

Friends of Burgess Park

Response to the Area Plans – Height of buildings Camberwell, Peckham draft visions 6 July 2017

Friends of Burgess Park - is a local community group with the remit to protect, promote and enhance Burgess Park. We have a committee and engage with local people through our mailing list (300 + people) Facebook Group (407 people) and Twitter. We meet monthly and liaise with the council and other local community groups with an interest in the park. We also hold events in the park to promote biodiversity, heritage and engage the wider community.

Camberwell and Peckham visions – Must take account of the Burgess Park as an important part of the area. Tall buildings around this park and other green spaces would:

- change the essential character of the park and immediate area
- be detrimental to health and well being
- full consideration of loss of sunlight must be adequately addressed in planning policy.

(See also FOBP other submission on site allocations/Burgess Business Park and the submission on the draft Southwark Plan which also covered height of buildings around the park).

Height of current buildings around Burgess Park

On the corner of Wells Way and St Georges Way parallel to the church), is a large apartment block 4 storeys (GF + 3) high.

Camberwell Fields (GF + 7) at Southampton Way/Edmund Street which is a corner site opposite a main park entrance and should be the highest building along the southern boundary.

The height of the two buildings around the park as above and new developments on Southampton Way (five and six storeys) are in keeping with the local area, and the other immediate tall buildings which are the nearby former St George's Church, which is a listed building and an important site for views and way-finding in the area and St Giles Church, Camberwell.

FOBP have objected to the 21-23 Parkhouse St development proposed nine-storey building (planning application) which will set a precedent for more new housing in the area. FOBP have objected about:

- significant building shadows,
- the height of tall buildings and
- the impact of building too close to the park boundary on biodiversity and
- the green link into the park

To the north of the park taller buildings are part of the Aylesbury redevelopment, the current blocks being between nine and twelve floors in height. Taller buildings will be replacing these buildings in the near future. This will significantly alter the ambience, look and feel, and view out of the park.

Height for new buildings around Burgess Park

The importance of lines of sight, visibility, and dominance cannot be under-estimated for the impact of the park as an open space. At the moment there are no tall buildings which above the tree line on that south side or dominate the sky line either along the immediate park edge or further away.

The position of any buildings taller than eight storeys (ie Camberwell Fields) would completely alter the southern aspect of the park. If the planning requirement change – and views to Burgess Park will be highly desirable – tower blocks 3/4/5 times the height of the trees will make the park feel hemmed in on both sides by tall buildings.

Sunlight and light

Burgess Park is a very narrow park and this means that building height has a significant impact. The northern/Albany Road side of the park will have buildings of significant height once the NHHT proposed plans for the Aylesbury estate are built.

The impact of building shadow on public realm and parks especially need to be an important planning consideration. "shadows even turn light into another medium of inequality — a resource that can be bought by the wealthy, eclipsed from the poor." "San Francisco has had a "sunlight ordinance" that requires the parks commission to review any proposed building taller than 40 feet that might shadow public parks."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/05/04/in-the-shadows-of-booming-cities-a-tension-between-sunlight-and-prosperity/>

Central Park in New York has a central [Central Park Sunshine Task Force](#) to monitor the impact of tall building shadow on the park. "The Task Force is evaluating the impact of new construction and will make policy change recommendations so that NYC zoning laws adequately take into account new construction trends and techniques for extremely large and tall buildings, in order to protect New-Yorkers vital access to air and sun light."

The impact of shadowing onto the park is not fully addressed through current standard sunlight/shade reports which consider the impact on other dwellings and amenity space.

FOBP would recommend that Southwark Council investigate some of the approaches already underway other cities to address access to sunlight.