

Proposed Bell Green Neighbourhood Area and Forum designation consultation statement

July 2022

1 Introduction

- 1.1.** Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the government through the Localism Act 2011 and is designed to enable local communities to draft planning policies at a neighbourhood level that are intended to become part of the local planning framework for the area.
- 1.2.** A neighbourhood plan will set planning policies concerning non-strategic development and can identify site allocations within the designated area. Neighbourhood plans can also provide a wide range of detailed policies or set out a single policy that relates to a specific issue.
- 1.3.** The first stage of the neighbourhood planning process is to propose a neighbourhood area and have this designated by the local council. The neighbourhood area is normally proposed by the group (emerging neighbourhood forum) that are endeavouring to develop the draft planning policies.
- 1.4.** Once the area and forum applications have been submitted, the council will review that applications and make sure that they meet the requirements set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (General) 2012. If successful the council will then hold a public consultation on both applications for a minimum of 6 weeks
- 1.5.** Once the consultation has been completed the council or lead council if the applications concern more than one borough will prepare a consultation statement that will be used in the decision making process. If successful the forum designation will last a maximum of 5 years. If the forum decides to remain as the designated forum for the area, they will need to undergo the application process again. A neighbourhood area designation does not have a maximum timeline and if an area does not have an affiliated forum another forum is free to submit an application. The new or existing forum may also apply to change the boundary of the designated area through a separate application process.

2 Proposed Bell Green Neighbourhood Area and Forum applications

- 2.1.** On the 7 April 2022 the proposed Bell Green Neighbourhood Forum submitted a combined application to the London Borough of Lewisham (LBL) to propose the designation of a Neighbourhood Area and Forum. The application was assessed by council officers and judged to be in keeping with Regulation 9 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2.** The proposed Bell Green Neighbourhood Area incorporates parts of the Bellingham, Perry Vale, Sydenham and Rushey Green Wards. The proposed Bell Green Neighbourhood Forum wishes to become responsible for all neighbourhood planning matters within the boundary of this area.

2.3. The consultation period for the proposed Bell Green Forum designation took place over a 6 week period from 26 May 2022 to 7 July 2022.

2.4. This document provides a summary of the representations made during the consultation period and takes account any relevant planning matter that was received through representations that were received by LBL during the consultation

2.5. The outcome of the combined application for the proposed Bell Green Neighbourhood Area and Forum is subject to approval from LBL outlined in the Council's constitution.

2.6. All representations are provided in full with personal details removed in appendix A and formatted as follows:

- Table 1 – Citizen Space submissions for the Neighbourhood Area
- Table 2 – citizen Space submissions for the Neighbourhood Forum
- Table 3 – Citizen Space submissions general Further Comments on the application
- Table 4 – Written Representations submitted to the planning policy inbox

3 Consultation Activities undertaken by the council

3.1. The consultation activities were carried out in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and the Councils Statement of Community Involvement:

- Consultation questionnaire on Lewisham Councils Citizen Space
- E-mail sent informing statutory consultees
- E-mail sent informing residents of the designated area supported by the ward assembly data base
- Public notice published in the Newshopper
- Promotion of consultation through the Council's Twitter, Facebook and Nextdoor accounts
- Copy of application published online via Lewisham Website
- Notification sent to Local ward Councillors

4 Summary of respondents

4.1. The questionnaire was separated into two parts:

- The Area application
- The Forum application

4.2. Both application questionnaires followed the same format asking if the respondent supported or objected to the designation of the Area/Forum and if the respondent had any comments to support their decision. The full schedule of consultation representations can be found in tables 1 – 4 (Appendix A).

4.3. The consultation received a total of 77 respondents which included a mix of residents, ward Cllr's, business owners, community groups and statutory consultees. 69 of the respondents

submitted their representation through a citizen space survey and 8 through a written representation directly to the planning policy inbox.

4.4. Of the 69 registered respondents to the citizen space survey:

- 64 provided a response when asked if they supported or objected to the designation of the Neighbourhood Area, with 5 not answering
- 66 provided a response when asked if they supported or objected to designation of the Neighbourhood Forum, with 3 not answering

4.5. Of the 8 submissions received as written responses received directly to the planning policy inbox:

- 6 were statutory bodies
- 1 combined response from the 3 Rushey Green Cllrs
- 1 resident response

5 Summary of responses from Citizen Space Survey – Neighbourhood Area Application

5.1. Of the 69 responses received through the citizen space survey regarding whether or not the respondent would support the designation of a Neighbourhood Area:

- 59 supported the designation
- 5 objected to the designation
- 5 did not answer

5.2. Of the 69 respondents to the Neighbourhood Area application, 36 submitted further comments. Of those comments, 28 were submitted by supporters, 5 were submitted by objectors, 3 by respondents who did not answer the support/object question.

5.3. The majority of comments supporting the designation of the Neighbourhood Area discussed the following main themes:

- The need for more community involvement in planning decisions;
- The need for more investment in the area; and
- Feelings from respondents that the area has been overlooked.

5.4. There were 15 comments submitted in support of the designation of the Neighbourhood Area discussing the need for more community involvement when it came to planning for the area with 9 comments highlighting feelings that the area was overlooked and was in need of investment. There were 3 comments that supported the designation noting that the area would benefit from a cohesive approach to planning issues.

5.5. All 5 comments submitted by objectors noted that they felt members of the proposed forum did not fully represent the area.

6 Summary of responses from Citizen Space Survey – Neighbourhood Forum Application

6.1. Of the 69 responses received through the citizen space survey regarding whether or not the respondent would support the designation of a Neighbourhood Forum:

- 60 supported the designation
- 6 objected to the designation
- 3 did not answer

6.2. Of the 69 respondents to the Neighbourhood Forum application, 29 submitted further comments. Of those comments 20 were submitted by supporters, 5 by objectors and 3 by respondents who did not answer the support/object question.

6.3. The majority of comments supporting the designation of the Neighbourhood Forum discussed the following main themes:

- Community influence in Planning
- Improving community cohesion
- The need for improvement in the area
- Representation of the group

6.4. There were 13 comments submitted in support of the designation of the Neighbourhood Forum discussing the importance of there being more community influence within planning, 5 comments stating the forum would improve community cohesion and that they support the aims of the forum and 3 comments discussed the need for improving the area.

6.5. Of the 6 objectors to the designation of the forum, 5 provided comments noting that they felt the proposed forum members did not fully represent the proposed area or felt the proposed forum was not inclusive.

7 Summary of Responses Written Representations

7.1. The Council received 8 written responses to the consultation. Responses were received from:

- 6 Statutory bodies
 - National Highways
 - Natural England
 - Port of London Authority
 - Transport for London
 - The Coal Authority
 - Sport England
- 1 combined response from the 3 Rushey Green councillors
- 1 response from a local resident

7.2. Of the 8 written responses:

- 1 response (Rushey Green Councillors) Objected
- 1 response (resident) Supported
- 6 (statutory bodies) neither supported or objected

- 7.3. For the purposes of this consultation the combined response from the 3 Rushey Green Councillors will be treated as 3 separate objections to the designation.
- 7.4. The response in support of designating the Neighbourhood Area and Forum discussed the importance of meaningful consultation and keeping local residents informed with planning decisions and noted that the creation of a forum would be a good mechanism to fulfil this obligation.
- 7.5. The objection, co-signed by the 3 Rushey Green Councillors noted in their response that they felt the size of the area was too large and the communities that existed within the proposed area should not be treated as a homogenous group when it comes to planning issues as their needs are different. The response however does not disagree with the principle of the designation of a Neighbourhood area and Forum for Bell Green but states it would like to see the proposed area reduced to not include Rushey Green

8 Responses from Councillors

8.1. In total there were 6 responses from Lewisham Councillors with 2 supporting the designation of the Neighbourhood Area and Forum and 4 objecting to it. 3 responses were received through the Citizen Space survey and 1 combined response co-signed by 3 Rushey Green Councillors as a written submission.

8.2. In support of the designation were:

- Cllr Curran
- Cllr Lavery

8.3. Objection to the designation were:

- Cllr Krupski
- Cllr Muldoon
- Cllr Walsh
- Cllr Paschoud.

8.4. The Councillors supporting the designation noted that the proposed forum had a positive vision for the area.

8.5. The reasons the councillors objected to the designation is highlighted in 7.5 of this report. Additionally 1 further Councillor objected by submitting a submission through the Citizen Space survey echoing these themes.

9 Overview/Conclusions

9.1. The outcome of the consultation has determined that for the application concerning the proposed Neighbourhood Area designation there were:

- 60 submissions of support
- 8 submissions of Objection

- 11 submissions that neither supported or objected

9.2. The outcome of the consultation has determined that for the application concerning the proposed Neighbourhood Forum designation there were:

- 61 submissions of support
- 9 submissions of objection
- 9 submissions that neither supported or objected

9.3. A majority of respondents to the consultation showed support for both the designation of the Neighbourhood Area and Forum, providing reasons such as wanting to see improvements made to the area, improving community cohesion in the area and wanting more involvement from the community in the planning process.

9.4. The majority of objectors provided additional comments which noted concerns regarding how representative of the wider community the proposed forum are as well as the concerns regarding the size of the proposed area.

