SUB AREA 3

SANDGATE STREET, VERNEY ROAD AND OLD KENT ROAD (SOUTH)
HISTORY

The Surrey Canal was one of the earliest developments in the area, being completed in the early 1800s, before the railways and residential development. In the 1830s the South Metropolitan Gas Company established a new gasworks on land adjoining the canal, with the company owning its own fleet of barges to transport coal along the canal. The gasworks grew steadily under Thomas Livesey and his son George and by 1900 covered 36 acres and contained a cricket ground, cycle track and allotments, as well as 8 gasholders. At the time, the gasworks were at the cutting edge of new technology, fundamentally changing the way people live in their homes. George Livesey himself had a long association with the area; he grew up in the Canal Grove cottages, established the first public library in Camberwell on Old Kent Road (later the Livesey Museum) and served as a Sunday school teacher in Christ Church.

The largest gasholder is listed. Built by George Livesey between 1879 and 1881 it was briefly the world's largest gasholder and was constructed using a pioneering geodesic structure. It also sits above a tank which was the deepest then constructed and one of the deepest ever built. There are other fragments of this industrial past still visible such as the cobbled road surface to the north of Canal Grove.

Sandgate Street and Ruby Street were residential streets of Victorian terraced housing, with shops and pubs on Old Kent Road and a school on Ruby Street. The terraced houses were tightly packed and typical of the late Victorian residential development in the area. The area was bombed very heavily, and after the war these streets redeveloped mainly for industrial use. The canal was infilled in the late 1970s and the canal alignment was later redeveloped with housing and industry.
THE AREA TODAY

The remaining gas holders no longer store gas and a large part of the former gas works site is occupied by Southwark’s Integrated Waste Management Facility (IWMF) and the adjacent New Cross Electricity Substation. Between Verney Road and Old Kent Road there is a mix of medium and large sized industrial units between which accommodate around 57 businesses and 1,600 jobs. The Canal Grove Cottages provide a reminder of the area’s heritage and the mature trees around the cottages provide them with a lovely setting and are visible up and down the Old Kent Road. Generally however, because of the industrial heritage of the area around the former canal and gasworks, there is little open space and no north-south routes between St James’s Road and Ilderton Road.

The north side of Old Kent Road is very fragmented. Bomb damage and road widening resulted in the demolition of the Georgian and Victorian terraces and their replacement by larger retail stores, such as Curry’s PC World, the B&M Bargain Store, Carpet Right and Staples. There is a surviving Georgian house and later Edwardian commercial buildings next to B&M Bargain Store.

The south side of Old Kent Road has a much more established frontage which features some handsome buildings including Christ Church, the former Livesey Museum and the Royal London buildings.
SITES AND MASTERPLANS
SANDGATE STREET AND VERNEY ROAD (OKR 13)

Plan
This area will be transformed into a mixed new neighbourhood with a diverse range of uses. While its character will change, it will continue to provide jobs within a range of business spaces, including standalone industrial buildings, large warehouses that are integrated into mixed use buildings, small and medium sized industrial spaces and offices. New parks, a secondary school, indoor sports hall, a possible health hub, access to shops and other facilities on Old Kent Road and a short walk to a tube station will make the area a great place to live and work.

The scale of development will have a central London character. Like much of London, there will be contrasts between big and small, old and new which can help create a rich and varied character. The buildings and landscape that will stay, such as the Canal Grove cottages, their surrounding trees and cobbled road, the Royal London Buildings and the gasometer will help shape the area’s changing identity.

Site area: 14.6 ha

There are currently 57 businesses and 1,600 jobs in this site.

Indicative capacity: around 3,680 homes, 2,820 jobs

Development must:
• Replace existing employment floorspace (B use class) and provide a range of employment spaces which is consistent with the building and land use types shown in Figure SA3.3; and
• Replace existing retail space (A class use) and activate frontages on Old Kent Road through provision of retail (A use class), business (B use class) or community uses (D use class); and
• Provide housing; and
• Provide land for a new secondary school and 6th form. The precise area required will be confirmed at AAP submission stage. An enlarged site would be subject to a relocation strategy for existing tenants and businesses
• Provide a new sports hall; and
• Explore the potential for a new health hub on Verney Way; and
• Provide a new park on the alignment of the former Surrey Canal; and
• Provide new pocket parks at the Ruby Triangle and on the KFC site; and
• Provide on-site servicing.

Phasing
Development in the site will happen incrementally over time. Developments on the Ruby Triangle, Varcoe Road, Murdoch Street and at 6-12 Verney Road are expected to start in the next five years. Development on the sites in the middle of the area, including Curry’s PC World, the adjacent warehouses and the Sandgate Street depot could take place in the early 2020s which is also when the council will need a new secondary school.
OTHER SITE ALLOCATIONS: 634-636 OLD KENT ROAD (OKR14); 684-698 OLD KENT ROAD (KWIK FIT GARAGE) (OKR15)

Plan
We want these sites to provide new shopping frontages, strengthen the Old Kent Road’s role as a high street and provide much needed housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Area</th>
<th>Indicative Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>634-636 Old Kent Road (OKR14)</td>
<td>0.1ha 42 homes and 18 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>684-698 Old Kent Road (KWIK FIT GARAGE) (OKR15)</td>
<td>0.2ha 65 homes and 14 jobs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are currently 3 businesses and 8 jobs in these sites.

Redevelopment must:
• Provide retail space on Old Kent Road frontage (A use class), replacing existing commercial space; and
• Provide housing; and
• Provide on-site servicing.

Phasing
Southwark has granted planning for a residential-led development on OKR14 to deliver 42 homes and flexible commercial space (17/AP/1646). No application has been received for OKR15 but it is expected to be redeveloped at some point in the plan period.
BUILDING TYPOLOGIES AND LAND USES

It is important that development provides a range of commercial spaces including shops, offices, small, medium and large sized industrial and warehousing units and that these can be integrated into a mixed use area.

HORIZONTAL MIX: Standalone large industrial storage and distribution units

These buildings provide an opportunity for large units of 500sqm+ and which are not part of mixed use development. Ceiling heights should be at least 6-8m and ideally 10m-13m for larger units. Units should have square proportions and provide predominantly column free space with large clear spans. There should be sufficient space for on-site servicing and storage.

Suitable uses: Storage, wholesale, distribution, depots (Class B1c, B8 and sui generis depot uses).

HORIZONTAL MIX: Medium-large storage and distribution in mixed use developments

Ceiling heights should be at least 6-8m. The number of columns should be minimised and there should be sufficient space for on-site servicing and storage. The frontages around blocks provide scope for two storeys of commercial space which can be used for offices, showrooms and studios. Residential amenity areas can be located on the rooftop.

Suitable uses: Storage, wholesale, distribution, depots (Class B1c, B2, B8 and sui generis depot uses) within the central spaces.

HORIZONTAL/VERTICAL MIX: Small industrial units

Double height spaces of at least 6-8m can be accommodated within the centre of blocks. Units would typically be 150-200m². Blocks can be wrapped within two storeys of workspace that can be used for offices, showrooms and studios.

Suitable uses: Light industrial uses (Class B1c and B8 use) and maker spaces within the central space.

VERTICAL MIX: Small office and studio

Workspace will be provided at ground and first floor. Ground floor ceiling heights should be a minimum of 4m.

Suitable uses: Artists’ studios and office space (Class B1a and/or B1c use).

VERTICAL MIX: High Street

New retail use to be provided below residential flats or office uses. Where there are large retail units at ground floor, these will be double height and served by generous footways.

Suitable uses: Larger retail units on Old Kent Road suitable for supermarkets or larger stores.
ACCESS, SERVICING AND FRONTAGES

Servicing
Servicing to commercial spaces and yards should take place off-street to ease pressure on the road network. Where possible:
• Servicing should be rationalised to serve multiple commercial units to reduce the number of trips and to remove the need for vehicles to cross the Surrey Canal Park;
• Standalone industrial units should have approximately 15m deep bay for deliveries, plus 12m clear turning space for HGVs, Roller shutter doors should be at least 4m high, and 2.4m wide;
• Industrial units should have individual ground floor direct access for pedestrians and vehicle loading/unloading;
• Undercrofts should have a minimum height of 5m to allow clearance for delivery vehicles; and
• Consideration should be given pedestrian and cycle movement in considering the design and location of loading bays and servicing access points.

Frontages
Frontages should help generate activity and vibrancy at ground floor by:
• Containing doors and windows which overlook streets and avoiding blank facades;
• Locating back-of-house functions, such as refuse stores, discretely to minimise their visual impact;
• Ensuring that any parking which is located within basements or structures where it can be wrapped with other uses;
• Making ground floor working spaces visible from the street with openings thought of as a “window into working”. Whilst solid external roller shutters should be avoided, innovative solutions to create adaptable and secure ground floor openings should be used;
• Provide active uses, including retail, business and school use in the frontages around the Surrey Canal Park; and
• Providing shopping and commercial frontages onto Old Kent Road itself.

Road network
The council will explore the potential to implement one-way movement on Sandgate Street to enable wider pavements, greening and additional loading bays.

Reduce the number of junctions on to the Old Kent Road, by closing the south end of Ruby Street and Murdock Street and transform these streets into public spaces in which people walking and cycling have priority.
STREETS, PARKS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Development can transform this large industrial area into a mixed use area with green routes and new parks which connect homes and workplaces with schools, a rejuvenated high street on Old Kent Road and surrounding residential areas.

1 OLD KENT ROAD
Existing trees retained and enhanced with new planting. Introduce new high street frontages on the north side of Old Kent Road which complement the handsome Royal London Buildings, Livesey Building and Christ Church on the south side of the road. Improving the pedestrian crossings, particularly on the alignment of the Surrey Canal Park, and look to deliver segregated cycle lane.

2 SURREY CANAL PARK
New linear park on the alignment of the former Surrey Canal which connects to Old Kent Road and Burgess Park. As well as providing valuable green space, the Surrey Canal Park will open into a series of "rooms off the park" which each have a different character and different role. The character of these rooms should be shaped by the land uses around and can include:
- The Canal Grove cottage park (see below);
- A space with a more commercial character which is fronted by small business units between Wevco Wharf and 6-12 Verney Road;
- A space which complements the potential new secondary school.

3 CANAL GROVE COTTAGES AND POCKET PARK
Improve the setting of the Canal Grove cottages by retaining and enhancing the existing mature trees, incorporating the cobbled access road into new landscaping, establishing a new pocket park and reducing building heights immediately around them.

4 SANDGATE STREET
Explore potential for a new secondary school in close proximity and connected to the new health hub and indoor sports hall. The new school can front on to the Surrey Canal Park, providing a meeting area outside the school and an attractive and safe route to the sports facilities in Burgess Park.

5 DOCTOR'S SURGERY
One of several sites which could provide a new health hub.

6 RUBY TRIANGLE
Open up routes through the Ruby Triangle site, create new pocket park, a square at the entrance to the potential new secondary school and a 4 court sports hall for use by the school during school hours and the wider community at other times.

7 GASHOLDER
Listed gasholder to be retained within a park. Retain and improve views towards the gasholder from Asylum Road, Commercial Way and Murdock Street. Find a new and secure location for the statue of George Livesey which is currently located in the rear garden of the Livesey Building, to bring it back into public view.

8 ST JAMES’S ROAD TO DEVON STREET
Connect new and existing streets to create a route for people walking and cycling between Devon Street and St James’s Road.

9 VERNEY ROAD TO OLD KENT ROAD
Work with National Grid and landowners to open route for pedestrians and cyclists between Verney Road and the Old Kent Road.

10 RUBY STREET AND MURDOCK STREET
Reduce the number of junctions on Old Kent Road and transform these streets into public spaces in which people walking and cycling have priority. Enhance the mature trees at the rear of the Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant and set within a small pocket park. Explore the potential for one-way traffic movement on Sandgate Street to enable wider pavements and additional loading bays.

11 VERNEY ROAD / ROTHERHITHE NEW ROAD
Make use of wide pavements and redevelopments to make the route towards Bramcole Park and liderton Road greener and safer.

12 DEVON STREET
New pocket park.
BUILDING HEIGHTS

In line with the 'Stations and Crossings' strategy, the height and scale of development in this area should be greatest at the 'crossing' where Rotherhithe New Road/St James's Road meets the Old Kent Road, and should reduce towards the interface between new development and surrounding residential neighbourhoods. The key elements of the building heights strategy here are:

- The tallest ‘Tier One’ buildings should be located close to the Old Kent Road, around the point where the Surrey Canal Park crosses the road and in conjunction with the open space proposed towards the centre of the site;
- With the exception of the tallest buildings at the 'crossing', building heights on Old Kent Road frontage should generally be between 8 and 10 storeys. There is also some potential for ‘Tier Two’ and ‘Tier Three’ buildings at key junctions along this frontage;
- The setting of the listed gasholder should be enhanced by opening up views of it from Murdock Street and retaining views from Commercial Way and Asylum Road;
- Building heights immediately around the gasholder should remain lower than the listed structure itself, in order to retain its prominence in the townscape;
- Building heights should also reduce immediately adjacent to the Canal Grove cottages in order to respect their more domestic scale; and
- The stand alone industrial buildings on the edge of the SPIL should be of an appropriate scale, driven by the nature of their potential uses.

The design of tall buildings should carefully consider their impact on the skyline and their relationships with the surrounding context, particularly sensitive features like conservation areas and listed buildings.
DESIGN GUIDANCE

The design of buildings, streets and open spaces in this Sub Area will vary in response to retained features and the proposed character, building typologies and land uses.

To the north, fronting on to Verney Road, and to the east near to the gasworks and retained Strategic Protected Industrial Land, the design of buildings should be informed by the area’s working, industrious heritage and character, with architecture which:

• Is solid and robust in appearance, with rational proportions and articulation;
• Is predominantly finished in brick;
• Has expressed structural elements such as concrete lintels;
• Has punched window openings with relatively deep reveals, that reflect the nature of the uses within; and
• Avoids using lightweight materials like glass balustrades and timber cladding.

This industrious character should be reflected in the design of the eastern end of the Surrey Canal Park, with:

• More intimate spaces, inspired by the historic grain of the area, including yards and alleyways, leading off the main route and into the new urban blocks; and
• Landscape design that incorporates hard surfaces such as traditional granite sets.

The buildings within the town centre should have more variety in their architectural design, with a more 21st Century appearance. They may have a similar aesthetic to the new high quality brick buildings at Kings Cross, or Blackfriars Road.

The architecture should:

• Be predominantly finished in brick, although perhaps with a higher proportion of glazing than around Mandela Way;
• Be lighter in appearance, with more intricate detailing or sculptural forms;
• Maintain an appropriate depth and layering of facades.

The buildings that front on to Old Kent Road should reintroduce its high street character with new shop fronts that:

• Are expressed according to a rhythm and proportion informed by traditional shop fronts elsewhere along the Old Kent Road;
• Sit comfortably within the overall building framework, with vertical features continuing all the way down to the street, rather than visually separating upper and lower floors; and
• Retain successful fragments of past development, such as 639-641 Old Kent Road, and, where vacant, re-use them in an appropriate manner.

To complement the architectural character of this part of the sub area, the western end of the Surrey Canal Park should consist of well mannered, but generous green squares and garden spaces, designed to enhance the setting of the listed Canal Grove cottages and retained mature trees. The ‘hidden’ and unassuming character of the cottages should be retained. Historic surfaces that remain around the listed cottages, such as the cobbled access road on the Wevco Wharf should be retained and incorporated into new landscape proposals.

The open space at the centre of the Ruby Triangle should combine the character of a London Square with a 21st Century aesthetic, created in part by a well designed relationship with a new indoor sports hall. The buildings around it should blend a traditional industrious aesthetic, with the lighter more sculptural expression of the buildings fronting on to the Old Kent Road.