

Friends of Burgess Park

Response to the 21-23 Parkhouse Street Planning Application 17/AP/1723

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 (394 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.

Height of buildings

The 21-23 Parkhouse St development will set a precedent for more new housing in the area so high standards and quality of design are paramount. The proposed nine-storey building is taller than Camberwell Fields 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 last major local development, on the corner of Wells Way and St Georges Way parallel to the church), is by comparison just 4 storeys (GF + 3) high. A nine-storey building would be higher than the nearby former St George's Church, which is a listed building and an important site for views and way-finding in the area.

Many new buildings achieve height by stepping back the top two to three storeys – there are many examples in the borough north of Burgess Park.

Nine storey height on the immediate park boundary is not appropriate.

Distance of buildings from the park

Buildings next to a park have an impact on wildlife. The area of park backing onto the Parkhouse St site has the highest bio-diversity value currently in the park ([LWT survey for Southwark Council 2013](#)) The area along this section of park has trees and will continue to have trees. At the moment there is considerable open space along that boundary with no buildings along it. Building must be set-back. The proposed setback/buffer zone for Parkhouse redevelopment is barely the width of potential tree canopy. This will mean lower flats will be in shade and the occupants will suffer from lack of light.

New development should be set further back.

Impact on the park

The proposed building is on the south side of the park, so would block light into the park, which would be detrimental to park vegetation and wildlife as well as park users. The area immediately beyond the boundary is a nature area with high a density of planting and currently is the highest value wildlife area in the park, see London Wildlife Trust report produced for Southwark Council.

Southwark Council Planning must take account of shadow and loss of sunlight to the park. As our city becomes denser with more high rise buildings reducing sunlight at street level parks become essential open spaces.

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/>

The impact of shadowing onto the park has not been fully addressed as the report states the site is not of amenity value because residents will not congregate. This is not adequate information to understand the impact of sunlight and shadow. (Page 3 HTA report: There will be no impact in terms of daylight, sunlight and overshadowing as a result of the proposed development. This is due to the fact that there are no residences in proximity to the site as well as no communal open spaces where local residents would congregate.)

Health Inequality

An increase in exposure to green space translated into a reduction of health problems. Green space has been linked with reduced levels of obesity in children and young people, higher levels of physical activity and a reduction in a number of long-term ill health conditions. The proportion of green and open space is linked to self-reported levels of health and mental health for all ages and socio-economic groups through improving companionship, sense of identity and belonging. Living in areas with green spaces is associated with significantly less income-related health inequality, weakening the effect of deprivation on health. In greener areas, mortality rates are significantly reduced for deprived groups, compared to less green areas. However, people from more deprived areas have less access; children in deprived areas are nine times less likely to have access to green space and places to play. Research reported by the Kings Fund

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/improving-publics-health/access-green-and-open-spaces-and-role-leisure-services> Please refer to this research on the effects of tall buildings and shadow in urban settings:

<https://www.londonnewsonline.co.uk/17517/concerns-tower-will-cast-shadow-greenwich-peninsula-ecology-park/> <http://portfolio.cpl.co.uk/CIBSE/201407/modelling-tall-buildings/>

https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/12/21/upshot/Mapping-the-Shadows-of-New-York-City.html?_r=0

Due regard must be placed on the importance of Burgess Park as a large park serving a wide local population. Increasing population will mean that numbers of users will increase and the green space become more vital for health and well-being.

Green Link Pathway to Burgess Park

The adjacent area is intended as a wildlife area and will not benefit from a high throughput of people. Any green link should not be a desire line for commuters whether pedestrians or on bike. Also, with regards to bikes, Parkhouse Street is a one-way street, which would create problems if cyclists were using the Green Link and travelling on to Wells Way, against the direction of traffic.

Will other new developments along Parkhouse St and backing onto the park also have entrance routes?

Further studies onto the impact of the new route would be required. It is anticipated that the new Quietways will increase cycle traffic (this has been the experience of other QW routes).

This route has been included into this plan for this block but is also meant as a route for the wider Burgess Business park redevelopment. This cannot be viewed or any decision made in isolation without considering the wider development plans.