

The Beehive Public House – Asset of Community Value Application: Additional Information from the Walworth Society – 31st July 2015

SECTION 1

Please provide reason for ticking the box(es) above and your detailed reasons why the authority should conclude this is land of community value. Building or other land whose main (i.e. non ancillary) use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community Or has recently done so. And it is realistic to think it can do so in the future.

The Beehive PH is extremely important to the life and soul of West Walworth and the wider Walworth area in general. It has a significant history and valuable current and potential future usage.

Maps of the location of the Beehive and how the surrounding area have changed are shown in the attached pdf addendum - BeehivePH-PubLoss&Maps-31Jul15

The Beehive - History

- The land around the around the current pub was originally market gardens. Some of Walworth's Gardens were pleasure grounds for local public use and that of visitors from the centre of the city eg Beehive Tea Gardens and Montpelier Tavern and Tea Gardens¹.
- The history of cricket owes a significant debt to the area as the Montpelier Cricket Club, one of the strongest clubs in South London in the early 19th Century used the Beehive Grounds until new building encroached to such a degree that the acquisition of these grounds left the Montpelier Club without premises. Land owned by the Duchy of Cornwall at Kennington Oval was then found for the purposes of building a new cricket ground² and a cornerstone of English cricket was born in terms of the Oval Cricket ground and the Surrey County Cricket Club.
- The first landlord of the pub is thought to be John Dockree in the early 1850s³.
- The pub remained intact through the almost total redevelopment of the area after the Second World War and the creation of the Penrose Estate from the remnants of Carter Street.
- The pub sits within the Sutherland Square Conservation Area.
- A fuller history of the Beehive is included as an pdf addendum with this and is entitled - BeehiveHistory-31Jul15.pdf

Walworth – Loss of Public Houses

- Whereas there were at one time 26 pubs in Newington ward (west of the Walworth Road and not including the Walworth Rd), The Beehive, The Canterbury Arms (Maddock Way) and the Robert Peel (Langdale Close) are the only pubs which are currently open.
- A fuller outline of the loss of pubs is shown in the addeddum pdf - BeehivePH-PubLoss&Maps-31Jul15

¹ The Story of Walworth, 1993 ed

² Walworth Society Historic Area Assessment

³ <http://pubshistory.com/LondonPubs/Newington/Beehive.shtml>

The Beehive – Contemporary Uses

- The Beehive is a focus for community life in West Walworth. People feel safe there and are happy to go there alone...

“It's one of the few pubs I would be happy to visit alone.” X Fielding St SE17

“It's one of the only places around here to drink in where I feel safe. I can pop in and know that there are people around who will make sure that I don't get pestered. There's no other pub around here that I would do into.”

...and with friends and family. Key is the fact that the Beehive is a place where people can come together and meet in an area that more generally lacks places to socialise.

“I lived around the corner from this pub, and it was my first port of call for easy dinners and a great selection of wine. My husband loved the whisky collection. If we had surprise guests this is where we'd go to eat. I loved that it was a busy, successful pub that maintained a friendly and welcoming face to everyone who went there. What I always liked most about the Beehive though, was that I would get to meet my neighbours and the people who lived in the community around me there. I would not have been able to make the links to my community in the way that I did without the Beehive.” X Fielding St SE17

“Our family - the two of us, son and daughter and their respective families - use the Beehive regularly for family occasions. X Sutherland Square SE17

- It is a place that is sufficiently friendly and relaxed that people can form friendships with other people who go there.

“We arrange to meet up at the Beehive with local friends at least once a month, we live in the same area but didn't really get to know each other until we started to bump into each other in the pub. There's a group of us who meet up just as a form of socialising. There aren't any other pubs locally to go to.”

- Of value to the area is the use of the Beehive for more formal local events such as wakes. While the pub serves the local area and is welcoming it also acts as a venue for events that are able to occur in the local area and with an appropriately West Walworth feel.

“We moved to Walworth nearly 3 years ago, not knowing anyone or any local businesses. I didn't want to move here, we had been living in Borough for a couple of years and I found the area most agreeable with the market and lovely local pubs and restaurants but our budget meant we had to move slightly out of zone 1. After a short while, we discovered the Beehive, not too far from our flat. Despite not being the closest 'local' (this for us would be the Tankard but we will leave that there), we visited a few times and have since made it our local. We go there on good days for sun, on lazy days for dinner and on any other days for a multitude of reasons, to meet up after work and digest a bad day without taking it home, to escape when family are staying, to seek peace after a day out or returning from a busy break. We have got to know some of the faces there and they us, especially now we have a young pup, we take her to sit in the garden bit while we have a beer and she potters about.

So it's a part of our lives in Walworth now and it's helped me to feel like a local and grow to love the area as I now do. Without it we would not have a nice place to meet up and spend valuable time in; London needs places where local people can meet and catch up, we don't want big chains all over the place, we want real pubs with their true character intact. When you look at the Beehive, it's amazing really how it stands so proud with just one house attached still after what I assume to be bomb damage disposing of the rest.

I know this place is important to the community, they have more than their share of wakes held there which means it's dear to a lot of people. It's got a good soul has the Bee so I hope it remains for many more years to come." X West Walworth SE17

- Also valuable is the role that the pub plays for local organisations. Again in an area where venues are few on the ground, the Beehive offers an appropriate semi-formal character which is appropriate for organisations to make use of for meetings, other gatherings and social events associated with their businesses.

"When we first moved to Walworth it was not our nearest pub but it was a popular place to go after meetings of one sort or another. Sometimes the meeting itself would take place in the pub, or outside it. This is now common practice for several local organisations including the Manor Penton residents and also the Fielding Street residents 7/7 (7.00pm on the 7th of each month).

Now following several pub closures it is our nearest pub and a more or less automatic destination when two or three friends or family need to gather together. Our two month old grandson will be having his first visit to the pub garden this weekend. This is somewhat older than his aunt with whom we stopped for a drink at the Beehive on our way home from the hospital two days after she was born in July 1989." X Penton Place SE17

"I have been going to the Beehive for over 30 years and over that time I have made a number of close friends who I see regularly there. We have always used the Beehive because its small, friendly and relatively quiet; it is now the only local pub where I can meet friends. I am also involved in a number of local community groups which meet near to the Beehive including the X which socialises there after meetings. Without the Beehive I'm not sure that there would be anywhere else for us to go. All the other pubs we used to use are long closed." X – Pullens Estate Resident SE17

In addition it is a place where community events such as quizzes are held.

"The X Group are going to have a quiz there too to raise money towards next year's fete."

For many years local residents have held an informal get together (Stammtisch) on the third Thursday of the month in the Beehive.

- The Beehive plays a valuable social role as a location that can help reduce social isolation for local people.

“The Beehive was X’s front room. The corner of the bar became his ‘home from home’ as he met and talked to all his friends. X died a few months ago, and everyone who knew him knew what that comment given by his brother in his funeral address meant.

Newington and the area around the Beehive is a tight little community, some drinkers have been born and grown up in the area, they can count on bumping in to each other at the pub. Others are more recent newcomers, some living on the local estates or in the streets and squares around the area. To them it’s the place where they have been able to get over loneliness or become part of the community by getting to know the other people who drink or eat there.”

“I can always find someone I know there. I often call in on the way home, I know that if I go in there is at least one or two people whom I can talk to. It’s a very friendly place.”

A couple who live in Fielding Street said that to them having the pub made this area feel like a village. ‘We have lived in other parts of London, sometimes for several years and still despite going to local pubs didn’t get to know anyone. The Beehive is perched in the right place. It’s just around the corner from everyone, and you know that your neighbours will be going there so you can find someone. It’s like having a local pub in a village, everyone knows everyone.”

- The Beehive compares well to the other pubs in Walworth!

“It’s the only pub around here. It is my local and it’s where I feel at home. I often arrange to meet friends from other places around here and they all know where to come to. It’s clean, bright and comfortable. Other pubs in Walworth Road are large and miserable.”

- People like the fact that it combines an historic setting with a pleasant atmosphere that helps span intergenerational differences. Rather than being a pub for a single age group, it has the ability to bring all ages together happily.

“It’s truly a lovely building providing a friendly place in the community for young and old alike, especially the lovely Sunday roasts when the place is chock-a-block full with families.” X Boundary Lane SE17

- This sense of coming together is also associated with its location at the crossroads of a number of locations, destinations and routes across West Walworth. Again its success and value is linked to its capacity to be a central location that people are naturally drawn to to meet and socialise.

“The Beehive is a quintessential local pub. Not embedded in an individual street, it lies at the junction and apex of several streets, squares and cul de sacs. Opposite a school, close to Pasley Park, part of the route to or from the tube and the Walworth Road, The Beehive is a social hub of the area where I live and at the heart of multiple journeys to or from somewhere on foot for local people. A handsome Victorian building with a welcoming aspect, there are always plenty of people both inside and out, quietly enjoying each other’s company. Inside it is spacious and mellow, a relaxing characterful inviting room. It has fulfilled its role as a social hub in the area for a very long time. More than 150 years old, it used to serve those from the pleasure gardens and the market gardens, then

as now it was positioned in such a way as to be a natural meeting point for a wide range of people on their various routes in and around the area. It is an essential part of the social landscape of Walworth and as such it should be protected." X Sutherland Square SE17

- This theme further extends to making connections across the wider Walworth area so that people and groups that are normally separated by the Walworth Road can come together at the Beehive. The Walworth Society has seen in much of its work that often people do not cross the Walworth Road and have only a vague idea of the places on the "other side".

"I live up near Burgess Park and often arrange to meet my boyfriend in the pub on the way home, although it's further away than other pubs on our side of Walworth Road it feels like our local. We have got to know some of the other people who live near it. I wish we had a pub like this near us." AML, Albany Road.

"We have monthly meetings near Faraday Gardens and always pop across over to the Beehive afterwards to carry on with our talk. It's the most convivial place around."

- Further evidence (if some of it is a little old now) of the appeal of the Beehive comes from the large number of reviews of the pub from people who have visited it from all across London. On the Beer in the Evening website, there are a total of 30 reviews⁴ about the Beehive with a strong emphasis on people feeling it is a hidden gem and well worth travelling to to visit. Again West Walworth is not laden with destination and there is a real value in having the Beehive as a place that can draw people in from across South London. Some of the quotes include:

"Excellent little local pub in a primarily residential area sandwiched between Walworth Road and Kennington Park Road. Cosy both inside and out in the small beer garden."

"Really excellent pub in slightly unlikely location. The atmosphere is great - a real pub, no musak or fruit machines, rarely too crowded (except for the extremely popular Sunday lunches) but usually enough people to make it feel comfortable. Staff are friendly, the beer (Pride) is well kept, and the wines are ok too."

"This is a lovely bistro-type pub with a jolly atmosphere, particularly at the weekends. Great on a fine evening when you can eat outside."

"Something between a pub and a bar. Some of the locals are friendlier than the staff! Not too far from Kennington tube station. Real ale here, quality was just ok when I visited last year. Probably the "best" pub in the SE17 area - visit and make your own minds up."

⁴ <http://www.beerintheevening.com/pubs/s/34/3425/Beehive/Walworth>

SECTION 2

What area of social interests does the Asset further? Give reasons why you believe the principal (ie main) use of the asset furthers, or has recently furthered, social wellbeing or social interests (ie cultural, sporting or **recreational**) **and we would say social**.

- The focus of the usage of the Beehive is recreational and social. In an area with a shortage of public houses and recreational opportunities in general, the Beehive is the place where people go to meet and relax and generally socialise.
- The presence of both a pleasant and characterful interior along with a spacious seating area outside (both covered and in the open) offer a variety of settings for people to drink inside and outside and in particular (as has been noted) for families to be able to meet and dine outside in summer and at weekends in particular. There is absolutely no where else that offers these amenities in the Walworth area.
- The need for these recreational and social uses will only increase in our area. The table below shows how the residential population of Newington Ward has grown in the past three decades.

Year	Population
1981	9,216
1991	9,879
2001	13,500
2006	13,228
2011	14,150
2013	14,893
2014	15,215
2015	15,500

- Population growth is likely to be significant in the next few years with residential development planned all across Newington with development sites including the Manor Place Depot (c300 units), Manor Place Terrace (60 units), the Braganza St workshops, the Andy Knight studios on Occupation Road along with a host of other sites along the railway line which were identified in the Elephant & Castle SPD for residential development. It is essential that opportunities exist for people to socialise and relax and the Beehive is sufficiently attractive and close to all to be a perfect location.

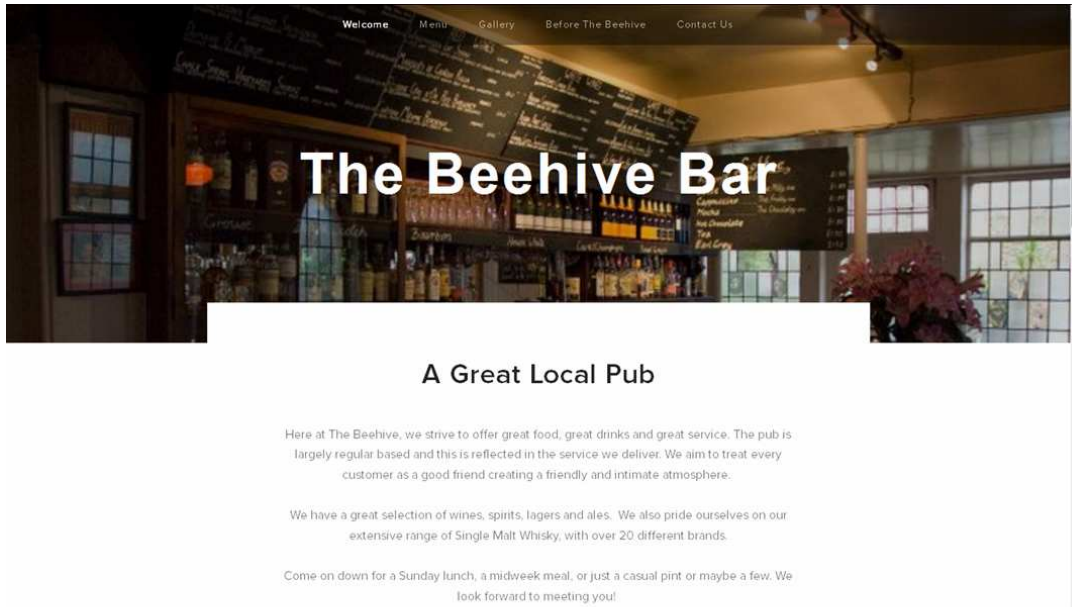
Accompanying Images



Beehive PH



Detail of Historic Sign



Screengrab of the Beehive website (www.thebeehivebar.co.uk)