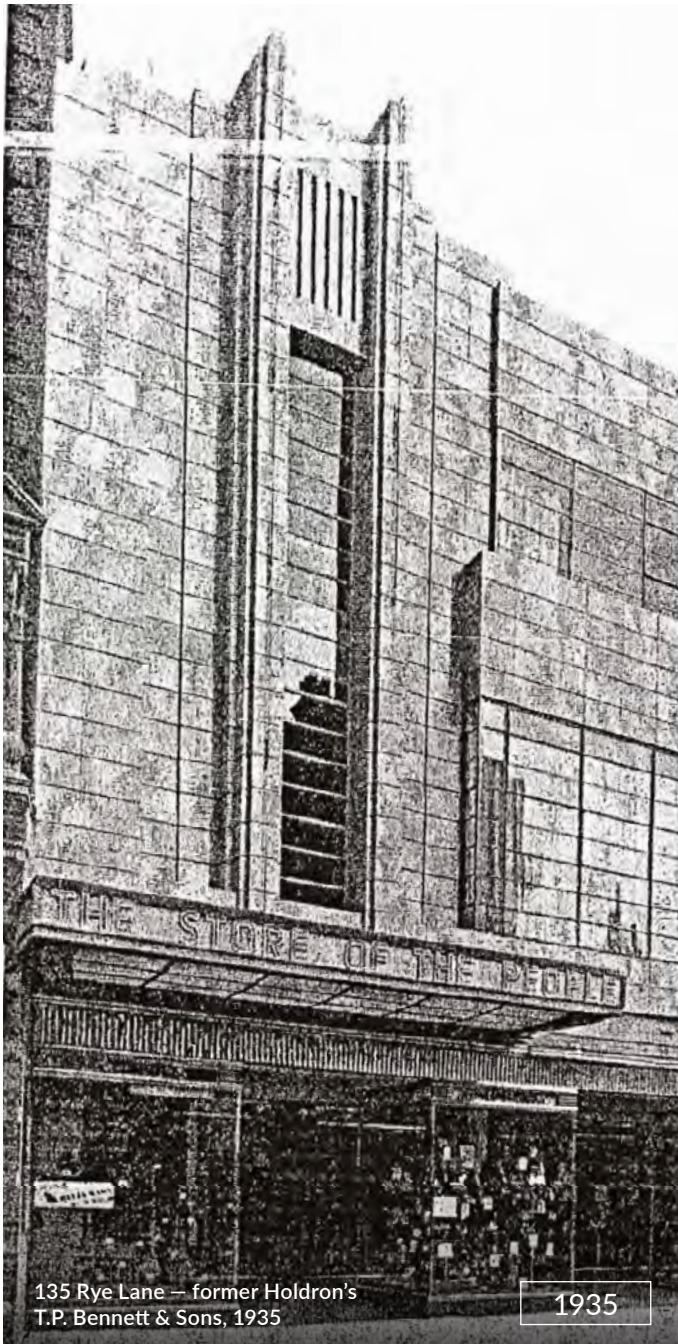




70 Rye Lane at Holly Grove
Southern Railway architects and engineers
department, 1935



54-58 Rye Lane — former Marks & Spencer
Robert Lutyens, architect, 1934



135 Rye Lane — former Holdron's
T.P. Bennett & Sons, 1935

1935



2014



117-125 Rye Lane — former C&A
Southern Railway architects and engineers
department, 1935

2014



1935



6-12 Blenheim Grove
Southern Railway architects and engineers
department, 1935



72-74 Rye Lane — former C&A
North, Robin & Wilsdon, architects, 1930

VOICES OF PECKHAM

SELECTED COMMENTS

People have different opinions, likes and dislikes. This is how they said it:

All comments can be found on Commonplace:
www.peckhamcodesign.org/commonplace

Sat 06 Sep 2014 10:38

That's what I worry about with the Peckham re development, new buildings, new people, new shops... one day we'll turn around and find blandification like everywhere else and wonder how we lost that indefinable something that makes Peckham... I like things that are a little bit messy, crumbling around the edges, too cold, too ugly, too old fashioned... they are familiar and yet exciting at the same time, too easy to forget to cherish... like some old relative you never bothered to speak to... but you find out when they're dead that they single-handedly saved a battalion in the war... Can we let new things spring up alongside old things... without that simplistic obliteration we always seem to end up with? I am worried because most decisions are

made with finance as their main, if concealed, driver... and money alone is never enough of a reason.

Tue 26 Aug 2014 15:19

Agree with the poster who mentioned the need for square to have a sense of enclosure (place) and blankets. Not a square in any sense.

Fri 22 Aug 2014 16:08

The area in front of the station is gloomy and a bit run down. The station building and the local businesses are great but the space isn't very attractive.

LEAVING A BAD IMPRESSION



"I brought my father who lives out in the country to Peckham. He was brought up in South London..."




"...but moved away in the sixties. His mother used to take him to shop at Austins of Peckham."



"...far from what someone said about the station leaving a bad impression, he loves how Peckham is."

"He said he found it very exciting and loved all the African shops and Turkish shops. He even liked the arcade everyone seems to want to be knocked down. I do not think peckham leaves a bad impression. Just leave it alone."



Thu 21 Aug 2014 19:55

Peckham Rye station has huge potential given the historic facade and space between the main building entrance and Rye Lane.

Wed 20 Aug 2014 20:40

It would be great to open up the square at ground level whilst preserving the top floor of the existing buildings. Maybe create an open market area to allow small businesses to continue to operate whilst creating cafe/bar/art overlooking the square.

Tue 26 Aug 2014 15:17

A place to: pass through, gather, play, relax and enjoy.

Mon 15 Sep 2014 21:29

I like the covered market as an entrance to the station. It would be a shame to lose this.

Wed 20 Aug 2014 13:42

Strengths — the Grade II listed station building and hustle and bustle of lively independent businesses and shops surrounding it.

Weaknesses — gloomy arcade blocking view of station facade, poor paving, lack of trees. Needs good hard and soft landscaping, good treatment of station arches — NOT glass boxes appended to the front of them, but the arch shapes kept visible with old timber doors fronting them, housing small local businesses that can open out onto the station square.

Sun 14 Sep 2014 21:19

It should be left with minimal interference from developers. It's developed very nicely on its own.


The station needs lifts. The bank in the arcade should go and small shops built in there. Take roof off the arcade to give a partial view of station only.

Tue 02 Sep 2014 16:44

We could make our beautiful station building more visible. We could create more open space around the station to enable those arriving and leaving the area to flow in and out more easily. We could keep/support light industrial in Dovedale Court... there should be opportunities for rooftop greening. We should plant trees in the new square in front of the station. We should keep existing low-rent spaces that support the independent businesses and creative enterprises that already exist. We could also work to provide additional affordable spaces for new start-ups. We could keep and enhance the Art Deco buildings that already exist on this plot... High-rise around the station is not appropriate

Sat 30 Aug 2014 13:25

I would also like to support strongly the plea for a thorough examination of the 'repurposing' of the buildings around the station before any decisions about whether they should be demolished... It has always been assumed that the whole arcade has to be demolished to produce the improvements most people want. But ideas have been surfacing this year about ways to open up the ground level and reuse the upper floor.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

PECKHAM TOWN CENTRE

In order to explore the historical context of how Peckham CoDesign and proposals for Peckham Rye Station came about, we should focus on the role of the community in initiating ideas and promoting local discussions about the development of Peckham town centre. This is the commercial heart of Peckham, composed of three primary streets – Rye Lane, Peckham High Street and Peckham Hill Street – plus a few adjacent areas, which are lined with retail shops and a variety of businesses. Many people live in the town centre, above and among the commercial premises, integrated tightly with the residential area. It affects a wider geographical spread because of its physical, social and economic attributes.

For more information, please visit Peckham Vision:
www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Peckham_Town_Centre

Rye Lane Central

For a long time council policies assumed that the town centre could only be a long narrow linear shopping street, with relatively isolated opportunity/development sites. Peckham Vision promoted the idea of viewing it instead as an integrated matrix, with old and new buildings, interlinked with a network of open pedestrian spaces and pathways. The core of this is the area in the central part of Rye Lane between Elm Grove and Bournemouth Road, with Peckham Rye station and the emerging Copeland Cultural Quarter at its heart.

The Copeland Cultural Quarter

The Copeland Cultural Quarter is the area next to the railway line between Rye Lane, Bournemouth Road and Copeland Road. For several years it was blighted by TfL and the council, who planned to demolish it for a tram depot. Peckham Vision was born here, when the campaign to review this plan took shape in 2005-2006. Finally in October 2008, following the campaign, TfL's own consultants reported that it was the wrong site for the tram depot and the threat was lifted. For years it has been evolving into a thriving mixed area of artists' studios, art galleries, a variety of small businesses, retail and creative industry, housing and other community uses. The campaign named this area an emerging cultural quarter. This has been realised with the CLF Art Cafe now established in the Bussey building and several years of successful art galleries on site, with an increasing demand from creative and cultural enterprises. A major part of the land is owned and operated by Copeland Park, so the area and its immediate surrounds has become known as the Copeland Cultural Quarter (CCQ).

The CCQ is an active and interesting contributor to the economic, social and cultural life of Peckham. This positive change has been occurring organically and naturally over the last decade, made possible because the site is characterised by a mixture of commercial and industrial buildings with scope for additional new developments. It is a natural

place for Peckham to expand into and develop for mixed uses, building on the commercial and cultural presence of the site, with part of the strategic vision to open up the space in front of the magnificent station buildings and transform the central part of Rye Lane.

The draft masterplan drawn up by Peckham Vision illustrated the concept of a mixed organic development with the gradual rehabilitation of historic buildings integrated with new build, creating linked squares, courtyards and the Copeland Cultural Quarter, providing a comfortable transition between the town centre in the west and housing to the east.

This plan complemented a similar vision for Peckham Rye Station and its adjacent environments, both behind and in front.

Peckham Rye Station



The station, c. 1880.

Peckham Rye Station began operating in 1865. The building was Grade II listed in 2008 by English Heritage, after years of campaigning by the Peckham Society. The station was originally built with an open square in front. The building remains but the square became filled with commercial buildings in the 1930s. In 2008 the council agreed to the longer term policy to have the buildings in the square removed and reopened as a space in the central part of the town centre — part of the integrated plan produced by Peckham Vision for Rye Lane Central. In Jan 2012 £10m funding was agreed by the council and the London Mayor to implement this transformation. With the council's support, Peckham Vision, the Rye Lane & Station Action Group and the Peckham Society also worked together to bring the large historic waiting room out of dereliction.



From 2004, the Peckham Society campaigned for a Central Peckham Conservation Area to recognize the historic interest and antiquity of Peckham town centre. In 2009, this was strongly supported by English Heritage's Historic Area Assessment of Central Peckham. There are noteworthy buildings in the centre of Peckham that point to the neighbourhood's distinctive history of over 300 years. The designation of a conservation area sets a high standard for new buildings and helps potential developers understand the historic context of their proposals. The designation status also brings government money to improve historic buildings and streetscape and help young or old people, Londoners and new immigrants see and understand their neighbourhood's long and varied history. In October 2011 the council finally designated the whole of the town centre as the Rye Lane Conservation Area. Subsequently in May 2012 the Heritage Lottery Fund approved a first round proposal for a £1.7m Townscape Heritage Initiative grant.

Original text written for Peckham Vision website by Eileen Conn 2006 to 2014.

Selected from the website links below, and reproduced for this compilation by Michelle Male Shaw.

www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Peckham_Town_Centre
www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Visions_for_Peckham
www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Copeland_Cultural_Quarter

Role of the community in the station project

The local community played a significant role in initiating and championing the proposal to open up the front of the station. The idea was first proposed by the Peckham Society in 1997, and taken up by Peckham Vision in 2006, as part of the local campaign for an integrated approach to Peckham town centre. Discussions with the council had included a proposal for a public competition for design of the square, to involve local public discussion of the scope and details. However, when the council and GLA brought the funding together (2011), the community was excluded from the discussion of the scope of the project – its purpose, scale and its role in the town centre economy. This was developed by the council, GLA and Network Rail together. In 2013, council documents in the public domain indicated a plan to clear the whole site at once. In response to two deputations to Cabinet and a Scrutiny examination, the council said that was definitely not the plan. In January 2014 the community inevitably rejected the proposals for major redevelopment of the whole site. The authorities then agreed to adopt a CoDesign process, proposed by the community, to enable the full local public discussion that had been missing the previous two years. This story has stimulated media commentaries on the role of communities in the future of their own neighbourhoods and in the nature of organic change, in an era of redevelopments based on major demolition and rebuilding.

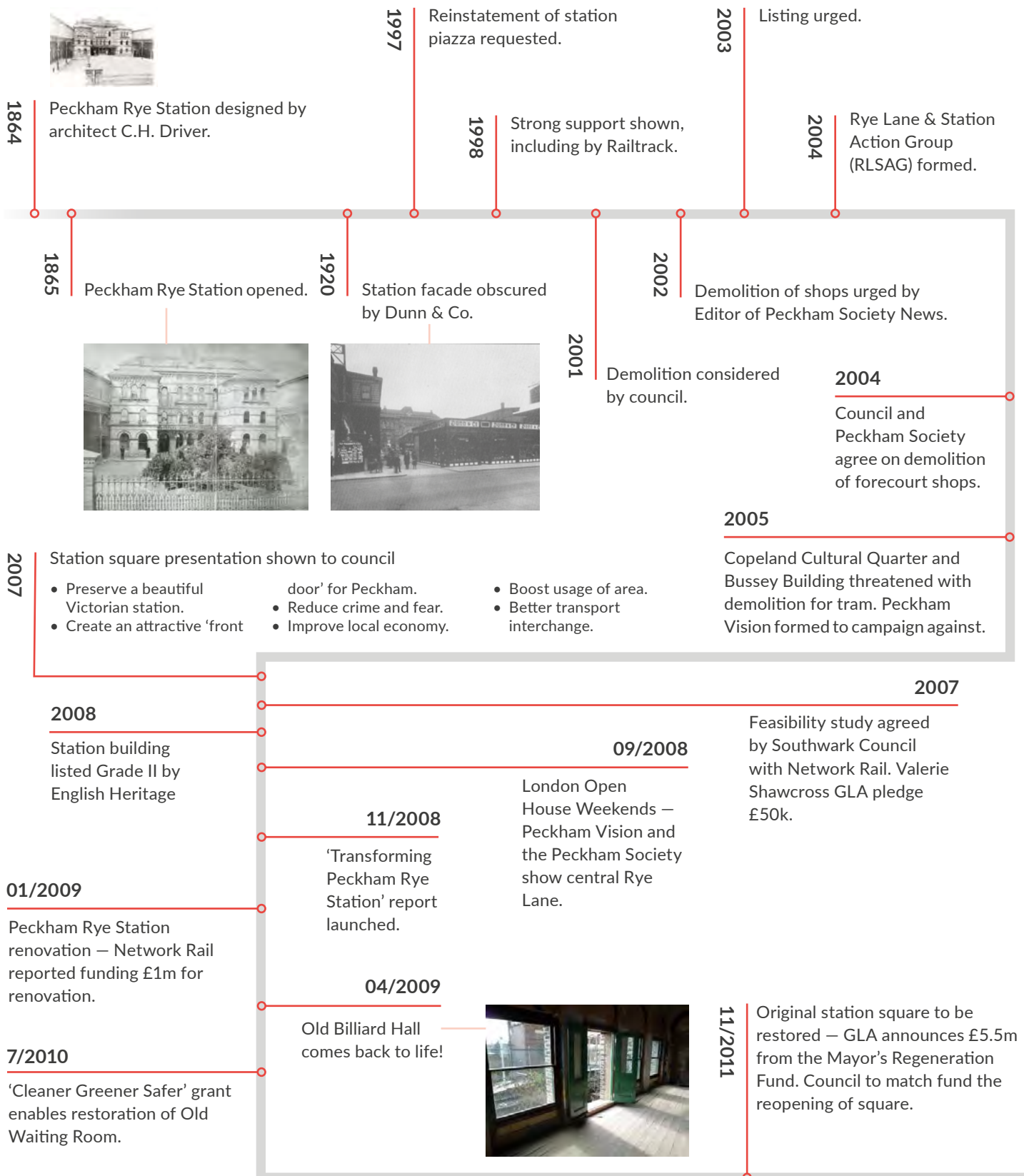
Eileen Conn (Peckham Vision coordinator)

For further information on central Rye Lane please visit:

www.peckhamvision.org/wiki/Transforming_Central_Rye_Lane

PECKHAM RYE STATION SQUARE

TIMELINE OF HOW WE GOT HERE



Cllr Fiona Colley meeting re. council to buy shop leases in forecourt (PSN 128).



08/2012 | Peckham Vision puts on three-day exhibition about town centre and of plans for station.

11/2012

Historic Staircase revealed. VIPs visit restoration, including Harriet Harman.



2013

Two Peckham Vision deputations – to Southwark Cabinet to stop clearance of all businesses on station site, and to scrutiny committee.

10/2012

Money acquired and plans being developed to:

- complete Old Waiting Room
- remove shopping arcade
- recreate square
- link front square to Dovehead Court at rear
- lift access all platforms
- refurbish arches
- buy out leases
- relocate businesses
- early 2013 council and Network Rail hope to achieve c. £12m+;
- will ask for public's views
- plans to complete works by 2016.

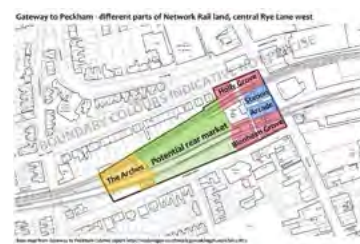
10/2012

Granting of central
Conservation Areas
is significant

06/2013

To help local discussions, Peckham Vision produces map of properties in station plans. Council plan to:

- remove buildings in Station Arcade
- recreate public square
- create path front to rear of station
- consider a new rear market.
- Council and Network Rail to consult public on plans for site in 2014.
- Buildings marked in pink less likely to be affected.



01/07/2014

Ash Sakula introduction
at Peckham Liberal Club,
including What If architects.
Delay to start date announced.

05/06/2014

Ash Sakula architects appointed by Southwark as community engagement firm for CoDesign consultation process.

23/07/2014

Launch of community-built model of town centre. The model, scale 1:100, was made out of card and timber by resident volunteers to aid discussion about station. Organised by Peckham Vision.



28/05/2014

'Co-Imagine the redevelopment of Peckham Rye Station' event at Bussey Building by Katy Hawkins – for locals to creatively respond to station site/show ideas.

20/08/2014

CoDesign Peckham launch at Frank's Café, multi-storey car park. Attended by Cllr Mark Williams, Southwark's Cabinet member for regeneration, planning and transport. Noted at launch:

- Station site area greatly reduced omitting Dovedale Court to rear of station. This was of concern and queried by many.
- Programme schedule: as many people as possible to co-operate with CoDesign from 3 Sept-25 Oct, 2014.
- CoDesign purpose: "To address community aspirations for the wider area surrounding Peckham Rye Station and focus on the station forecourt, to develop a more detailed design brief for this space."

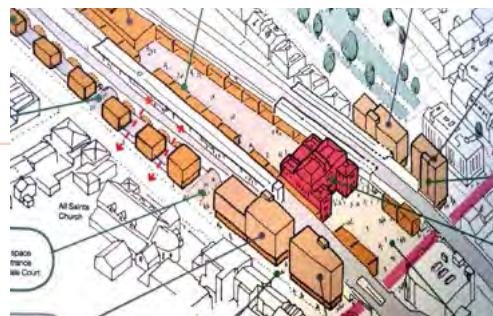
25/11/2013

Community Council Meeting with Weston Williamson, architects for Network Rail, to design redevelopment. Residents Peckham Planning Network stated poor community engagement had wasted time.

01/2014

Station 'Gateway' consultation — Mass objection to new build proposals by Weston Williamson:

- plans to demolish all the existing industries
- to be replaced with seven-storey high rise new build flats
- did not account for council's intentions to not clear the whole site.



30/11/2013

Station 'Gateway' Consultation — Weston Williamson give one week for public response.

11/02/2014

Council seeks more time — Mass local concern prompted reports on ITN news.

- Constituents wrote to councilors.
- Harriet Harman MP met with lead Cllrs Peter John and Fiona Colley.
- Extra time requested for further consultation.
- Council asked GLA for more time with Harriet's support.
- Network Rail should include estate management agreement so local industries not priced out.
- 1930s building on Blenheim Grove should be protected.
- Proposed high rise should be lowered.
- Include public toilets.



2014

Deputation to Community Council

- 12 Feb — Deputation to Community Council: Weston Williamson plan withdrawn, further consultation promised.
- 16 Feb — locals and Harriet Harman request more time from Boris Johnson.
- 25 Feb — Cllr Fiona Colley: "Plans to make local people full partners in shaping the redevelopment."

03/2014

Poll shows 70%+ opposition to development plans, other than open square.

27/03/2014

Meeting with Harriet Harman MP on Central Rye Lane — Harriet visits key development sites around station area, followed by meeting with local businesses. After the meeting Harriet:

- met Network Rail CEO, David Higgins
- clarified council arrangements for a 'CoDesign' process
- corresponded with the Mayor of London.
- GLA agreed to extend consultation period.
- Council to consider third party to facilitate 'CoDesign'.

27/04/2014

Station gets 'Access for All' funding — Peckham Rye on DoT list of 42 station including in 'Access for All' programme = lifts to all platforms.

04/2014

Community Engagement Brief tender to eight firms for appointment by council in partnership with Network Rail, GLA and Southern Railways. Launched in June after May council elections.

03/04/2014

New timeline for Peckham Rye Station redevelopment confirmed by council. "GLA will extend deadline and £5m funding secure."

03/09-25/10/2014

CoDesign Peckham Workshops held at CoDesign Shop under station stairs, inviting public to take part.

10/09/2014 - ongoing 2014

CoDesign Peckham Editorial Meetings held at 7pm Tuesdays, inviting public to produce WEEKLY editorials.

16,24/10/2014

Meetings with Alistair Hugget of Southwark Council to request further time for CoDesign to continue successfully, to afford quality time for production of design brief and discuss way forward.

PECKHAM'S HISTORIC TOWN CENTRE INVESTMENT

The council has secured £1.675m of funding from the Townscape Heritage Initiative programme that will help deliver building repairs and improve spaces within the conservation areas of Peckham town centre.

This bid unlocks funding to highlight the value of heritage assets and invest in repairs and architectural reinstatement of historic and listed buildings, support and extend recent public realm works to the north of Rye Lane and complement the proposed investment in a new square in front of Peckham Rye Station. (Area Action Plan, 4.7.16)

The money will be made available under the Heritage Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) – a grants programme set up to provide much-needed investment for communities to improve and regenerate the historic built environment for the benefit of local residents, workers and visitors.

The five-year scheme will see 44 of the most important historic buildings on Peckham High Street and Rye Lane shortlisted for a grant to repair damaged facades, reinstate lost historic features and install high-quality traditional windows and shop fronts.

Owners will also be encouraged to bring vacant floor space in the upper floors back into use to support the local economy and provide much-needed housing.

In addition, the grant will enable the council and its partners in the community to put in place a programme of complementary initiatives centred

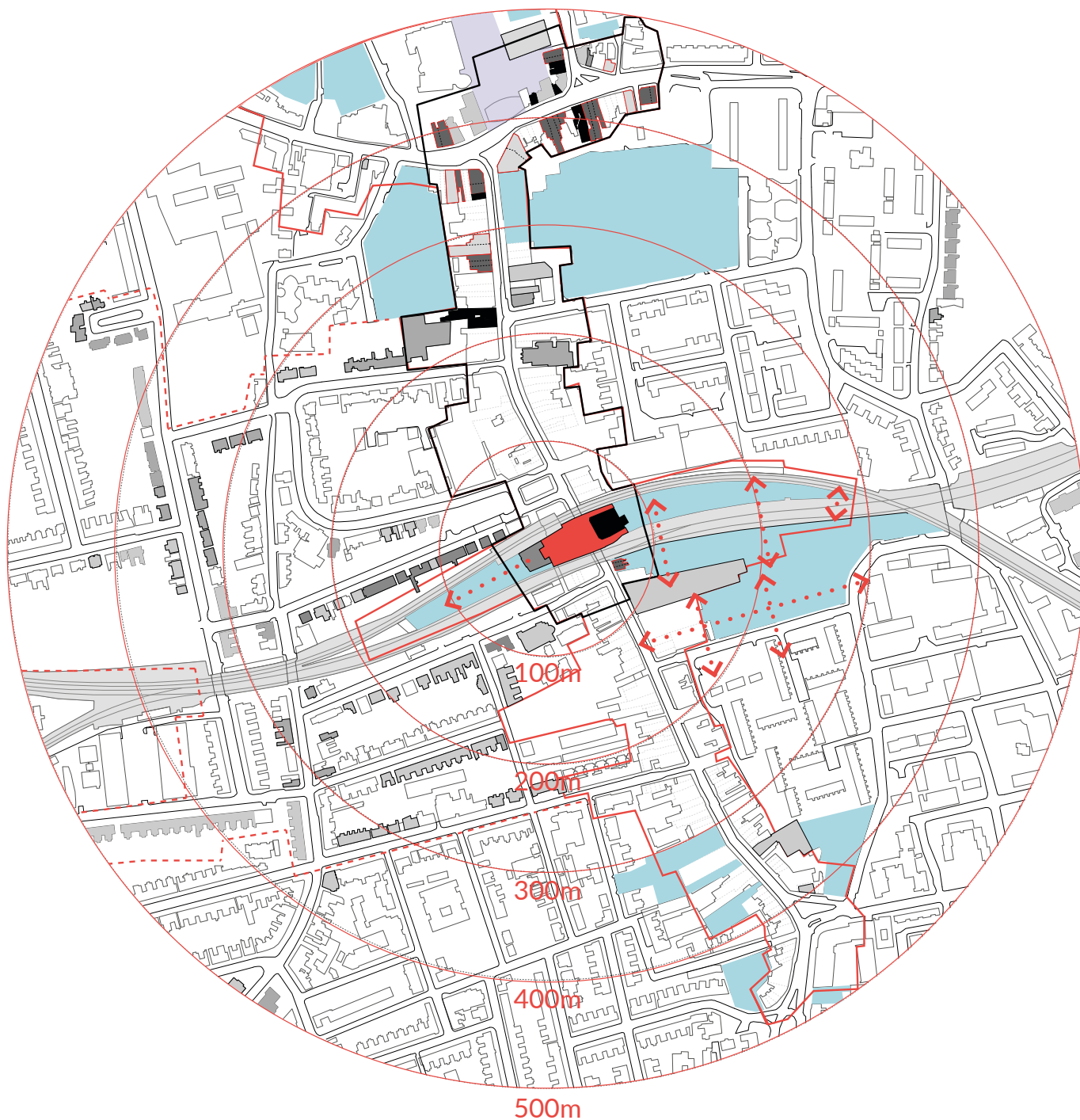
on the better knowledge and enjoyment of this important historic town centre. It aims to bring wider benefits to the community of Peckham with a unique programme including traditional building skills, improved knowledge of the history of the area and a celebration of its heritage.

The project will enable voluntary groups like Peckham Vision and the Peckham Society to help the council deliver among other things an education programme for local schools; a traditional building skills and apprenticeships initiative for young people; information and guidance about the historic town centre; and a 'Celebrate Peckham' programme.

Sue Bowers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for London, said: "Investing lottery money to revitalise historic buildings at the heart of a community not only makes a place more attractive to live, visit and invest in, it also provides jobs and training opportunities for local people. We are delighted to make this award to Peckham as part of our on-going commitment to preserving London's heritage."

Southwark Council

www.goo.gl/ce2aDe
www.southwark.gov.uk



KEY

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Towns Heritage Initiative (THI) boundary | THI high priority project |
| Rye Lane Peckham Conservation area | THI medium priority project |
| Holly Grove Conservation Area | THI reserve project |
| Proposed development sites (Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan 2012; incorporating planning inspector's comments 2014) | Grade II listed buildings |
| Public realm enhancement, Towns Heritage Initiative, priority project: station square | Possible locally listed buildings |
| Proposed new connections (Area Action Plan) | |
| Peckham Square Commission (Southwark appointed architect, Nov 2014) | |

PECKHAM RYE STATION

A CHANGING AREA



Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan (2012), proposed development sites

PNAAP 3: Land between railway arches and railway arches (Eastern Arches). Proposal to open up railway arches to improve north-south connection. The site is deemed suitable for a mixed-use development with small-scale businesses, cultural, leisure and retail elements.

PNAAP 4: Copeland Industrial Park. Mixed-use development on this site should be centred around the retention of the historic Bussey building and should include new public realm opportunities and improvements to provide space for new residents, workers and visitors.

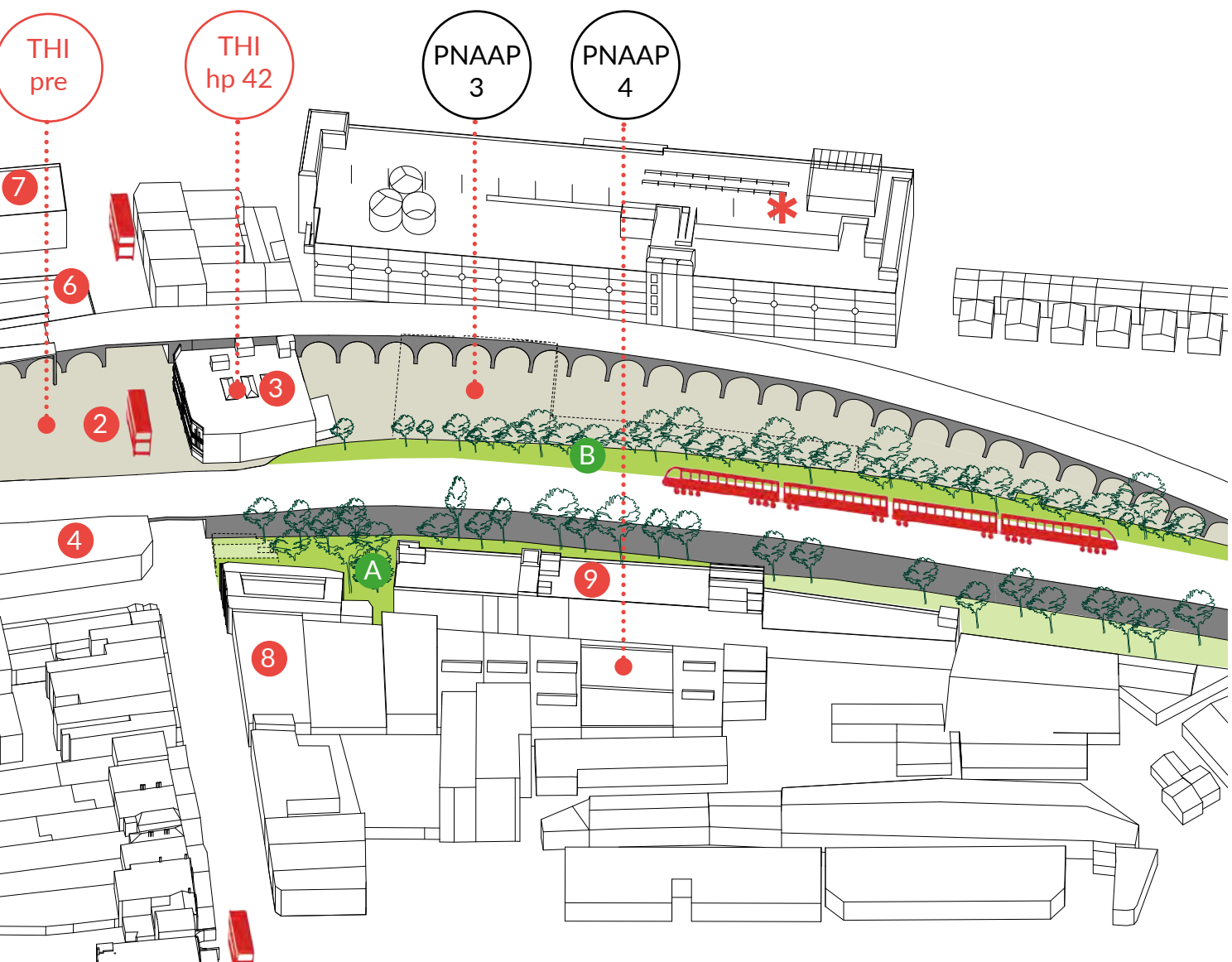
PNAAP 6: Dovedale Court, station building and station forecourt. Peckham Rye Station is one of the main arrival points into Peckham and Nunhead,

with an estimated two-and-a-half million people using the station each year. The consultation on the Area Action Plan has at every stage highlighted the support for improving the station and removing the existing forecourt buildings (arcade). Development should conserve or enhance the historic character of listed station building and the surrounding conservation areas. Use classes for the site: Business use (Class B1), retail use (Classes A1/ A2/ A3/ A4), public square. Community/cultural use (Class D).

Town Centre Heritage Initiative

THI hp42: High priority building (refurbishment)

THI pre: public realm improvement (new station square, demolition of arcade)



Historic buildings surrounding the station:

1. Rye Lane Station, Grade II listed
2. Art Deco station arcade, to be demolished
3. Art Deco (former) department store
4. Art Deco building, Blenheim Grove
5. Art Deco building, Blenheim Grove
6. Art Deco building, Holly Grove
7. Art Deco building, former C&A, now McDonald's
8. Art Deco building, Hodron's department store, now Khan's Bargain
9. Bussey building, historic industrial building
10. All Saints Church

Historic green spaces and green areas linked to historic structures:

- A. Former rifle range; overgrown area next to railway. Potential to extend green space to link with Consort Road.
- B. Overgrown area next to railway line, high level
- C. Overgrown area, Blenheim Grove
- D. Green space adjacent to historic church

* Cinema/Multi-storey car park was included originally as PNAAP 2: Proposal for redevelopment for mixed leisure, retail, residential, public realm uses. The site was removed from PNAAP for further research into potential for adaptation to cultural uses.

HIDDEN VIEWS

LAND BETWEEN THE RAILWAY ARCHES

“

There is no need for the arches to be extended forward into the square. Simple robust solutions to making the arches into retail space will be fine: we need as little design as possible to make the space come about.

”

Voice from Commonplace
Fri 29 Aug 2014 21:14



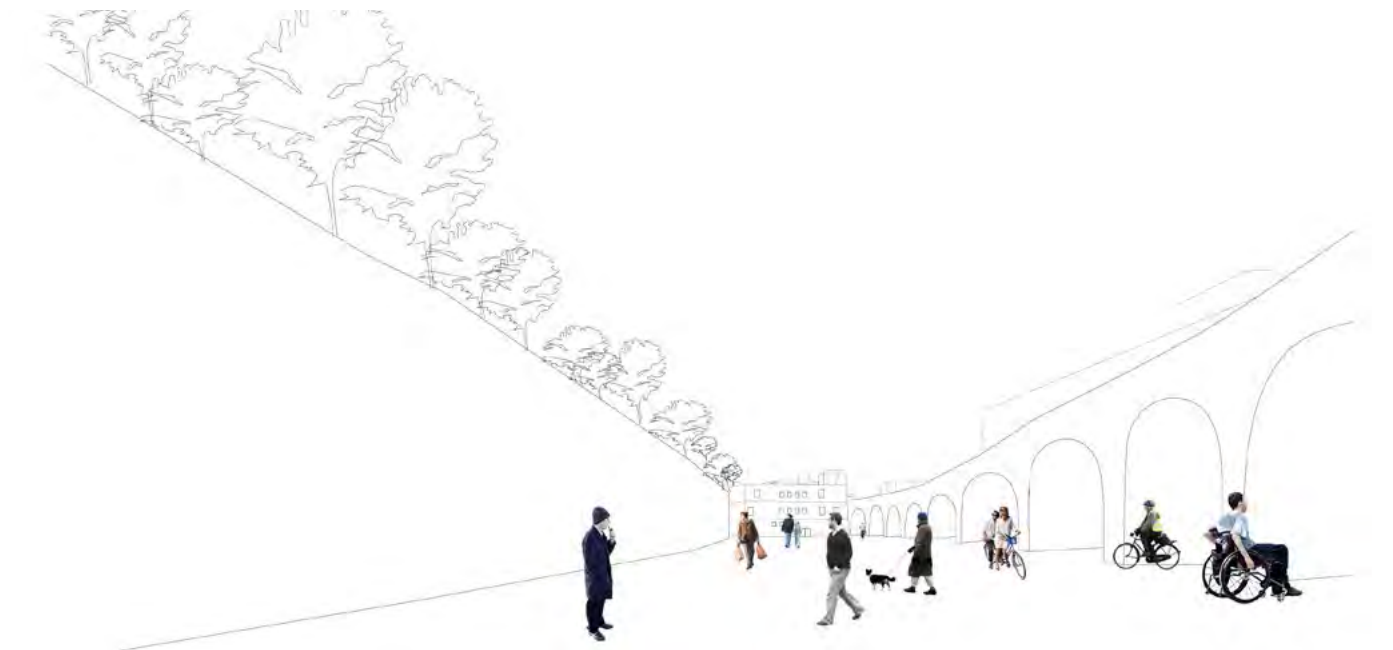
View of the proposed square
from Peckham Rye Station



Removal of the station arcade would reveal this view towards the Art Deco former C&A department store opposite the station. The square could extend across Rye Lane and link to the courtyard behind the historic building.



View of Eastern Arches towards the back of former C&A department store



The land between the railway arches on the east side of Rye Lane is currently inaccessible to the public and occupied by a scaffolding company. In 2016 their lease will run out and the company will relocate, freeing up this site in the centre of Peckham for a different use. Approximately 23 double height arches could be occupied by a diverse range of small businesses including light industrial, leisure and retail. Direct access routes towards the multi-storey park as well as Consort Road could be created across the viaduct.

NEWS FROM THE STREET

LUCY SCHOFIELD TALKS TO PEOPLE ON RYE LANE



Albert & George, stall owner and lottery predictor (selling suitcases from China)

It is a lovely place; it is full of good people. I've lived here for 30 years and I've never met a bad person. It has a multicultural nature. It's the way people walk and interact that gives it character. There are lots of people from Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia and Sierra Leone. There used to be lots of gangs and racism: African and Jamaican youth, but good community relations with the police have combatted this. Pakistanis, Indians, Jamaicans and Africans are involved in policing and their approach is cordial, not aggressive and there is less racism now. There are now English restaurants and lots of young white guys come for dinner, it is good to have the mix. There is a flow of good transport: the 12, 63, 78, 343, 197 from Peckham to Croyden, the P12 and P13 and 368. It is very well connected.

We like our staples and we come here to buy our food. You can get it all here: fufu, keykey, banky, jollof rice, makye, yam & plantain, gari and yams with tilapia. People also come here for cosmetics, it's cheaper than Brixton and Lewisham here and they make good sales.

Include a youth centre in new developments, but not on the main road. Don't demolish the garages, and reinstate some toilets — like the ones they had 15 years ago until they were demolished. Elena got 10,000 signatures on a petition to lobby the council but they said they hadn't enough cash to rebuild them. People use the toilets in McDonald's. Some of the indoor markets don't work because they're off street and need better marketing, so new developments should be open to the street. Will they be providing facilities for apprenticeships in the new plans? There are lots of unemployed people who need to improve craft skills.



Chris Watson, Rye Wax

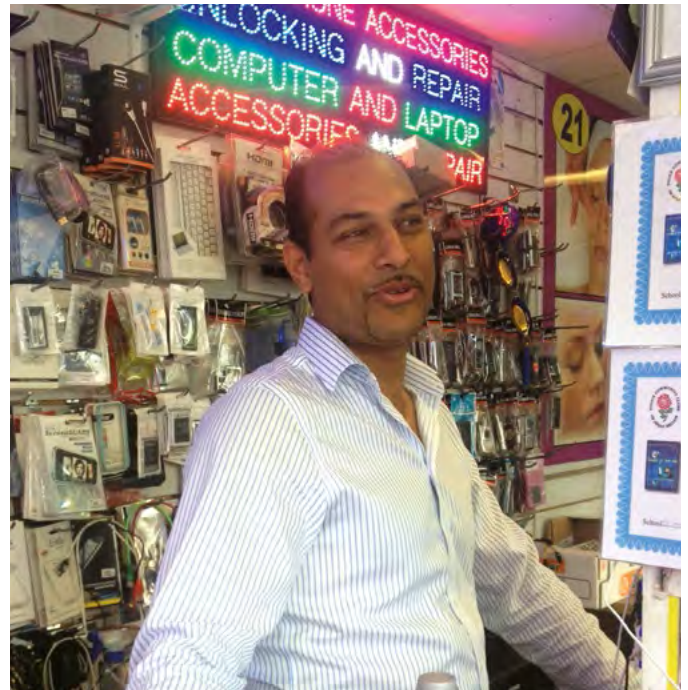
It's a great place; people get up and go, have ideas and make things happen. It's very entrepreneurial. There is loads of good food and business: Banh Mi, the pubs, Momos and lots of great places to hang out. The record shop is a great place to be. There is a super-cheap cinema; it's a fiver for anything. You can't go turfing out all those businesses in the new developments around the station. As long as the existing businesses are happy it will be OK. I'm a bit worried about house prices and rent — if they make it too nice we won't be able to live here. But I've only been here for four years, I think the locals would be annoyed if I called myself local.



Emma and Sean, Yoga Rise, the Bussey building

Peckham has a nice spirit — there is a really good community and it's a really positive place for new businesses. It's not just new people finding a gap in the market, there is a bit of everything. We shop everywhere from Khan's Bargain to the Chinese shops and the nail bars. There's a nice community of dog-walkers too — if you have a dog, go to the park in the morning or early evening and you'll see a lot of the community.

On the down side, it's not so nice seeing children (or adults) peeing in the street and we can't take our dog down the High Street because there are so many chicken bones. There's a lack of appreciation of how some people's actions affect others.



Safi and Abdul, Phone Shop, Travel Agency and Nail Bar by the station

Past, present or future; there will always be change and people need to be prepared for it, but don't disturb the community. The borough used to be BNP but now it's a community of white, black: lots of Pakistanis and Afghanis. This is a place where I hold memories. I moved here from Bexley with my African travel agency of 22 years. Every place is a best place whether it is clubbing or prayers or business, it is what suits you. Some people can't move out so have to stick with it and change their way of thinking about the place. They should clean up the street and make use of the wasted recycling opportunities. If they recycled more cardboard they could keep the council taxes low.



Afi, Afghanistan, general store between railway arches

Some of the units are terrible because they're too dark. I'd like more light in my unit and the streets need to have a clean up — they really smell.

Anonymous

It used to be like a second Oxford Street — every shop was a main high street shop: C&A, M&S, Jones and Higgins. I've lived here for 35 years. There are very few English shops now and if you are middle class and white you like it and think it adds character. But I feel the area is destroyed: there is rubbish everywhere and it stinks. I have nothing good to say about the area any more. It's a dump. Most of the traders want to get out.

Patient in the chiroprapist's waiting room, came from West Indies in 1960s

The council are wilfully pushing people away and letting way for people with money to move in. It's outrageous. Over the years the changes have been for the worse. The priority is for the buildings to be improved. It is all private sector and housing association now. I have been waiting for new windows for 10 years but the council keep putting the money into different projects. They don't do anything for older people — they have to hang out in shops, bookies and on street corners. There is nowhere to play dominoes any more. You need to have different ages mixing — the young here listen to the older generation. Peckham used to be good.

Leonie, artist

I have mixed feelings about the changes. I moved to Bellenden when it was derelict. The types of people have changed. It is a good community but there is not enough cohesion between different socio-economic groups and there is a need for cheaper places. Bun House, which was a place for artists opposite the library, closed and the artists in the Bussey building are under threat. There are Acme, ASE studios and a new studio in Peckham but not sure if it is easy for other artists to come in.

Royal Textiles, retailer and exporter of fine African fabrics made in Holland

Royal sells daily and ceremonial African wear made in Amsterdam. There is an extensive collection from black and red Ghanaian funeral wear to Nigerian wedding wear to Osikani or rich man's gear, which is the most expensive fabric for party or ceremonies. All the patterns have meanings, [for example, one] is saying to accept god. You buy six yards and go to the back of the shop where we have seamstresses who can knock up African and Nigerian styles. It takes about two weeks.



Chiropodist, Carlton Jefferson, Rye Lane

I was born in Jamaica but came here in the 60s and was schooled here. I've been in Peckham for 26 years. I cut elderly people's nails, attend to pussy toes, verrucas or if someone has stood on a nail etc. All major illnesses affect the foot and there is a lot of variety. West Indians travel from all over London to use me if I'm recommended.

I think the sooner the town centre is cleaned up the better. It's better than it used to be: you couldn't walk through the centre at night if you valued your life. Now there are too many chicken and hair shops on the High Street and there are hairballs running through the town like tumbleweed in a western. I'd like a better variety of shops. As a kid, going to Peckham was like going to the West End — I used to come up here to go to the cinema. All areas have peaks and troughs and Peckham is on an up at the moment. The white people talk about how it has gone downhill, sell up, leave and go but they still come back to have their feet done here.

PERSONAL HISTORY

OF A LOCAL TEENAGER

My history of Peckham

I have lived in Peckham since I was two years old, and now at eighteen I can truly say it has been an amazing place to grow up. I have seen a lot of change over the years, but living in such a diverse and vibrant community has been a huge part of my life and development as a person.

Since the death of Damilola Taylor in 2001, and various moral panics sparked by the media stigmatising Peckham for violence and crime, I have often had to explain to friends from other parts of London that Peckham isn't (that) dodgy and dangerous. I think even in Primary school I thought Peckham was a dangerous place, but as I grew up here and experienced independence in the area, I saw a whole new side to it.

Through my studies I have been very interested in geographical and social development in urban areas. In fact I can link my first experience of looking at Peckham Town Centre in this way to my Geography GCSE fieldwork in 2010. The fieldwork concluded Peckham's success was down to the multicultural, diverse community and shopping experience; its individuality and character. Still today I would say exactly the same thing, yet in less than four years I have seen huge change.

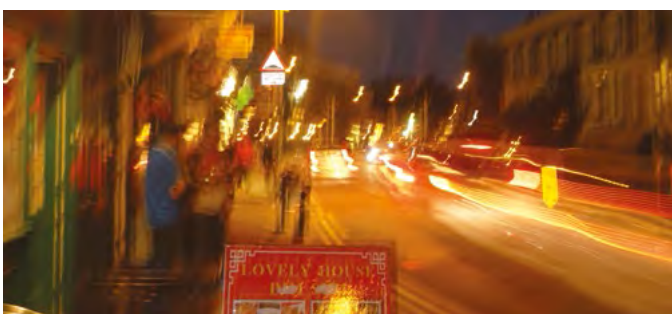
Nightlife has accelerated in Peckham, with various online sources quoting it as the new Dalston (I'll keep Peckham thanks!). Now being eighteen, I have (legally) experienced Peckham's Bussey building, various bars, clubs and so forth. Me and my friends have all noticed, however, the contrasts between different social groups in Peckham. At night time, Peckham is densely populated with young people and students-mainly white. In the daytime Rye lane is a bustle with all types of people; shopping, going about day to day life, playing.

Futhermore we can see more divisions through pockets of gentrification in areas such as Bellenden Road. This road was nothing when I first moved here, but over the last couple of years it has grown in to a lovely little street. Yet house prices have soared.

I look forward to seeing how Peckham changes in the future, but like many I don't want to see Peckham lose its character. Being involved in the CoDesign process has made me see both the station and Peckham's futures in a new light. I think as long as it is done carefully, change could have a positive impact for community, business and others. As long as it doesn't turn into the 'failed' Dalston square. A lot of people have said that.

The whole area between the railway tracks has a lot of potential; and I really hope the groups involved work together on behalf of our community and our future.

Flossie Harry



EXPERIMENTAL PECKHAM

AN INSPIRATION

This CoDesign project isn't the first time the people of Peckham have got involved in designing how we live. Between 1926 and 1950, the Peckham Experiment set out to study all the factors that contribute to health by observing members of the community interacting in a social setting. The Peckham Experiment has been hugely influential in shaping understanding of the way to cultivate health rather than simply treating sickness, as well as informing the World Health Organisation. Visitors, inspired by the lessons from the project, come from all over the world to see the building in St Mary's Road.

Run by husband and wife team, Dr George Scott Williamson and Dr Innes Pearse, the experiment was founded on the belief that, given the right facilities, communities would spontaneously organise themselves. They wanted to gauge people's interest in informing and empowering themselves to promote individuals and family health.

950 families took part in the original experiment at the Pioneer Health Centre on Queens Road and thousands more attended the purpose-built centre that opened later on St Mary's Road. Constructed to the designs of Owen Williams, it contained facilities such as a swimming pool and gym, a crèche, a library, and a rooftop playground.

'Members' were given access to information, medical advice, fitness facilities and social events as well as fresh organic produce direct from the Peckham Experiment's dedicated farm. They were encouraged to be self-organising, and the Pioneer Health Centre became much more than just a 'health centre' in today's terms — it was the social and cultural centre for the community.

It wasn't by chance that the doctors chose Peckham as the home for their experiment. Then, as now, Peckham represented "a cross-section of the total populace of the nation with as widely differing a cultural a mixture as it is possible to find in

any circumscribed metropolitan area". Peckham reformers aimed to transform the city and sought to make "a full and energetic life possible in terms of urban existence".

So, what was learnt from the Peckham Experiment?

The lasting legacy of the centre's work is our understanding of the importance of environment for health and wellbeing. We now know that communities thrive when they have the means to make their own choices.

Some of their key learnings are especially relevant to our CoDesign project:

- If people are given information about themselves and their families they will attempt to make decisions that are in the best interests of their families.
- People thrive when they are given the freedom to make choices about their activities and will choose those that help in their development.
- When people are given resources in a community to enable them to grow they will be active in their community for the benefit of that community.

The Peckham Experiment focused on health, but looking back on their achievements we can see that they created a thriving community around a space that people could use as they wished, encouraging mixed cultural activities and putting on formal and informal social occasions. But above all, they learnt that given the freedom to choose, people and communities usually make the right choices for their wellbeing.

Charlotte Fereday (service designer)

Historic images: www.sochealth.co.uk, Pioneer Health Foundation, Wellcome Library London



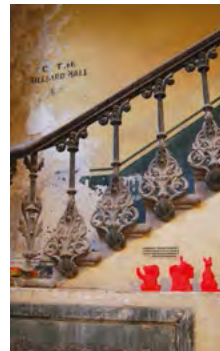
WAITING FOR THE FUTURE

PECKHAM STATION

Regular users of the station over the past few years will have seen some of its stunning original features emerging from under layers of green paint and pigeon droppings. From the semi-restored ornate staircase that the CoDesign Shop has been calling home for the past few weeks to the magically untouched gents toilets on the other side of the station, this gradual unveiling has been the result of many years of hard work on the part of Peckham Vision, the Rye Lane & Station Action Group and the Peckham Society. Led by local architect and historian Benedict O’Looney, the original focus of the restoration was the Old Waiting Room between platforms two and three. After a long stint as the staff recreation room and then as a public billiards room, it was sealed up in the 1960s and left forgotten. But in 2010, with the windows un-bricked and the floor repaired, it became possible to see how this space could be brought back to life. Four years on, the team behind the restoration are still campaigning, fund-raising and working behind the scenes to fulfil the room’s potential. So what does the future look like? Subject to negotiations with Network Rail over the lease, Peckham Vision hopes to turn the space into a profitable community-run enterprise as a multi-purpose venue. Over the past few years they’ve been inundated with enquiries

about hiring the space, so they have a solid business plan — but without a separate entrance from the station, access is only possible with the provision of a special temporary licence from Network Rail and the agreement of two rail companies and the station staff. With funding now in place to complete work on the staircase, the restoration is another step closer to becoming a reality. It’s worth bearing these plans in mind when we’re considering both the history and the future of the space: if the station building is restored to its former beauty with a thriving multi-purpose venue at its heart, what should happen to the forecourt? Would it change the way we think about the future of the arcade? What about lighting, seating and space for bikes? While the two projects are totally separate they do share an important space in the centre of Peckham and they need to work together. I’m looking forward visiting the Old Waiting Room in the future. But they need to get the stairs finished first.

Charlotte Fereday (service designer)



1930S TOILETS REDISCOVERED AT PECKHAM RYE STATION

NORTH WING AND SANITARY COURTS RESTORATION

This past year Network Rail has carried out the restoration of the north wing of Peckham Rye Station with the help of the Peckham-based practice Benedict O’Looney Architects. This project began with the refenestration of the station forecourt in the winter of 2012. With five new windows and three sets of doors in place to the station’s original design, Network Rail Property decided to upgrade a series of rooms over the ground and first floors and ‘rediscover’ the lost 1930s toilets, or ‘sanitary courts’, that had been closed up on the north side of the station for more than 50 years, largely forgotten.

Our first views of the lost ‘sanitary courts’ were with torches, and we were amazed to discover a shimmering green and white glass mosaic floor below us covered with dust. The toilets had been open for about 30 years, but closed in 1962 when the north part of the booking hall was walled off to make a betting office. With public access lost, it was decided then to mothball the 1930s loos.

In the summer of 2010 Network Rail’s arch inspection team mistakenly demolished the ladies’ sanitary courts, not realizing they were part of a Grade II listed building. This project salvaged what was left of the ladies’ and restored the largely intact gents’ back to its original 1935 state. As much of

the gents’ original sanitary ware and fittings were still intact, we treated this project as forming a ‘museum’ of mid-20th-century Moderne station toilets by carefully cleaning, repairing and re-fixing doors, sinks, WCs and ironmongery. Even the Second World War-era venereal disease notices were conserved and re-fixed! Where the original toilets could not be reused, we found six salvaged WCs to a similar 1930s design complete with timber seats from a salvage yard in Norfolk.

The ‘Jesse Rust’s patent glass’ mosaic floor was cleaned and restored. In the demolished ladies’, we used new mosaic to suggest where the lost WCs and timber partitions had been.

To the rest of the Victorian wing we reinstated lost plasterwork and mouldings from surviving fragments, and details found in similar rooms in the station. The newer 20th century interventions were carefully revealed and picked out in different colours to quietly tell the narrative of changes to these spaces from the 1860s onward.

This project has been shortlisted for the National Railway Heritage Awards 2014.

Benedict O’Looney (architect)



TOILET PETITION

4,270 PEOPLE IN PECKHAM WANT MORE PUBLIC TOILETS

Members of Peckham Vision, and the Rye Lane Traders' Association presented the petition to the Community Council on the 30th of September 2013. The petition had over 4,270 signatures, all of which had been gathered in or near the town centre.

Peckham is a major shopping centre in Southwark thronging with shoppers and visitors. Unfortunately public urinating has now become a very unpleasant feature of our town centre, because of the lack of public toilets. Parents are teaching their children to urinate in public as there is no obviously available public facility. Local residents have for many years campaigned for public toilets. Now it is even more urgent as cultural life in central Rye Lane has taken off. There are many more pedestrians at all times, and it has extended the problems through the evening and into the night. There is only one public toilet in Peckham town centre – on Atwell Road. It is not pleasant to use. There are increasing problems day and night with urinating and worse in the shopping and residential streets as a result of the lack of decent public toilets.

We need a solution to this. This is the right time to raise the issue when major work to improve the areas around Peckham Rye Station is being designed. Central Rye Lane is due for a major reshaping to recreate the public square in front of the station and make major improvements in Network Rail's land around it. The petition is asking the council and Network Rail to take this opportunity to provide for public toilets in these developments. This is maybe a once in a lifetime chance to ensure that these changes include good quality public toilets that are well managed.

The deputation included representatives of Peckham Vision and the Rye Lane Traders' Association; a local resident who is co-ordinator of Peckham Vision; a local resident in Holly Grove who has a business in The Arches, Blenheim Grove; a local resident in Blenheim Grove who has a new business in the station forecourt; a market trader in Rye Lane who is a local resident; and a trader in Rye Lane who co-ordinates the Rye Lane Traders' Association.

The Community Council unanimously agreed with the deputation's request that officers should be asked to review with us the issues and report back to the Community Council on:

- the need for public toilet facilities in Rye Lane
- the problems from the lack of public facilities
- the possible locations for new facilities, in relation to the station developments
- the issues in terms of management and cost of each of them.

Note

The lost lavatories at the junction of Rye Lane and The Peckham High Street (Peckham's village core) might still exist underground. A look at maps and historic photographs suggest that a substantial subterranean public lavatory was built around 1900 and was used by the community until about 1955. Photographs show the entrance to lavatories with tall decorative wrought iron railings and flights of steps, north and south, to what must have been substantial, tiled, subterranean sanitary courts.

Image: Lavatories 1905, outside Jones & Higgins, when Peckham was in its heyday. (outlined in red)



Sources: www.spectacle.co.uk;
Benedict O'Looney,
Petition photos courtesy of Corinne Turner

QUESTIONS / ANSWERS

THESE QUESTIONS WERE RAISED BY THE WEEKLY EDITORIAL TEAM

These answers were provided by Alistair Huggett,
London Borough of Southwark

What are the plans for the Holly Grove site (Art Deco Building) currently occupied by Iceland?

The lease for the site is owned by Bywater and they are currently developing their own proposals. These plans haven't been made public yet as Bywater will need to negotiate with Network Rail, which is the freeholder of the site. From the plans Southwark Council have seen it will be a mixed-use development – retaining the Iceland with flats above. There is a potential for the council to purchase the flats for council homes but no formal discussions have been started. As soon as Bywater have a scheme that they are confident in, and are at a stage with Network Rail negotiations where they feel the scheme may proceed, doubtless they will make it public. Any proposed scheme would need to go through the statutory planning process, which includes a period of formal consultation.

If for any reason the negotiations with Network Rail are unsuccessful, then the building would revert to being compulsorily purchased (CPO'd) and a scheme would be developed by Southwark Council.

What are the plans for 2-10 Blenheim Grove (Art Deco Building)?

Blenheim Grove (12-16) with the Sunday Painter gallery, studios and the Peckham Refreshment Rooms is not included in the scheme as it is owned privately and isn't required operationally for the station improvements; therefore no need to CPO it.

A study is currently being prepared for the corner building on Blenheim Grove currently occupied by hair salons on ground floor. Southwark Council have asked Weston Williamson to do a capacity study for the site looking at how much retail can potentially

be relocated and how to make the arches behind function as retail units. They have been asked to look at the potential of a four-storey building on this site and how potential uses such as business incubator space, children's nursery, churches etc. could function. As soon as Southwark Council have this information they will make it public.

This building will then be included in the design brief (which the CoDesign process will help determine) for the square and arches.

Are the proposals for the sites on Blenheim Grove and Holly Grove being developed assuming the demolition of the existing Art Deco buildings? Are options being explored to retain the historic structures and extend them above?

Proposals for the Iceland site are assuming the demolition of the existing building. Probably the same applies to the Blenheim Grove site. Basically it's considered that these Art Deco buildings wouldn't convert well to modern retail/other uses with internal bin stores etc. But that's not to say a really imaginative scheme couldn't retain parts. Southwark Council haven't got to that stage yet and have no preconceived ideas.

The Blenheim Grove and Holly Grove sites aren't earmarked in the Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan (AAP) nor are they specifically addressed as part of the Town Heritage Initiative (THI) funding.

Regarding the AAP – this is a high-level strategic document and rarely will have plans for individual buildings. However both sites are in the 'core area' as defined by the AAP; in the conservation area;

Blenheim Grove is a protected shopping frontage, and that's while not part of the building, the AAP makes reference to improving the public realm at the eastern end of Holly Grove.

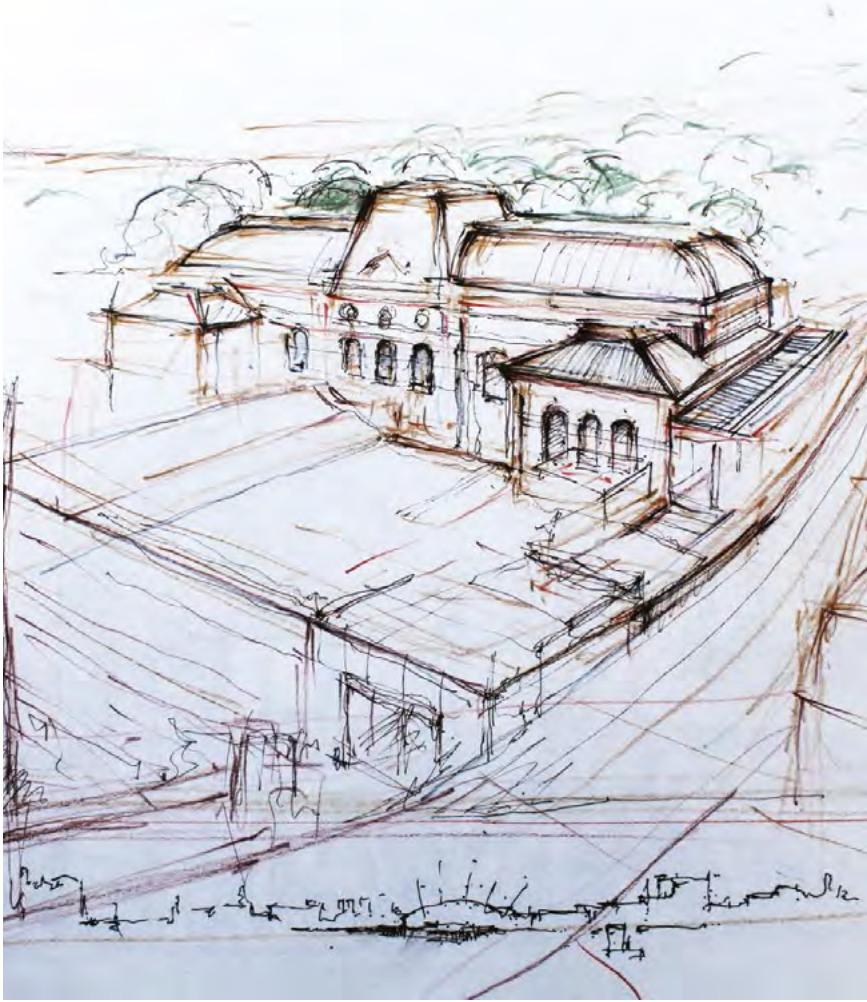
As for the THI, the buildings were originally included but priorities had to be made of the most important buildings to be supported due to limited budgets. They didn't make the shortlist as there are other buildings that make a greater contribution to the streetscape or are more historically important

There is still confusion over the location of bus stops within the new scheme. Will existing bus stops be located along the new square's boundary with Rye Lane? Will there be a need to provide shelter from the rain along this boundary?

We haven't approached Transport for London (Buses) to discuss this yet as we currently haven't got any design proposals to show them. If there is a preference from the feedback you get during the process we will certainly feed this into the design brief.

Programme update:

The next stage of the process is to commission designers so that they can work with all the stakeholders to develop the final brief and programme of the design process. Until we have someone on board to do this we will not know exactly how long this process will take and therefore we haven't revised the draft programme previously issued.











This document was printed by HIM London
on the Canon imageRUNNER C7065i

www.himlondon.co.uk

www.peckhamcodesign.org / December 2014