

Friends of Burgess Park

Malt St Berkeley Homes – Consultation comments October 2016

Friends of Burgess Park is an association of people and other interested groups who are concerned to protect, promote and enhance an important, inner-city London park. The FOBP keeps local people informed about issues impacting on Burgess Park through monthly mail outs to our 350 mailing list; regular updates to our Facebook group, 378 members and Twitter, 2600 followers. We engage with park users through events in the park which bring the community together.

FOBP appreciate the opportunity to review the Berkeley Homes proposals through the pre-planning consultation.

The redevelopment of the site is the first of many new developments likely to take place as part of the Old Kent Road Opportunity Area. As such the site sets a precedent. The new housing will increase the local population and numbers of people using Burgess Park. The site is close to Burgess Park and so FOBP are interested in the linkage and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists and the quality of the public space and green routes.

1. The high quality pedestrian and cycle provision passing north/south through the development is welcome. It is likely to be very busy.
2. The current designs show a mix of segregated routes and then shared space and pavement/road provision. This seems quite a number of alternative treatments in a short distance and space. Living Streets (UK charity for everyday walking) study for Burgess Park with other case studies on shared pedestrian and cycling areas recommended that commuter cyclists should be catered for on roads not through green spaces. Shared spaces is particularly problematic where there are high numbers of people.
3. The routes must link properly to other walking and cycle routes.
4. The increased numbers of cyclists using this new route is very likely to increase cyclist numbers likely to use Surrey Canal Walk and Burgess Park. We would like Southwark Council to address this.
5. The public space around the new housing is welcome. However, the current designs show substantial amounts of hard surfaces with islands of planting.
6. The proposed planting must contribute towards quality green space for the residents which is usable for recreation and leisure use – not just visual through inaccessible planters.
7. In the consultation material the border with the neighbouring estate has been “substantially greened up” and this is misleading unless it is part of the plans of Berkley Homes.
8. The proposed buildings follow the old Surrey Canal route, which is a dominant and significant element of the council’s proposals for the Old Kent Road opportunity area. This is understandable. However, the size and scale of the proposed alignment for the Surrey Canal is not of the necessary scale and significance should the rest of this route materialise. The most sizable green link as currently proposed is along Bianca Road. This does not have a good alignment with Burgess Park. Further consideration would need to be made by you and the council on road crossing at Glengall Road.
9. The height of the proposed tower and the mass of the blocks seems out of keeping with the immediate residential neighbours. We have previously made representations to the Southwark Plan and the Old Kent Road IIA on the height and mass of buildings immediately adjacent to Burgess Park will have a detrimental impact on light, space, planting and wildlife. Whilst these are not immediately next to the park we are aware of the tendency for new buildings to be aligned and to be graduated. The height of the tower would lead to buildings even when graduated being too tall beside the park.