HIGH STREETS & TOWN CENTRES

ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES

A
BUILT
ENVIRONMENT

FOR
ALL
LONDONERS

CONTENTS

MAYOR'S FOREWORD

London's high streets and town centres have shaped the fabric of our great city. They are a focal point for our culture, communities and everyday economies. They support the most sustainable models of living and working, including active travel and shorter commutes. And they are where new ideas, new ways of living, new businesses and new experiences are made.

Our high streets and town centres face many challenges, but our research shows how much Londoners value them as places to meet, socialise, access services, shop, work and live. These vital public places boost wellbeing and benefit many different communities, making them some of London's most important spaces.

When we read the national headlines about the decline of our high streets, the stories are always about retail. But this report – led by experts and supported by my Mayor's Design Advocates – shows that high streets are so much more than just parades of shops. And while changes in the retail economy are important, this is far from the only issue they face.

Our high streets and town centres are affected by both global trends and national issues like austerity. Alongside the concerns surrounding big retail, the wider economy is evolving rapidly. Jobs and the nature of work itself are in flux due to advances in artificial intelligence and automation. Workplaces are changing, with more people working flexibly and remotely. Digital technology, big data and new ways of delivering goods and services are all changing the role of the high street. The urgent need for new housing is leading to the restructure of many town centres. And increasing congestion, air pollution and the climate emergency mean we need new, more sustainable models of living, working and commuting.

In response to these challenges, my new London Plan calls for high streets and town centres to adapt and diversify. This guidance will help to support the implementation of ambitious, innovative and fresh strategies so our high streets and town centres not only adapt and survive but thrive.

As the case studies in this report show, when it comes to our high streets, London's communities, businesses and local authorities have shown extraordinary levels of enterprise, motivation and commitment to delivering change. With this leadership in place, and given the right support, I believe London's high streets are in a great position to reinvent themselves, becoming even better places to visit, to live and to do business.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

INTRODUCTION

This guidance follows our earlier review of London's high streets as part of the Mayor's Good Growth by Design programme. It is ambitious in scope and goes beyond everyday operational concerns – important as those are. Our aim is to promote and support a framework so our high streets can adapt and diversify.

We have taken a broad and inclusive look at high streets. These complex and dynamic mixed-use urban corridors ensure easy pedestrian access to everyday goods and services, places of work and leisure. They are typically characterised by a variety of premises that accommodate non-residential uses to support the wider neighbourhood. They are linked to and sometimes synonymous with town centres. Yet they can stretch way beyond and sit outside of designated town centre locations. They play an important role in civic and community life and are vital for London's economic success. Retail is but one part of this.

In this guidance we advocate a 'mission-orientated' approach to the development of 'adaptive' strategies for high street renewal. Such strategies are comprised of the actions to be taken by purposefully formed partnerships in response to specific place-based environmental, social or economic challenges. Adaptive strategy formulation and implementation is an iterative, interactive process, characterised by adaptable planning, early adoption, evolutionary development, continuous improvement and flexible responses.

Strategies of this kind focus on what is needed for a given high street and its community – rather than a pre-chosen answer. And then test their application. This may lead to a new or revised asset or a tech-based solution. It could just as well lead to a new community-led governance arrangement, a design code or a novel property management model. In this way, we can use scarce investment in the best way. We can fulfil a stated mission.

In this document we highlight a series of strategies and approaches led by London boroughs. All are considering the problems high streets face, coming up with hypotheses, setting goals, forming the

necessary partnerships and together prototyping solutions. For some it's early days. Others have already made huge improvements to the high street environment and related services – ensuring these are focused on users' needs. This document showcases this activity and extrapolates a series of related proposals. By so doing, it aims to explore a range of possible solutions, share best practice and scale-up what works across London.

We've developed principles and practices based on what we've learnt from London's high streets and the partnerships led by London's boroughs. Local communities and practitioners are invited to use and test these in the development of their own 'adaptive strategies' and to achieve major and long-lasting positive change.

This guidance is in the spirit of City Hall's sponsorship of new institutions and processes where boroughs and practitioners can quickly learn from each other. Examples include the London Office of Technology & Innovation and the Social Integration Design Lab. Such initiatives demonstrate a will to work in partnership so that the risks and rewards of innovation are shared. We will continue to grow these joint resources and mission-driven ways of working. This will ensure we take the chance to boost public value and make high streets genuinely inclusive, participative, accessible, equitable, innovative and prosperous places.

This is an invitation to consider the types of high streets we want – in a London open to all. We must consider how to adapt policies and actions to deliver this in the most efficient way.

About this guidance

This guidance has been prepared for all involved in the development of better and more resilient high streets. It supports local partnerships to prepare adaptive strategies to deliver this goal.

Investing in high streets – (p15)
The guidance starts by asserting the public value of London's high streets and sets out why we should continue to intervene and invest in them. It provides the strategic arguments to underpin efforts by local partnerships to gain support for their high street improvement projects. In doing so, it enables them to innovate and to generate solutions to the challenges of today.

Adapting to the challenges – (p29)
The guidance then explores and collates the challenges high streets face in general. The most prominent of these include the climate emergency, the impact of digital technology innovations on consumer behaviour and work patterns, and the need to accommodate housing by restructuring town centres. It outlines potential responses and provides support to local groups wishing to build resilience at a time of great change.

Case studies: Learning from London's high streets – (p79)
The guidance then examines 10 case studies of high street innovation and renewal led by London boroughs or Business Improvement Districts. Taken together, these highlight the range of issues faced across London, and showcase the related leadership, goal setting, coordination, experimentation and inclusive practice needed to address them.

The consultant team behind this guidance worked with the boroughs to develop a series of 'what if' scenarios based on their existing proposals to draw out lessons for others and show the way ahead.

Each tackles a different set of challenges. At Tottenham High Road, for example, the council is using Social Value Leases to deliver inclusive regeneration and promote social integration (p151). The Walthamstow case study shows how the high street can be adapted

to support civic and cultural uses (p193). In South Norwood, the strategy is to embed community participation into regeneration by enabling a community group to take over the role of managing property on the high street (p203).

These case studies are supplemented with inspiring examples of related projects from across the UK and beyond. These collectively provide useful insights and ways forward for those embarking on any aspect of high street regeneration.

Developing adaptive strategies – (p217)

The report concludes with a set of principles and practices. These have been informed by the investment case, the examination of challenges and the study of boroughs' existing and extrapolated activity. Each can be used to support experimentation and innovation as part of realisable proposals and strategy making.

Principles include the need to create long-term participatory structures, (p224), to design and plan for intense, mixed uses (p230), and to be willing to experiment and prototype (p234). Each of the principles is explored in detail alongside useful action plans and references.

Essays

The narrative of the document is supported by 'thought-starter' contributions from economist Mariana Mazzucato, Professor in the Economics of Innovation & Public Value at the Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose at University College London (p16), and from Mayor's Design Advocates Dan Hill (p30) and Wayne Hemingway (p74). Together, these stimulating insights help frame the discussion as well as advocating specific approaches.

Appendices – published online

The guidance is supported by the following appendices:
1. Guidance on evaluation and monitoring
2. Relevant data sources
3. Relevant literature

This guidance suite is intended for all local authorities, agencies, practitioners and community representatives involved in developing proposals for high street renewal. It is designed to generate ideas, actions and possibilities to help London's high streets and town centres adapt to meet the challenges, not just of today, but of the future too.

2
Adapting to the challenges

1
Investing in high streets

3
Learning from London's high streets

Appendix 1
Evaluation and monitoring

4
Developing adaptive strategies

1.
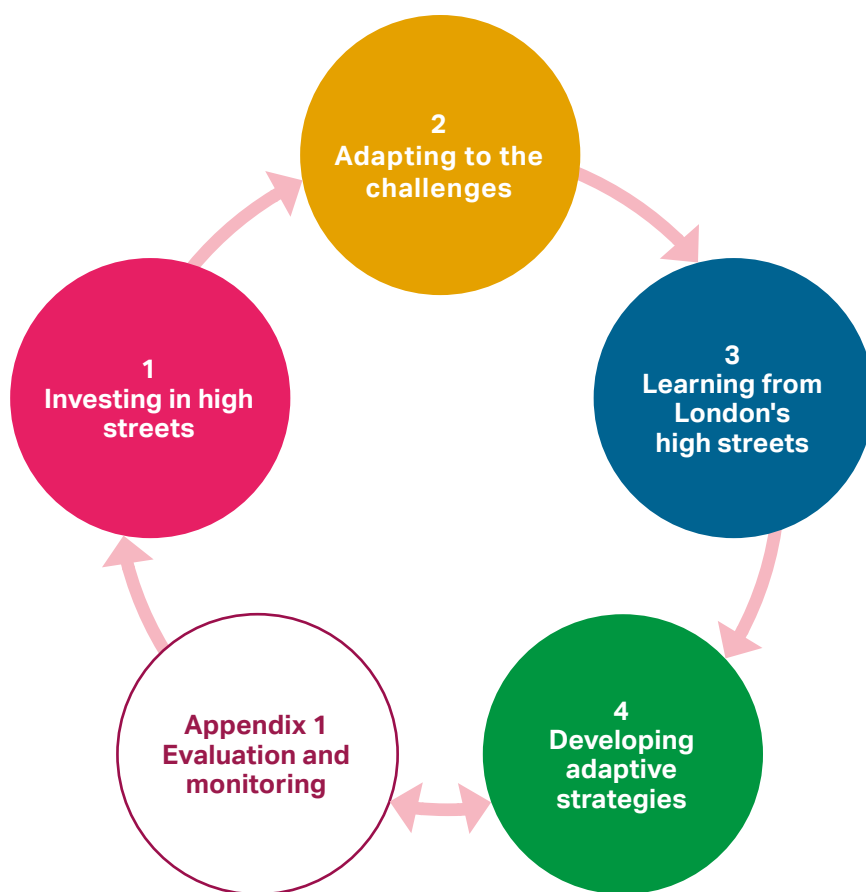
INVESTING IN

HIGH STREETS

PUBLIC VALUE AND THE HIGH STREET

**A thought-starter from the UCL Institute for
Innovation and Public Purpose
by Professor Mariana Mazzucato**

What is public value and why does it matter?

High streets are places where public and private investments meet citizens. Who are the streets for? How are the benefits distributed? Is the wealth created reinvested back into the streets or is it siphoned off? These are all key questions to develop a new notion of the public good behind the high street.

And yet public good needs to be contested, not just as something that fulfils objectives unfulfilled by private good. In the words of artist Olafur Eliasson[1], public space cannot just be a 'doormat' for private space. Furthermore, the people who nurture public space must be themselves nurtured. To reinvent the public good, it is useful to go to first principles around 'public value' – as value created collectively for a public purpose.

This requires an understanding of how public institutions can engage citizens in defining purpose (participatory structures), nurture organisational capabilities and capacity to shape new opportunities (organisational competencies); dynamically assess the value created (dynamic evaluation); and ensure that societal value is distributed equitably (good growth)[2].

How can we create public value on the high street?

The value of the high street, in London and across the UK, should not be understood through the number of shopfronts or other organisations occupying the physical space. Instead, it needs to be calculated by considering how choices are made about occupancy, inter-dependency and cooperation between different stakeholders.

1   Godfrey, M., Olafur Eliasson: In Real Life. Tate Publishing, 2019
2   Mazzucato, M. and Kattel, K. Getting serious about value. Working Paper Series.
    UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, 2019

How do these organisations interact, and how can they relate to one another in a way that develops value in the public realm, for all? This is an economic and practical, rather than a conceptual question. Conditions of occupancy can be put in place for high street stakeholders to design the transformation of any given high street, in recognition of their role in the economy. To create public value, we need capitalism to be purpose-driven, and for public purpose to be at the heart of how governments, companies and citizens interact.

The role of mission-oriented policies and approaches – those that are challenge-driven, outcomes-focused, and aimed at solving certain problems, rather than investing in specific sectors – can be vital for our high streets. Mission-oriented innovation activates these cross-sectoral and cross-actor collaborations and creates unexpected spill-over effects. Taking on missions could make for a high street which has public value creation at its heart, and specific missions – such as carbon reduction aims, or inclusive growth aims – agreed by local people as its adaptive strategy.

Understanding how to involve citizens both in the formation of missions and in public value planning and implementation, is key to making both citizens, and their high streets, more resilient and radical. We must find the processes, tools and approach to co-designing to harness the power of public, private, and citizen actors towards missions which create and sustain public value. Our high streets provide a unique geographic and cultural platform to enable this.

INVESTING IN HIGH STREETS

Mariana Mazzucato's short essay advocates a broader evaluation of high streets – one that goes beyond the traditional focus on retail and commerce, to consider and promote the delivery of wide-ranging public value and greater local impact.

The diversity and breadth of activity on London's high streets has over time forged a complex economic and social ecosystem comprised of many participants and assets. While this system is vulnerable to multiple challenges, it has shown a capacity to be a strong platform for problem solving and renewal.

A broad case for intervention exists based upon the breadth of outcomes offered up by this ecosystem. It has the potential to address inequality and – uniquely in London – there is significant opportunity afforded by high and often frustrated levels of demand for redevelopment. An understanding of this wider value proposition can enable the development of strategies for renewal to leverage the true value of investment.

THE VALUE IN LONDON'S HIGH STREETS

There are over 600 high streets in London.[1] Together these make up 20 per cent of all the high streets in the UK.[2] Each one serves a unique community and hinterland, some are highly successful, while others are struggling. The GLA's definition recognises the high street as a supportive urban ecosystem. It includes not just the premises fronting the street, but also all land use within 200m of the high street, several blocks back and all the floors above. Jobs, businesses, other non-residential uses and the homes we live in are all part of our understanding of the high streets as places. High streets typically have more retail at ground floor facing the street, but they support a huge range of uses above and behind, and an interdependent mix of different activities and characteristics. Taken together, these have a multiplier effect in creating value of many types.

1. High Streets for All. GLA, 2017 – High street definition based on the method developed by UCL/M. Carmona in 2013 and further analysed and refined by the GLA Regeneration team
2   High Streets in Great Britain. Office for National Statistics (ONS) (original source: Ordinance Survey), 2019. Definition based on clusters of 15 retail addresses within 150 metres, linked to roads

HIGH STREET ECOSYSTEM

Economic Value

Commercial Value

Social Value

Environmental Value
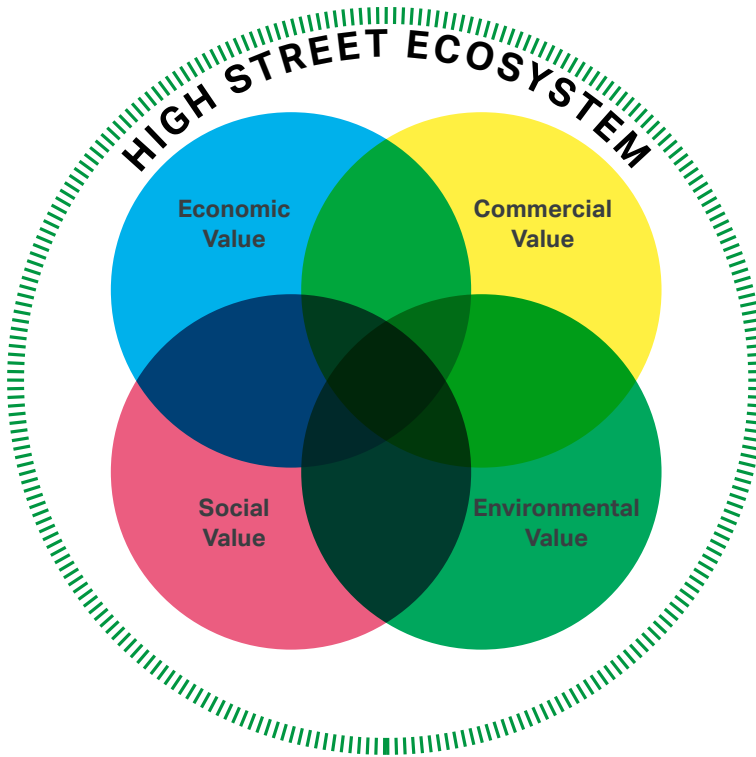
London's high streets are vital to its economy. New ONS research suggests that high streets and their immediate surrounds are home to over 200,000 businesses[3] equating to 41 per cent of all businesses in London. They also host nearly 1.5 million jobs[4] or 28 per cent of all jobs in the capital.

High streets and town centres accommodate a vast range of activities and sectors. Together, these fulfil different needs and create value in different ways. Across London, over half of all high street businesses are classified as offering 'business and professional service' activities. A further 10 per cent offer 'business support' services. Just over 40 per cent of all high street businesses are in 'higher-value' or 'knowledge-intensive businesses' – a number which is growing at about 1.5 times the rate compared with London as a whole.

3   UK Business Count. ONS, 2018
4   Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). ONS, 2017

High streets are also home to the everyday economy and provide the goods and services Londoners need for everyday life. Start-ups from across the spectrum are attracted to the well connected, affordable and low threshold enterprise workspace that high streets offer. 12 per cent of high street businesses constitute 'manufacturing, warehousing, transport and wholesale' and around 10 per cent are 'construction businesses'.[5] There are also a large number of 'public sector' activities which provide the critical social and civic functions underpinning high streets' wider value.

High streets are typically associated with their retail and leisure (for example food and drink) functions. Yet these uses currently account for just under 20 per cent of businesses in London's high streets and town centres.[6] Much media focus has been placed in recent years on the 'decline of high streets' – specifically retail.

Certain parts of London have witnessed big problems in this area, in line with the rest of the UK. However, the mixed-use ecosystem around London's high streets has proved to be relatively resilient overall. In fact, even where there may be high street shop-front vacancies, other uses above and behind the street front have the potential to compensate for these if carefully planned. Over the past five years, the number of businesses and jobs on and around high streets have increased by 45 and 21 per cent respectively.[7] This exceeds average growth rates across London's economy as a whole. In the same period, the number of high street retail businesses increased by 20 per cent, compared to the London-wide rate of 18 per cent.[8] This shows a tendency for start-ups and business incubation on London's high streets.

Whilst high streets appear to be a resilient urban typology in London, this varies widely across the city. For example, in Metropolitan centres, growth in the number of businesses and jobs is much lower than for high streets in general.[9] Some of London's larger centres are seeing a downturn in retail-related jobs and

5   UK Business Count. ONS, 2018
6   UK Business Count. ONS, 2018
7   BRES. ONS, 2017
8   UK Business Count. ONS, 2018
9   BRES. ONS, 2018

businesses, which is significant by national standards. In the three years from 2015-2017, retail employment in Kingston town centre fell by 15 per cent.[10] The latest data shows that Croydon town centre has an overall vacancy rate of 22 per cent across all use classes.[11]

Clearly high streets are about much more than retail. High Streets for All[12] recognises that London's high streets serve a wide range of Londoners in multiple and inclusive ways. They are highly social, diverse and accessible spaces. As such, they have a crucial role in supporting social, economic and environmental benefits across London's neighbourhoods. London's high streets are an effective and spatial catchment where it is possible to respond locally to far-reaching, wider societal issues. Particularly significant is the observation that high streets often cater for groups who are at risk of marginalisation or under-representation. These include the young, the elderly, jobseekers and those with young families. In fact, 51 per cent of people who visit high streets are not in work, compared with 27 per cent of Londoners overall.[12]

10 BRES. ONS, 2018
11 Local Data Company, 2019
12 High Streets for All, GLA research, 2017

CROSS-CUTTING AREAS FOR INTERVENTION

High streets feature across many different policy areas. They are complex places where intelligent investment can achieve cross-cutting goals.

●

High streets & social integration

London's high streets offer vital opportunities for Londoners to mix. The Mayor's Strategy for Social Integration sets out the three pillars of social integration – relationships, participation and equality.[13] High streets are particularly important for disabled Londoners, young people, women and older Londoners. As such, they have an important role to play in how these groups build relationships and participate locally, as well as how equality barriers are addressed.

Plans to improve and expand the collection and analysis of data on human and social aspects of London, such as wellbeing and community cohesion and social integration, will help to link social policy outcomes with investments taking place across other policy agendas. In this way, high streets are a crucial source for developing further evidence, which can be applied nationally as well as in London.

●

High streets & well-being

High streets provide an easy-to-reach reason to leave home which is good for both physical health and mental well-being. Sixty-three per cent of survey respondents for High Streets for All had walked to their high street,[14] showing a high propensity for active travel amongst high street users. However high streets have the potential also to conflict with healthier lifestyles for Londoners. Air quality mapping shows that poor air quality often spikes on high streets (other than pedestrianised ones) and only slightly improves on adjacent streets.

13   All of Us: The Mayor's Strategy for Social Integration. GLA, 2018
14   High Streets for All, GLA research, 2017

Whilst there are an increasing number of measures being put in place to improve this, it remains a critical issue. Analysis shows that local authorities with higher deprivation also have more high street fast food outlets. A growing body of evidence shows the link between exposure to fast food outlets and obesity.[15] Through the careful management of developments, design, investment and planning policy (i.e London Plan), high streets can support healthy diets and lifestyles.

●

High streets & environmental sustainability

High streets must adapt to meet challenging environmental targets. These have the potential to become leading models for sustainable living, piloting the way towards zero-carbon living and responding to a new climate. The Mayor's London Environment Strategy sets out targets to achieve this by 2050, if not before. They include London being zero carbon and having the best air quality of any city.[16]

Considerable changes are needed now to limit the worst effects of climate change. High streets and town centres will have to adapt to accommodate a circular consumer and business economy of recycling, reuse and waste management. Infrastructure will need to adapt to low-carbon public transport, and low-carbon delivery logistics. High streets are a network of places near to where most Londoners live or work. As such, they can play an important role in the low-carbon economy of reuse, lower waste and more sustainable transport. The restructuring of London's high streets presents a huge opportunity to innovate in this respect. For instance, Copenhagen has just set in motion ambitious plans to be the first carbon neutral city by 2025. This will be achieved through more efficient energy generation and use, even greater modal shift to cycling and walking, and improving building performance.[17]

15 Obesity and the Environment: regulating the growth of fast food outlets.
    Public Health England, 2014
16 London Environment Strategy. GLA, 2018
17 Co-create Copenhagen: Vision for 2025. City of Copenhagen, 2015

High streets & civic and cultural spaces

Outside the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), high streets often host a concentration of London's cultural infrastructure. This includes places of both cultural production (workshops, rehearsal spaces, creative manufacture) and consumption (cinemas, arts centres, libraries). Over 80 per cent of London's cultural production and consumption spaces are on or within 200m of a high street.[18] However, beyond this, London's high streets are themselves a celebration of different cultures. This is manifestly on display through their food offerings, religious ceremonies and overt cultural diversity. All have a role to play in social integration, health and well-being. Civic institutions on high streets benefit from high levels of accessibility and can contribute to cross-pollination of footfall between the myriad uses.

High streets are also at the heart of 24-hour London as places for work, entertainment and public transport. They have the potential for a much greater mix of uses, and improved safety and accessibility during the day and night, as championed by The London Night Time Commission's 2019 Think Night report.[19] The Mayor's Cultural Infrastructure Plan also sees "reimagined high streets" as part of the vision for the representation of culture in a changing world.[20]

18   Cultural Infrastructure Plan. GLA, 2019
19   Think Night. London Night Time Commission, 2019
20   Cultural Infrastructure Plan. GLA, 2019

Number of places
at high street level

- 1-2
- 2-4
- 4-6
- 6-8
- 8+
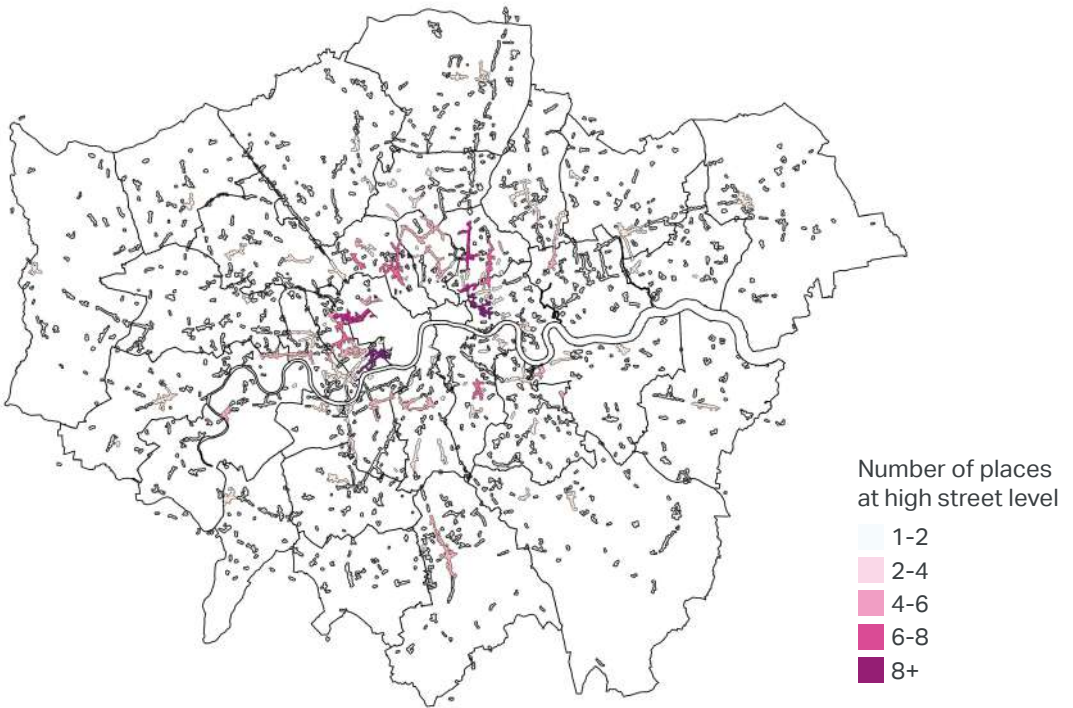
High streets & data

Smarter London Together, the Mayor's roadmap to making London "the smartest city in the world" describes how "the smart city of the future involves real-time metrics, data analysis and services focused on the needs of the citizen." It adds, "how we treat data is an infrastructure issue for the city, as important as our road, railway and energy networks".[21] Digital advances have created challenges for high streets, such as the increasing share of online retail, but they offer opportunities to use technology to harness a greater understanding of high street use to help ensure that they are responsive, citizen-driven assets. London has the intellectual capital to pioneer such initiatives.

21   Smarter London Together. GLA, 2018

A CASE FOR INVESTMENT

London's strong business base and enterprising culture will continue to find new ways to inhabit London's high streets. However, intervention and strategic coordination is needed so high streets can adapt to the challenges ahead. Only by diversifying can they deliver good growth – growth that is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable – to benefit all Londoners.

The investment case for high streets has traditionally focused on the delivery of economic and commercial value defined by an uplift in spending, productivity and land values. The Mayor of London's High Streets for All developed the case for investment based on the inherent social value of high streets. A further broadening of that case is made here based on London's high streets capacity to pilot renewal and address inequality.

While statistically, London's high streets appear to be doing well overall, in reality the picture is uneven. Many high streets in London are performing well, but others are visibly struggling, as are the communities they serve. A quarter of London's high streets intersect with communities in the top 20 per cent of Index of Multiple Deprivation.[22] The report – London and the UK: A Declaration of Interdependence' shows that unemployment rates in London are above the national average. Wealth inequality, and the proportion of people living in poverty (when adjusting for housing costs) are both higher than the rest of the UK.[23] There are also significant variations in employment and income across the capital. London is the most unequal region in the country – much of this is played out on its high streets.

The city needs new investment and new strategies for adaptation and diversification to support innovation and renewal. These can be calibrated to support those who are most excluded, to enable them to participate and to benefit from London's opportunities and successes. We must invest in London's high streets to maximise

22 English Indices of Deprivation 2015. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2015
23 London and the UK: A Declaration of Interdependence. GLA, 2019

Local-level indices of multiple deprivation intersecting with London's high streets, 2019

Deprivation %

most	2 – 10
	11 – 20
	21 – 30
	31 – 40
	41 – 50
	51 – 60
	61 – 70
	71 – 80
	81 – 90
least	91 – 99
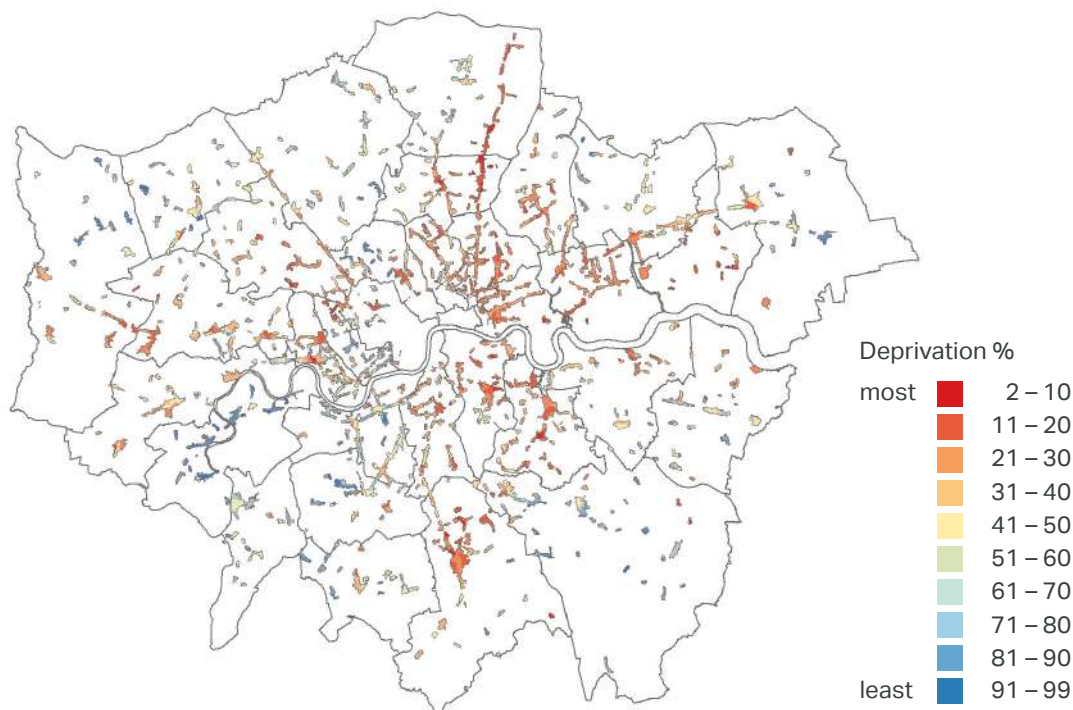
public value, to fund inclusive economies, to create healthy streets, to enable social integration and to embrace new technologies. We must ensure this investment reaches those who are most in need in our city.

High streets represent their local population and provide the perfect location to pilot participatory activities, innovation and more inclusive practices. Each has in its DNA the ability to create an adaptive strategy to enable continuing resilience and to increase public value. Many London boroughs are already preparing high street and town centre strategies to tackle acute deprivation and to take advantage of strong consumer demand. This is a combination and opportunity unique to the capital. The Mayor is committed to delivering good growth in London. He has prioritised this throughout his strategies, such as the draft London Plan, and investment programmes, such as the Good Growth Fund.

A strategic approach is in place and local support is strong. However, significant structural investment is required to address the challenges, and build the collaborative partnerships to realise the unrivalled opportunities presented in London.

2.

ADAPTING

TO THE

CHALLENGES

WHAT IS THE HIGH STREET FOR?

A thought-starter by Dan Hill

London is layer upon layer of communications infrastructure. For most of the city's existence, this manifested itself as physical transport, shaping the city as a river carves stone. Deep-down a city designed for the horse and cart, London is also fully adapted for the 20th century modes of the car and truck. Now it is facing a new wave of urban communications infrastructure, in the form of Amazon, Uber, Airbnb, WeWork and whatever they turn into. As with the car, these technologies fundamentally transform what the high street does, what it is. And just as with the car, city government and urban planning is often left playing catch-up.

One can endlessly debate the London high street. For, somewhat uniquely compared to other world cities, London is the high street. There are endless variations right across its huge sprawl: north, south, east and west, Regent Street, Highgate, Camberwell Church Street, Kingsland Road, King's Road.

And most of these are largely organic, unplanned delights. There are American-style malls in London, of course, but few to challenge the sheer distributed mass of high streets. Occasionally a carefully planned street significantly shapes London: Ian Nairn describes Regent Street as "the tube of space which is still Nash's, dividing Soho from the West End smoothly, firmly and with complete understanding." But few streets are Regent Street, and few planners are Nash.

Most of London is messy, complex and unkempt, and gloriously so, as it is the sheer out-of-control vibrancy and diversity of the London high street that makes it work. Stepping out of the tube at Barking, say, is to be immediately plunged into a "bath of multitude", as Charles Baudelaire would have put it if he had ever got the District Line out east. It is a churning, unruly tangle of mobile phone shops, bus stops, vape shops, butchers of meat of various hues, newsagents crossed with 7/11s, flats leaning into the street above the shops, signs in all languages.

Part of the reason that Britain's high streets are the subject of constant hand-wringing is that, as in line with Napoleon's jibe about Britain being a nation of shopkeepers, Britain is good at shops, and shopping, for better or worse. Yet if shopping is what London does, we must increasingly reconcile the fact that Amazon is where we shop. Thus, whilst some of those Barking butchers will be fine, there will be far fewer, and the bus stops will remain as other 'mobility as a service' provider can shift a population at the scale of London's as well as the bus and Tube can. The real challenge here is e-commerce. Amazon is one of the world's most powerful companies, developing its physical infrastructure as much as its digital services and products. It has already transformed London. Not, as previous waves of new infrastructure have, but by running new applications on the same old hardware.

Without active intervention, this kind of shopping manifests itself on the one hand as thousands and thousands of small vans – overly large for the context, yet largely full of air – crawling backwards and forwards over the city at huge cost to climate, health and community, and on the other hand as empty shopfronts in high streets.

There is a positive vision here, in which e-commerce is deployed for things that e-commerce is good for, with more coherent shared logistics reducing individual car traffic as a result, creating space on road and street for more meaningful and sustaining activities than shopping. Yet shops remain present, if fewer in number, for both transactions and experiences, i.e for what they are good at, whether it's a grocer laden with local fruit, or a high-service experience like a guitar shop, or being able to find a packet of crisps and a pint of milk at 11pm.

Other challenges posed by new technology, such as autonomous mobility will also play out on the high street. Again, we have options: shared mobility, autonomous or otherwise, could reduce the number of cars required by 80 per cent, revealing a street not defined by parking and queues of traffic but instead by vibrant life, whether biodiverse green and blue infrastructure or kids playing football, a far more social space.

So the increasingly rapid collapse of the old retail patterns across the UK is combining with better options in terms of shared mobility and logistics. Taken together, a physical/digital retrofit of the high street becomes possible, and can be supercharged by other initiatives: new forms of local engagement and participation; co-working spaces and studios, unlocked easily via digital services ensuring high utilisation; policies to encourage local independent retail; new forms of fabrication; a more varied housing offer. All could be set within a newly fluid, open public realm, woven with the green and blue of re-emergent London marshes.

To some extent, these new initiatives enable a return to a more diverse high street model, which, without romanticising, could be glimpsed in an early 20th century London. Equally familiar are locally produced goods, made and sold locally. The high street can be the crucible for the forging of new spaces to think, make, sell, live and move around, at once familiar, and yet enabled by emerging technologies and contemporary cultures.

But how do we approach this complex brief? One thing is clear: we cannot use the old tools to approach an entirely new challenge. The traditional methods of architecture, planning and urban design cannot move at the speed of Amazon, AI, or autonomous shuttles – or Extinction Rebellion, for that matter. We need to find new modes of engagement, and a richer array of toolkits and practices, to address the high street: prototypes, actions, acupunctures, all framed by a continual inquisitive reflection on "what the high street is for".

Only an engaged, diverse and adaptive toolkit ensures these acupunctures and interventions can be carefully stimulated, curated and managed. Each generates multiple kinds of value, as well as multiple multidisciplinary perspectives and practices. For these are not simply spatial strategies, but require holistic approaches across everything from environment to employment, experience to engineering, economics to ethics, led by truly many disciplinary teams, working to a form of mission-oriented innovation.

London's laissez-faire culture enables a form of generalised resilience. It is a city that is big enough to ensure that the high street always has something happening, for now at least, but is this something "good growth"? Not necessarily. We now need to bend ideas and activity in certain directions, as we face a series of interlinked existential crises: climate, health and social justice. These wicked problems will need a more active hand on the tiller, steering London towards the 'north stars' of clear societal outcomes. Redirecting the disruptive power of Amazon et al as if with a judo move, we might substantially remove the two aspects that diminish today's high streets – banal franchise retail, banks and betting shops on the one hand, and dirty, dumb 20th century mobility on the other. The question of what fills those spaces and activities is not clear, yet it is fascinating and urgent, and London is a city more than creative enough to figure it out. But the question needs to be asked – and asked well.

HIGH STREET CHALLENGES

"You never change something by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete." R. Buckmister Fuller, 1982

This section sets out the significant challenges faced by London's high streets and town centres. Each challenge requires public authorities to act in a strategic manner, drawing on evidence and insight to form specific partnerships and proposals. The trends that are driving change, and the opportunities for intervention, are highlighted to support better strategy making.

Changing social habits and expectations

The evolving consumer economy

Adapting to and mitigating climate change

Delivering intensification and mix

Delivering on housing demand

Managing data, digitalisation and technology

Austerity and the loss of social infrastructure

Unacceptable levels of pollution and congestion

Evolving jobs and work styles

Changes to public amenities and civic services

Rethinking of traditional governance structures

Changing social habits and expectations

Since the late 1980s, behaviours, habits and expectations have been increasingly orientated towards unique encounters and experiences, as an expression of what people value.[1] The emerging experience economy values what seems scarce, which today includes time, individuality, authenticity and feelings of well-being. Ikea's head of sustainability said in 2016 that, "we've probably hit peak stuff". The total amount of material consumed in the UK is now falling, as the average person is buying less 'stuff'.[2] There has been a corresponding decline in ownership as an aspiration, with 78 per cent of millennials (who make up around 30 per cent of Londoners) choosing to spend money on experiences rather than things.[3] A reduction in ownership also corresponds with concepts of "right-sizing", scaling down, being more mobile and having more flexible and agile work styles and lifestyles. Also related are concerns about provenance of goods, local and ethical sourcing, sustainability and craftsmanship.

London has an increasingly time-poor working population, which creates the need, desire and expectation of convenience, such as the availability of prepared food and same-day goods delivery. Credit card figures from 2017 showed that spending in restaurants went up 16 per cent in a year. At the same time, department stores suffered a 1 per cent drop in spending and household appliances fell by 2.5 per cent. Theatres and cinemas however encountered a 13 per cent rise.[4] This presents both opportunities and challenges for high street businesses and services. The changing lifestyles of Londoners brings more demand for London to operate 24 hours a day. Londoners have the latest bedtimes in the UK. Two-thirds of us regularly run errands, socialise or take part in culture or fitness activities at night.[5] High streets are some of the safest places to be during the night. They have a role to play in making the best use of buildings and spaces to support this activity.

1   B. Joseph Pine II, James H. Gilmore. Welcome to the experience economy. HBR, 1998
2   UK Environmental Accounts: How much material is the UK consuming. ONS, 2016
3   Millennials; fueling the experience economy. Harris Poll for Eventbrite, 2014
4   Simon Usborne. Just do it: the experience economy. The Guardian, 2017
5   Think Night. London Nighttime Commission, 2019

Opportunities for high streets:

- Maximise opportunities for social interaction, cultural, and authentic experiences by planning, designing, managing and curating high streets and town centres.
- Improve high streets for walking and cycling, which is shown to dramatically increase the number of people stopping, sitting and socialising.[6]
- Through management, actively promote environmental issues, such as reuse and waste-reduction, as well as the high street's contribution to these initiatives and to sustainable lifestyles generally.
- Support society's need and desire for convenience in the high street offer.
- Promote high streets as places for leisure, entertainment and non-retail experiences.
- Plan and design for the 24hr economy – remember to "Think Night."
- Promote digital interaction with the high street and its businesses or establishments.
- Promote social media sharing of experiences related to the high street #myhighstreet.
- Support, through planning policy, a vibrant mix of uses.
- Support, through the planning process, flexibility for meanwhile, nested and ancillary uses.

6   UCL. Street Appeal. Transport for London, 2019

The evolving consumer economy

Nationwide, large well known retailers are visibly failing at a faster rate than they are opening.[1] The UK's economy is having an impact on retailers' top lines through pressures on consumer spending, including the falling value of the pound and rise in consumer prices. Brexit has the potential to reduce demand and increase costs. Rents and rates in London also remain a problem for retailers, despite the downward adjustments already in play.

Changes in retail can affect London's high streets differently than other parts of the UK. This is linked to the nature of its economy, demographics, diversity, scale and urban form. Vacancy rates are on average lower than elsewhere in the UK. However, they are still often a problem. The recently reported 7.4 per cent figure masks a dramatic disparity across London.[2]

The New London Plan concludes that taking into account projected growth in household, commuter and tourist spending in London, 1.6m sqm of comparison goods retail floorspace will be needed between 2016 and 2041.[3] Without good planning the future distribution of retail floorspace is likely to be uneven. Future growth is unlikely to be in the formats we are used to. It's likely that many small high streets and town centres will see a decline in the requirement for retail floorspace.[4] However it is a complex picture. Independent retailers, a prominent feature of London's smaller high streets, are less affected by the trends than chains.

London has taken heavily to shopping online. Internet sales are commanding a higher proportion of what is a growing retail market overall. This is particularly true for electrical goods, books, music and games. This growth is predicted to continue for a while but then flatten out in time.[5]

1   Centre for Retail Research. Who's Gone Bust in Retail?. Centre for Retail Research, 2019
2   Building Blocks: Data by City. Centre for Cities, 2018 (High street vacancies map data)
3   Draft London Plan. Mayor of London, 2018
4   Draft London Plan. Mayor of London, 2018
5   Consumer Expenditure and Comparison Goods Floorspace Need in London. GLA, 2017

While online retail is growing, online and retail-park businesses are now looking for a high street physical presence on the high street. Examples include Ikea, B+Q, Amazon and furniture suppliers Sofa.com and Made.com. This is because of the importance of a physical interaction between brand, customer and product, and to manage online returns. "Click and collect" is also still a major growth area, managing the complexity of delivery and returns.

In the face of this competition, the challenge is for more traditional retailers to invest in innovation in order to evolve and remain interesting to consumers. For example, the beauty products sector is now providing exclusive in-store services, like makeovers and make-up tutorials, in carefully-designed, enticing spaces.[6]

The increasing need for London to densify is also shaping the retail sector. The 'big box' retail park typology, often supported by car-use, is out of favour. Instead, these under-used sites present prime opportunities for future mixed-use development, including residential and non-residential uses more suited to a walkable street.

6   L. Niven-Phillips. In the flesh: how beauty is luring customers back to the high street. The Guardian, 2019

Opportunities for high streets:

- Diversification of commercial uses on high streets to support a vibrant economy.
- Vacant retail units and rent adjustments can encourage non-retail commercial uses to re-enter town centres, such as businesses previously located in business park environments.
- Technology can enable engagement with the collaboration or sharing economy and revitalise underused spaces.
- High street partners can build in entertainment and unique, authentic experiences around retail, including co-design.
- Click and collect collaborations between online and high street stores can drive high street footfall.
- Businesses can embrace an omni-channel existence, investing in both physical and online stores.
- For smaller retailers, emerging retail digital platforms, such as Google NearSt, can boost high street retailers' marketing and online presence.
- Diversification of larger floor plate stores can include a variety of different services which cannot be obtained online, including co-working space, showrooms, artist studios, pop-up markets, cafés, bars, fitness classes, education classes, workshops, salons, on-site repairs, alterations, personal stylists and more.
- High streets units can have a different uses at night than during the day, getting more value out of the space.

Microsoft, in Vancouver, has converted an old department store into office space for up to 750 people. Image credit: Architizer

The Department Store, in London, is a landmark Edwardian department store which has been refurbished and reimagined to house workspace, retail units, a cafe, large event space, post office, restaurant and bar. Image credit: The Department Store

Adapting to and mitigating climate change

The Mayor's London Environment Strategy sets out plans to make London a net zero carbon city by 2050. This presents big challenges for town centres and high streets, such as integrating more efficient energy networks, and shifting to zero emission vehicles to reduce CO2 emissions from transport, servicing and logistics.

Due to the urban heat island effect, London can already be up to 10°C warmer than rural areas. This will only worsen with rising temperatures and population densities, impacting Londoners' health and comfort. The risk of surface water flooding for thousands of homes and businesses will also increase. This year, London is expected to have a water resource gap "of over 100m litres per day" and increasing.[1] London's high streets and town centres must adapt physically to accommodate more extreme climatic conditions and reduce their contribution to climate. They must also pave the way for a future which relies on consuming less and consuming more sustainably. Given the role of the consumer economy, this poses huge challenges for high streets. But there are opportunities too for retailers and service providers prepared to adapt.

Buildings and transport are the main contributors to London's Green House Gas emissions, with workspace generating 37 per cent.[2] New buildings in restructured high streets will need to be designed and built to high sustainably standards. Retaining, reusing, and upgrading London's existing building stock will be vital too. Seventy per cent of all buildings will have to be EPC-C rated by 2030 to avoid the worst effects of climate change.[3] Physical and economic strategies for high streets must be built around reducing waste and moving towards a closed-loop circular economy.

1   London Environment Strategy. GLA, 2018
2   London Environment Strategy. GLA, 2018
3   Zero Carbon London: a 1.5° compatible plan. Mayor of London, 2018

Opportunities for high streets:

- Facilitate sustainable living by optimising on the inherent qualities of high streets. Improve walkability and accessibility to public transport. Support the co-location of homes, jobs, amenities and services to create a greater local focus.
- Ensure new buildings monitor actual energy use and collect data on whole life cycle carbon emissions.
- Promote the adaptation, refurbishment, and reuse of existing buildings to conserve embodied energy stored in the existing building fabric and improve energy performance.
- Mitigate the urban heat island effect by planting more trees, creating green spaces in and around high streets and town centres and introducing more shaded areas.
- Support urban greening, sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) and permeable surfacing to manage rainwater and reduce flood risk.
- Promote healthy streets guidance for public realm design.
- Within major restructuring and regeneration schemes, demonstrate proactive response, considering wind, solar orientation, natural light, shading, and flooding.
- Local policy for town centre designations could expand to set ambitious standards around limiting waste and promoting reuse. For example, single use plastics could be restricted, supporting one of the Mayor's key ambitions.
- Improve access to publicly available drinking water fountains in order to reduce reliance on single-use plastics. Businesses could also offer water refilling services.
- Provide training for businesses and the public on how to reduce waste and promote reuse.
- The proximity and critical mass offered by high streets could be optimised to facilitate a culture of mending, ethical trade, exchange, re-use, recycling and upcycling.
- Promote waste consolidation for businesses, such as preferred supplier schemes in order to reduce vehicle trips, streamline services and improve recycling rates.
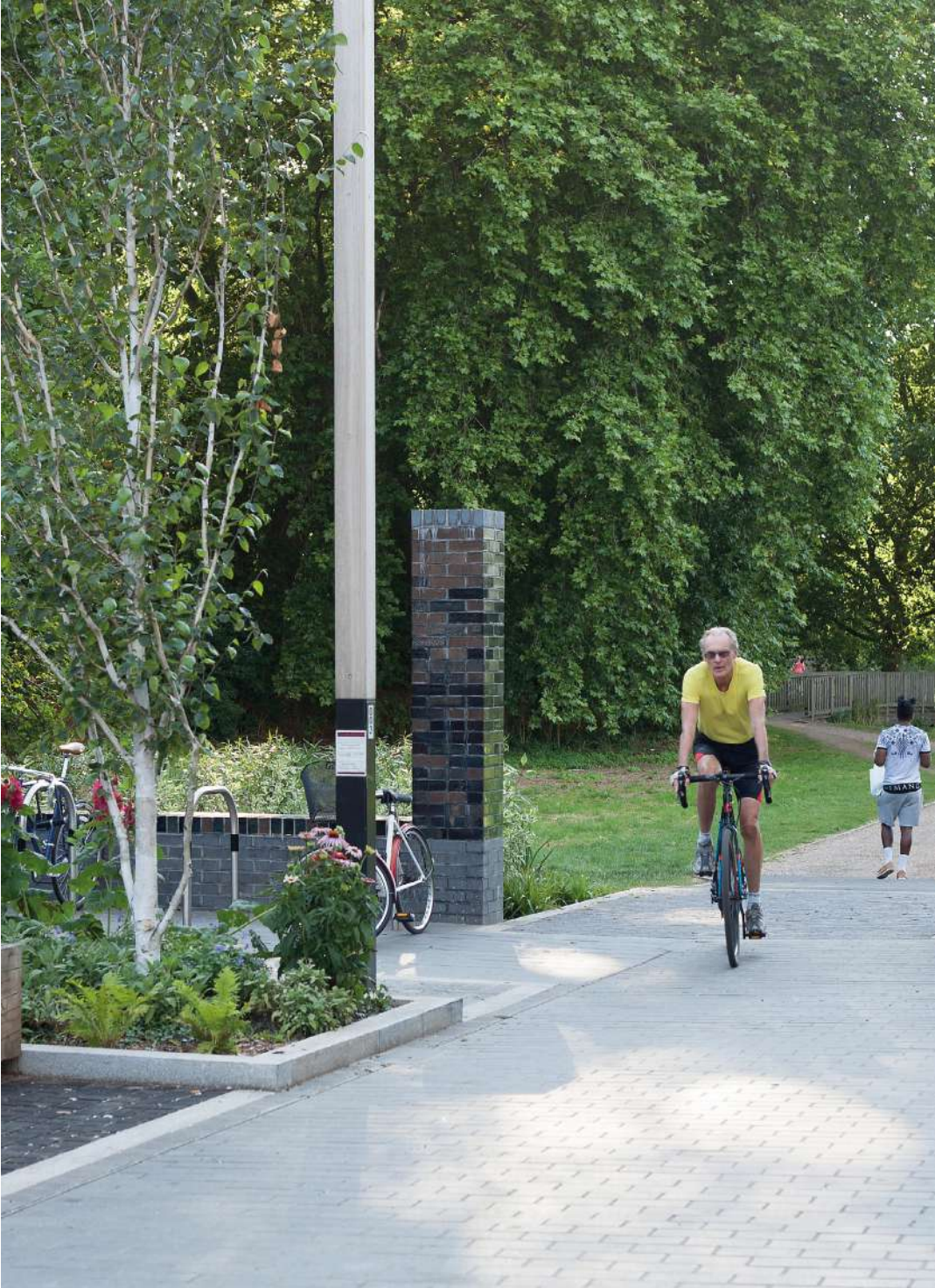
Connecting Colliers Wood, in London, is a public realm improvements project linking the station, park and river Wandle. It includes swales and rain gardens.
Image credit: Gort Scott and Jakob Spriestersbach
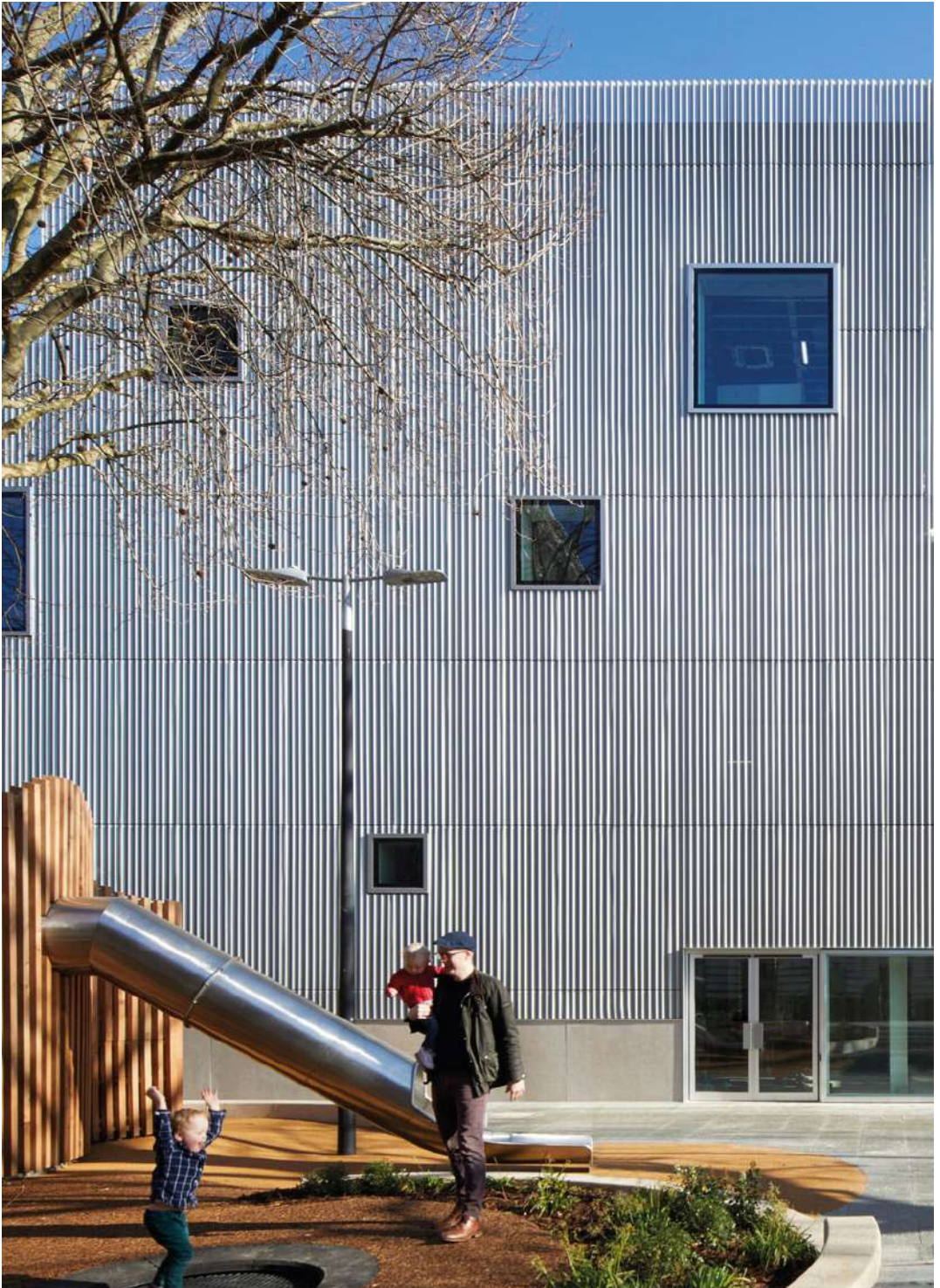
Elephant Park Energy Hub, in London, integrates community uses such as an early years nursery, café and playground, with a combined heat and power plant which serves local residents and businesses. Image credit: Morris and Company

Delivering intensification and mix

Office employment projections suggest there will be 619,300 more jobs in London by 2041, a 31 per cent increase, bringing the total to 2.6 million jobs. This could translate into a demand for between 4.7 and 6.1 million sqm of office floorspace ver the next 20 years.[1] The Mayor supports the delivery of commercial space on high streets and in town centres to promote urban vitality, support enterprise and the economy.

Secondary office space around the Central Activities Zone fringe is disappearing at a rapid rate. Rents are more than doubling on what remains.[2] This is partly due to housing pressure and the national planning policy's Permitted Development Rights (PDR) which allows the easy conversion of B1 office space to residential use. This resulted in 22 per cent of existing B1 office space obtaining 'Prior Approval' for conversion between 2013–2015 in outer London.[3] Older B1 stock tends to be more 'affordable' and the most prone to conversion – exacerbating affordability challenges.

Even where commercial floor space is replaced, it can have an impact on the local economy and businesses – particularly artists, creative industries and start-ups. To retain capacity, support future economic growth, sustain communities and high street vitality, we must protect non-residential space in London.

High streets can help meet the Mayor's ambition for London to be a better place at night. Some 1.6 million people work at night in London and many more people regularly work in the evening and want to access a wide range of goods and services after 6pm.[4] The night-time economy has a key role to play in preventing the decline of the high street. High street vitality can be supported by better planning of night time activity, for example, later opening hours could be encouraged for all types of businesses, especially those in the food, leisure and culture sectors.

1   Ramidus Consulting. London Office Policy Review 2017. GLA, 2017
2   London Office Policy Review 2017. GLA, 2017
3   London Office Policy Review 2017. GLA, 2017
4   Think Night. London Night Time Commision, 2019

Opportunities for high streets:

- Deliver mixed-use developments driven by the optimal design for non-residential space, rather than the space left over after residential development.
- Retain a healthy stock of existing mixed-use buildings, where appropriate, to conserve embodied energy, support existing tenants and retain affordable workspace.
- Promote a healthy and sustainable city by ensuring public services, jobs and retail are all within walking distance from from public transport and where people live.
- Draw on the increased numbers of residents with mixed-use developments, promote community participation and local advocacy opportunities.
- Promote and deliver more diverse uses including those which contribute to social value.
- Generate new economic clusters taking advantage of proximity to large 'anchors' like education, healthcare or research institutions.
- Encourage the inclusion of production and light-manufacturing uses within mixed-use typologies.
- Safeguard pubs as integral social and community spaces.
- Promote new and innovative models of housebuilding. Such as cooperative housing and co-housing models which can also include community-orientated mixed uses.

Caxton Works, in London, combines light industrial units at ground floor level with residential above demonstrating the potential for forward thinking and bold mixed-use typologies in the capital. Image credit: Studio Egret West

Green Rooms, in London, is a converted Art Deco showroom which now houses a social enterprise art hotel, workspace, function rooms and café bar.
Image credit: SODA and Lewis Khan

Delivering on housing demand

Tackling London's housing crisis remains one of the city's biggest challenges. The growth in London's affordable housing stock has not kept pace with decades of job and population growth. This is made worse by rising construction costs, wage stagnation and austerity measures limiting public sector resources. The Mayor sees high streets and town centres as good places for residential intensification. This is already being delivered across London, especially outer London, meaning more people will be living on and around high streets. Huge changes are needed. That's why the draft London Plan supports and encourages the adaptation and restructuring of town centres. This will enable them to take advantage of existing infrastructure and benefit from higher populations of residents. With this comes the opportunity and imperative to support a wider mix of uses and housing types. Higher density development will also help reduce carbon use per head.

This is a chance to reconfigure our high streets using the knowledge that we have gained especially over the last decade. This includes better allowing for a range of uses for work, making, cultural and community within urban blocks and mixed-use buildings, coupled with well-designed street frontages and public realm. The housing-led nature of some mixed-use projects can limit the ambition and scope for a wider stakeholder-led regeneration process. However, it is important to also include existing businesses and community stakeholders in regeneration conversations in order to create more resilient and vibrant mixed-use neighbourhoods and high streets.

With increased intensity of both residential and mixed uses, noise is likely to be a growing issue. The Agent of Change principle should be used to ensure that new developments incorporate good acoustic design principles and so protect existing uses.

Opportunities for high streets:

- Take advantage of the co-location of homes, amenities and public transport networks to promote active travel by foot and bike and use of public transport.
- Improve footfall in high streets and town centres by increasing the number of residents, thereby supporting local shops and services.
- Carefully consider the density and design of different housing typologies to allow for high quality living environments with generous amenity space for residents.
- Safeguard existing non-residential tenants and landowners.
- Where businesses might need to be relocated, provide support and or compensation where necessary.
- Engage local stakeholders to understand how non-residential and residential uses might be integrated in the site-specific context.
- Incorporate high quality non-residential units, carefully designed for appropriate threshold space onto public realm, floor to ceiling heights, daylighting, servicing arrangements, storage facilities and space unobstructed by residential services.
- Promote net zero carbon and principles of design for new developments in order to meet the targets set out in "Zero Carbon London: 1.5 deg Compatible Plan" [1]
- Convert, extend and retrofit existing under-used buildings to residential use above ground floor level, using high energy efficiency standards.
- Support intensification with efficient localised energy networks such as district heating and power hubs.

1   Zero Carbon London: A 1.5°C compatible plan. GLA, 2018

Greencity, in Zurich, is a new sustainable urban district and the first certified '2000-watt site' in the country. Building site A1 is a mixed-use building comprising commercial at ground floor level and generous facilities for its residents including courtyards, roof gardens and a communal room running the length of the building at third floor level. Image credit: EM2N

Nightingale 1 housing project, in Melbourne, is a community housing model designed around principles of environmental sustainability, affordability and social inclusion. This is the first housing block in the country built on an entirely fossil-fuel free network. The ground floor is dedicated to commercial and community uses. Image credit: Breathe Architecture and Eve Wilson

Managing data, digitalisation and the integration of technology

City data and 'smart' technologies are complex and increasingly important in urban design and planning disciplines. They can help us live better and more sustainably. The Mayor's Smarter London Together defines a Smart City as, "a collaborative, connected and responsive city".[1] It integrates digital technologies and uses city-wide data to respond to citizens' needs.

City data and Smart Cities are linked, but not the same. There are new datasets and ways to access data. These include wifi networks, cameras, crowdsourced data, data from apps and social media posts. Much emphasis is made of the value of consumer data and its increasing availability via credit cards and mobile phone companies. This rich data now contains vast amounts of information including footfall and dwell time, how far people have travelled to reach a high street, background information on demographics and other spending habits. This is data that retailers want.

Data can be used to test, inform and add weight to evidence from observation, anecdote and community participation. Data used on its own can, however, be misinterpreted, or mask issues that are not revealed through the data. Big commercial data sets alone will also not necessarily provide information to help guide a future pathway. This will require coordinated thinking by community and business stakeholders, planning, transport and urban design professionals.

There are big challenges around collating and storing data for the public sector. This includes concerns of privacy and trust – who owns data and how it is used. The GLA is working with local boroughs and professional organisations to consider how to engage the public in local decision-making about data collection. This would be done through voluntary or collaborative data collection and 'data trusts'. The latter is a concept seeking to retain trust in how data is collected, stored and shared to realise its full benefits and potential.

1   Smarter London Together: The Mayor's roadmap to transform London into the smartest city in the world. GLA, 2018

The digital twin is another idea linked to Smart Cities. At its simplest, the digital twin of the high street would be a 3D digital model with coordinated up-to-date, geolocated information. This could include details about property owners, businesses, opening hours, leases, rates and rent, air quality, development proposals, planning applications and more. Such a tool can inform strategic planning for authorities and communities and be an efficient data store.

The Mayor's Cultural Infrastructure Map presents data and locations of London's cultural infrastructure, including production sites and pubs. It has already been useful in relation to planning applications and supporting the development of local plans and high street strategies.[2] The public can add facilities which have not yet been included too.

Apps and websites are another area where innovation could change our relationship with town centres or high streets using mobile phones. Examples include CityMapper, which helps us navigate many different interconnected modes of transport and locate high street businesses in real time. Similarly, web-based platforms for community engagement can also connect businesses on high streets with each other. They involve local people and businesses in plans for the evolution of high streets.

2   Cultural Infrastructure Map. GLA

Opportunities for high streets:

- Use smart city planning to monitor and improve the efficiency of public services (for example street lighting, waste collection, movement networks).
- Enhance digital connectivity can enable councils to collect anonymised data through public wifi.
- Address identified high street challenges through the targeted collection and use of data.
- Monetise data to pay for its collection by local authorities (especially less-sensitive uses such as noise and pollution for common good).
- Involve communities in high street data collection and management.
- Develop data trusts models.
- Use mobile apps to improve and enliven the public's experience of high streets and town centres (for example to access information about high street offer, events or services or to map interesting routes).
- Use web platforms to engage communities and promote participation for things like events or initiatives and to support organisations and businesses.

Umbrellium, in London, has developed a Pollution Explorers Toolkit which includes workshops and devices to help teach the public about local air quality and inspire individual behavioral changes. Image credit: Umbrellium blog

Austerity and the loss of social infrastructure

The GLA High Streets for All, states "High streets are the city's most common public asset – everybody has one"[1]. They are social, diverse and accessible spaces and as such, where many of London's social issues come to the fore. These social issues are set against a backdrop of increasing inequality due to wider economic frameworks. These include, wage stagnation, health and food issues, access to part-time work opportunities, access to decent housing and childcare. In parallel, austerity has seen a fall in public spending especially for those who are most in need over the last decade. Councils have been cutting non-statutory services and selling associated buildings and spaces including those which delivered social value on high streets.[2]

London's poverty rate is higher than the rest of England's and a fifth of Londoners are paid below the London Living Wage.[3] Poverty is directly related to poorer health outcomes, worse educational attainment and food insecurity.[4] Wealth inequality is higher in London than in any other region and that trend is becoming more extreme: the least wealthy 10 per cent lost 32 per cent of their wealth over the last two years, whereas the wealth of the top 10 per cent increased by 25 per cent.[5] Socio-economic inequality can breed resentment and creates challenges for social integration of different social groups and communities.

Through the Mayor's powers to shape how London grows he has promoted social mixing, culturally-vibrant areas and growth that benefits all. High streets have a vital role to play in reducing socio-economic inequality. Intelligent high street investment can deliver across a full range of policy objectives. The challenge is to work across different council departments and galvanise different stakeholders to help high streets to best generate social and economic value.

1   High Streets for All, GLA research, 2017
2   The Great British Sell Off. Locality, 2018
3   Inequality: The gap between the richest and poorest in London, Trust for London
4   The Mayors Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Mayor of London, 2018
5   Inequality: The gap between the richest and poorest in London, Trust for London

Opportunities for high streets:

- Build long term capacity for participation between councils, local communities and businesses.
- Promote healthy streets to enable healthier lifestyles, improve walking, cycling and public transport routes.
- Make high streets into healthy foodscapes, taking into account the presentation, availability and affordability of the food offering.
- Use council assets (land, buildings) to generate long term public value, to benefit all, including applying conditions such as paying occupants the London Living Wage.
- Safeguard and enhance premises that are already used or valued by London's diverse communities.
- Safeguard existing and future independent businesses on the high street and support them in thriving alongside corporate retail chains.
- Explore innovative models of community-led economic development which could enable low and middle income communities to participate in local business ownership and investment, community finance and local exchange trading schemes.

Unacceptable levels of pollution and congestion

High streets and town centres are inseparable from London's road network. By their nature, they are typically very accessible with a high level of interconnectivity for individual and commercial movement. However, this brings related challenges with air and noise pollution and traffic congestion. These cause preventable illnesses, community severance and road traffic injuries, impacting on wellbeing and making high streets less enjoyable places to spend time. The challenge is to reduce traffic through better-managed freight and fewer car trips and by shifting to low- or no-emission transport.

Increasing public awareness and the use of digital tools and apps allow people to track pollution and make better choices about their routes and activities. This is likely to have a negative impact on the use of high streets over time unless improvements to air quality can be achieved. Air pollution can also disrupt property prices and affect development viability in areas shown to be most polluted[1].

Across London, car use is slowly declining despite population growth, down 20 per cent by 2017, from a peak in 1999.[2] Nevertheless, one quarter of current car trips in London could potentially be walked, and two thirds could potentially be cycled.[3] Cycling continues to rise (55 per cent increase in the last 10 years) but, this growth is slowing. To increase its modal share, further changes to our streets will be needed. Fears about road safety and pollution are the biggest barriers to cycling.

Commercial traffic is a big challenge, with vans and lorries accounting for one fifth of all London's traffic (one third in central London in the morning peak). This is still growing. The picture is likely to be worse for high streets and town centres, because the growing commercial traffic and deliveries are more concentrated in these areas.

1   https://addresspollution.org
2   Road traffic statistics. Department for Transport, 2019
3   The Mayor's Transport Strategy. Mayor of London, 2018

The Mayor launched the central London Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in April 2019. In 2021, it will expand to cover the area within the North and South Circular roads, helping to improve air quality across many of London's high streets.

London already has the biggest network of clean buses of any major world city, and the ambition is to make all buses 'zero emission' by 2037 at the latest. Autonomous and electric vehicles will answer some movement needs, but the goal must be for more physical activity (walking and cycling) and less traffic congestion.

Action is needed around the production and collection of commercial waste. Coordinated management of waste collection by a single provider could reduce trip numbers and congestion. 'Last mile' delivery – currently dominated by diesel vans – is a key area for innovation and intervention. Micro-distribution hubs serviced by cargo-bikes are a big opportunity for more local distribution. High streets may also benefit from hosting micro-fulfilment centres for local, 24-hour collections by customers.

Opportunities for high streets:

- Adopt the Healthy Streets approach and consider using the Healthy Streets Check List for Designers on any high street design proposals.[1]
- Promote the use of e-bikes and cargo bikes, to reduce car and van trips, and plan for their storage and parking.[2]
- Promote ultra-low emission electric vehicles to reduce localised pollution.
- Promote Click and Collect to reduce e-commerce deliveries and bring footfall to the high street.
- Promote deliveries between 6pm and 6am to reduce peak- time congestion, improve road safety and reduce peak pollution levels.
- Promote the radical reduction of commercial waste. Consolidate waste collections with single providers and reduce the number of waste collections.
- Plan for coordinated deliveries to high street consolidation centres to reduce vehicle numbers, followed by low-emission last mile deliveries (especially cargo-bike delivery).
- Plan for coordinated micro-distribution centres and localised cargo-bike delivery.
- Explore other means of freight delivery such as rail and waterways.
- Involve people in participatory projects to help change habits and perceptions around car use and promote physical activity and active transport.
- Radically improve cycle safety by improving the cycle network and promoting cycling lessons. Plan for good quality cycle parking, especially near transport interchange points, to facilitate multi-modal trips.

1   Healthy Streets for London. Transport for London, 2017
2   Walking and Cycling: the economic benefits. TfL

This Is How We Measure

TARGETS FOR 2025	WHERE WE STAND
Copenhageners spend 20% more time in urban spaces	1 hr 44 mins per week in 2013
90% of Copenhageners consider their neighbourhood lively and varied	59% in 2013
Two thirds of Copenhageners consider the city clean	33% in 2014
50% of trips to work and study in Copenhagen are by bike	45% in 2014
70% of Copenhageners are satisfied with bicycle parking	33% in 2014
75% of Copenhageners consider Copenhagen a green city	68% in 2015
A majority of Copenhageners consider Copenhagen a city with an edge	32% in 2015
70% of Copenhageners find that they have plenty of opportunity to get involved at local level	47% in 2015
Twice as many volunteers take part in development, care and maintenance of the city	Approx. 1,700 in 2014
The number of deprived areas is at least halved	6 in 2015
90% of the Copenhageners find it easy to get around the city	82% in 2015
At least 70% of new social housing is placed in school districts with less than 20% social housing	31 in 2015
Copenhagen is carbon neutral	31% reduction of CO_2 from 2005-2014
75% of all trips in Copenhagen are on foot, by bike or by public transport	67% in 2014
Number of homes suffering from severe noise pollution is more than halved	About 35,000 in 2012
A majority of Copenhageners use sharing, swapping or reuse schemes	22% in 2015
The risk of flooding is reduced by 30%, and climate proofing has benefitted 160,000 Copenhageners	Risk level unchanged

Co-create Copenhagen, Vision for 2025, focuses on the "life between buildings" and sets clear targets around transport, livability, urban space, reuse and more to help address the city's environmental challenges. Image credit: Kobenhavns Kommune

Royal Mail, in the UK, is trialing swapping delivery vehicles for e-bikes to reduce the company's carbon emissions. For six months, eight solar, battery, pedal and brake powered e-trikes will deliver post in Stratford (east London), Cambridge and Sutton Coldfield. Image credit: Activa

Evolving jobs and work styles

The latest evidence from Office for National Statistics shows that the number of jobs and businesses on London's high streets grew much faster than in London generally between 2013 and 2018. 'Knowledge' businesses in London, (technology, design, media and law) on high streets (including within the Central Activities Zone) have grown by 60 per cent. This compares to 43 per cent in the city overall. In outer London alone, the figure is slightly higher at 61 per cent. The figures paint a positive picture. However, predictions vary as to which jobs will be automated in the future. The 'everyday economy', including businesses on high streets, must continue to innovate and focus on what humans are good at, and on what computers are not good at. There is the potential for the high street's main draw to be based on personal service and delivery of face-to-face experiences.

Londoners do not operate within a 9am–5pm framework. The city is now recognised as having a 24-hour economy, with activity happening around the clock. There are 1.6 million night-time workers in London. This is a third of the capital's employees, and half of night bus journeys are for work. The largest sectors for night work are health and social care, followed by cultural and leisure, in which half of employees work nights.[1] High streets and town centres must adapt to reflect this, to better serve local people and exploit opportunities for business innovation.

Working culture and practices are also changing and becoming increasingly decentralised, flexible and agile. As a result, there are increasing numbers of people working in less conventional environments. These include at home, near home, and in flexible co-working spaces with a natural draw towards local high streets. Google's Workplace 2020 report, based on a wide survey of businesses, states that "flexible working will be the defining characteristic of the future workplace".[2]

1   Think Night. London Night Time Commission, 2019
2   V. Lafargue. Workplace 2020: a study of the future of work. Google

Opportunities for high streets:

- Engage with the growth in 'flexible' working on the high street (co-working space, café working) and test the market for expansion of workspace opportunities.
- Encourage new 'affordable' workspace outside central London as part of new mixed-use developments.
- Use commercial space as a buffer with residential; for example, above ground floor level or behind the high street.
- Support later opening hours to give Londoners better access to their city after 6pm.

Central Parade, in London, is a Grade 2 listed high street building which was converted from council offices to a creative enterprise hub comprising incubator units, co-working areas, meeting rooms, a cafe open to the public and more.
Image credit: Gort Scott and Meanwhile Space

Impact Hub, in Birmingham, is a network of entrepreneurs and activists with a social and sustainable mission. They promote knowledge sharing and manage a number of spaces for co-working, meetings and events. Image credit: Impact Hub

Spacious, in New York, is a workspace club that uses local spaces that are underused in the daytime, such as bars, restaurants and function rooms, to provide affordable workspace. Available spaces are visible on an app. Image credit: Spacious and Bar Primi

Changes to public amenities and civic services

Public and semi-public institutions like pharmacies, libraries and post offices are facing huge pressure to survive along and around high streets.[1] They are suffering from changes to legislation and corporate practice, and austerity-related cuts in funding. High street banks have been closing branches as a result of customers moving online. A fifth of all London's post offices closed a decade ago. Royal Mail is now facing funding cuts as it is increasingly overtaken by retailers such as WH Smith.

There has also been a reduction in the number of libraries in London.[2] Spending on libraries reduced by 12 per cent between 2014 and 2018, due to the funding pressures councils are facing. As a result, local authorities have had to think differently about how they provide these services.[3] Libraries are important civic buildings, often on high streets, providing shared and inclusive public spaces that are free to access. They are evolving in new directions to respond to digitisation and to offer broader opportunities and experiences for learning and working.

The retreat of the public estate means libraries and other institutions are increasingly responding to challenges around access to vital civic services. Most of the civic and public institutions we think of mainly operate in the day. However, new approaches to libraries also include longer opening hours and even 24-hour access. It's worth considering night-time public, civic and cultural activity on the high street in recognition of the changing lifestyles and working hours of Londoners. There are also opportunities for new hybrid typologies, merging libraries with workspace, cultural, civic and health and wellbeing uses as well as partnering with different institutions.

1   High Streets for All. GLA, 2017
2   BBC Data Unit. github.com/BBC-Data-Unit/libraries
3   Chartered Inst of Public Finance and Accounting Library Survey. 2017–18

Opportunities for high streets:

- Recognise the role of high street institutions being less about 'chores' or necessary visits and more about choices around social activity and cultural participation.
- Repurpose civic buildings, that are often heritage assets, for other mixed, social, cultural and commercial uses, to establish new forms of 'institution'.
- Incorporate council services within reinvented high street institutions and consider later opening hours.
- Recognise and quantify the long-term economic value of libraries (and new library typologies) with education, skills, health, and well-being. For example, "the predicted medical cost savings associated with library use... based on reductions in GP visits caused by improved access to health information, saves the NHS an estimated £27.5m a year"[1]
- Consider alternative delivery models for libraries, other funding opportunities and income streams such as providing workspace and training programmes.
- Take advantage of data and technological development to promote, support and improve access to civic and public institutions on the high street.

1   Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016–2021.
    Libraries Taskforce, 2016

East Street Exchange, in London, is a new extension to an existing local library. It forms part of the What Walworth Wants project to make flexible and affordable meeting spaces for communities and to create a more open and accessible relationship with the high street.
Image Credit: We Made That and Jacob Spriestersbach

Old Manor Park Library, in Newham, is a converted library which incorporates printing workshops, artists studios and community rooms and supports filmmaking, performance and research.
Image Credit: Apparata, Old Manor Park Library and Emil Charlaff

Rethinking of traditional governance structures

The institutions and authorities responsible for high streets have been responding to the impacts both of austerity measures and 'double devolution' – the transfer of power from central to local government and onto local businesses and communities in turn. Public spending for town centre management has been reduced in many local authorities. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are a recent arrival to the UK and represent a further shift in responsibility.

Technology and social media are both helping to boost community participation. People are becoming more aware of how regeneration affects places and who benefits. This means people are increasingly keen to be involved with decision-making in a more meaningful way. Community participation now has a key role in galvanising public support for good growth on the high street. This is helping to create a more inclusive and fairer city.

New structures such as town teams are gaining momentum too. These have the potential to deliver public value in a cost-efficient and equitable way. Examples include housing cooperatives, co-housing, and community self-build. Enabling community organisations to take on community assets transfer can help enhance public assets. This will help to meet the needs of certain communities.

Opportunities for high streets:

- Work closely with engaged local community organisations to catalyse long term participation.
- Build capacity within a community organisation willing to take on more responsibility in the local area including town teams, community self-build and co-housing. Work across institutions to explore community asset transfer. Facilitate technical advice and training.
- Maintain a supporting role for local authorities to guide informed decision making and development within the community organisation.
- Ring-fence local authority budgets to secure revenue for the community organisation to operate in the short-term.
- Design a transition strategy for the community organisation to operate on a self-sustaining model in the long-term.
- Protect existing premises used for community organisations providing public or community value.
- Engage with organisations such as Citizens UK.

AGILITY AND DIFFERENCE

by Wayne Hemingway

I have been commenting on town centres in the UK for well over a decade, and observing them from the first time I started to use them with my friends as a teenager. When I am asked to comment I have become well versed in my answers, which I can summarise as:

1. It's time to stop seeing the term "high street" as synonymous with shopping and remember that "town centres" have always been about social gathering.

2. The public are not stupid. They are actively deciding not to "shop till they drop" anymore and this is because:

*   So many of our big-name retailers are not relevant to new generations. How many young people have ever been in a Debenhams, House of Fraser or BHS?

*   There is a maturing of taste and understanding about the values of disposable income. Why fill your homes and cupboards with things you don't need when you could be spending your money on experiences (hence the growth and general buoyancy of leisure, sports, travel, social activities, café culture and events and festivals and the supply chains that go with these pastimes).

*   With new homes being built 30% smaller than they were in the 1970s and before, there is now nowhere to store all those "things you don't need".

*   The majority of under 35s are often in rental accommodation and having to move periodically, so why would you want to drag unnecessary belongings around with you?

*   There is a growing interest in and support for sustainable and ethical thinking. Long-estabished organisations like Greenpeace, the Fair Trade Foundation, Oxfam, Traid and Shelter are loved by younger generations, and being joined by new kids on the block

like Depop. These brands and their consumers are doing their job to warn us about the dangers of over consumption and helping shoppers to become informed about issues to do with packaging waste, provenance and ethical sourcing, but few retailers are doing enough to show their colours in this respect.

•   These shops point towards a fulfilling and productive life where your hard-earned money doesn't go to some offshore pension fund.

Observations from London can hopefully support the UK debate. There is however, another layer to London's suburban retail centres which is quite distinct in the national context; setting the city apart in terms of how we might plan and act in supporting change.

London's high streets and suburban centres have become the places where the city's diverse ethnic populations can articulate their identity.

Be it the Bengali populations of Stepney and Bethnal Green, the Turkish population of Green Lanes, the Indian population of Southall, the Jewish population in Golders Green or the multicultural Wembley High Road, these places all manage to be ethnically specific, and also identifiably 'London'. These populations have sustained local retail centres, providing resilient demand which has meant these places have been insulated from the challenges experienced elsewhere. Whilst we celebrate this generally, I don't think we have really paused to think about the value and importance this diversity has.

Hemingway Design has been based in Wembley since 1981. Whilst we have been there, I have observed Wembley High Road lose its M&S, its Pizza Express and most of the recognised chains and be replaced in part by subdivided units containing a myriad of micro – and always multi ethnic retailers – for the most part here, an evolving mix of Indian subcontinent, North African and Eastern European.

These retailers aren't just appealing to their own communities – they're punching beyond. This is partly because there is an acceptance in London of the exotic and the un-franchised, and

partly because they understand the locale. I often reflect on 'Mr. Tasty Corn' in Wembley where you are served with a cup of flavoured corn for a pound and once tasted, transported to some far-off place. I'm going to go to that guy rather than Burger King, I'm always going to support the "small guy".

All of this is of course highly entrepreneurial – often micro start-ups operating in tight shared spaces – intensifying and adding serendipity to the retail experience. Newly arrived entrepreneurs are taking advantage of a low threshold entry system into the city's economy; testing out ideas and starting to live their dream and often being able to do this (just like my wife and I did when we came to London 40 years ago), without collateral and bank debt guarantees. In this way streets across London are acting simultaneously as incubators to small businesses and to cultural identity more widely.

We need to celebrate this because what I don't see is empty shops. Wembley High Road is always packed and there is not a sign of a Franco Manca, COS, Spiritland style offer and there never will be, nor does there need to be. Vibrancy comes in many forms and we should embrace the fact that success doesn't have to mean cool. If you need a cool vibe then you hop on a tube to find it, and if you want Wagamama, Caffe Nero or Pret then the ever-expanding Wembley Park development offers that.

So, in conclusion, I think that many of London's retail centres by virtue of their ethnic and social mix create difference, which is challenging, exciting, resilient and necessary. Although it might be difficult to value this activity in a commercial sense, it is important to the future of our city. We need to find a way of appreciating these functions in London's retail streets and not just looking to replace them with whatever is on trend. Crucially, if London is to continue to sell itself as an "open city" post-Brexit then the city needs to recognise that populations will change, and planning must stay agile.

3.

LEARNING FROM LONDON'S HIGH STREETS
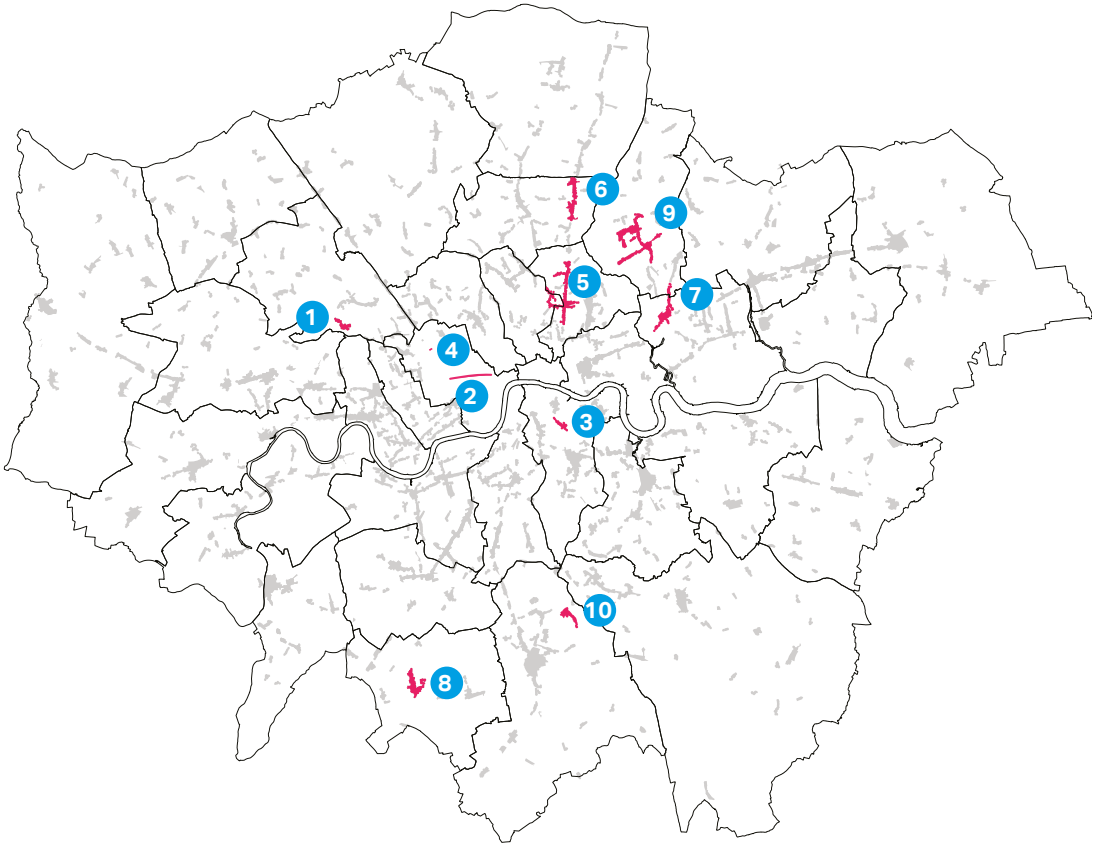
CASE STUDY HIGH STREETS

1. Harlesden, LB Brent
2. West End, LB Westminster
3. Old Kent Road, LB Southwark
4. Church Street, LB Westminster
5. Dalston High Street, LB Hackney
6. Tottenham High Road, LB Haringey
7. Stratford High Street, LB Newham / London Legacy Development Corporation
8. Sutton High Street, LB Sutton
9. Walthamstow, LB Waltham Forest
10. South Norwood, LB Croydon

LEARNING FROM LONDON'S HIGH STREETS

In this section we highlight a series of innovative approaches led by the London boroughs and their partners to tackle the different challenges faced by London's high streets.

The context of each case study is different. However, all show leadership, shared and clear goals and possible solutions to meet stated concerns and ambitions.

Each is testing bold ideas to generate momentum to build the case for investment. Common to all the case studies is the level of coordination across council departments and stakeholders, the identification of champions and a focus on delivery.

The consultant team behind this report worked with each borough to develop an understanding of the existing conditions and the innovative work already undertaken by each council. This part of the document showcases this model activity and develops a series of related speculative proposals.

Each proposal has been informed by an international reference framework of precedents and advanced approaches to evaluation and monitoring – see Appendix 1.

These case studies, precedents, propositions and evaluation approaches offer a range of possible resolutions to the challenges faced by different high streets. Together, these illustrate the breadth of practice and possibilities to frame the development of more 'adaptive' strategies for high street renewal across London.

PROPOSITIONS

Support the high street economy for a future shaped by experience and convenience

Creatively reuse vacant or underused retail units and department stores to support strategic values

Build on what already exists to plan for a successful mix of activities and uses on the high street

Ensure existing community value is retained and enhanced within a process of change and significant restructuring

Use data insight to support businesses on the high street

Promote social integration and deliver social value through enterprise on the high street

Make the high street a model for sustainable living and public well-being

Enable a flourishing culture for work on the high street

Adapt the high street to support cultural and civic life to foster social inclusion and interaction

Embed community participation as part of a long term strategy for the high street

THE HIGH STREET EXPERIENCE

Support the high street economy for a future shaped by experience and convenience

Using Harlesden town centre, this case study explores how a borough can experiment on a traditional high street, empowering businesses to draw on their diversity and expand their offer to serve multiple communities and meet changing demands

HARLESDEN, LB BRENT

Harlesden high street, LB Brent

EXISTING CONTEXT

Harlesden is in the north west of London, in the London Borough of Brent, between Kensal Green and Wembley. The town centre is one of the most diverse town centres in London and home to a growing population of new arrivals from Brazil, Portugal and Somalia. The architectural heritage of the area is also diverse and rich. The town centre has a range of small independent businesses including hair and beauty retailers, hairdressers, authentic Caribbean takeaways, fabric and clothing retailers alongside a good mix of stores selling fresh food including bakers, butchers, grocers and supermarkets. The town centre is well served by public transport options within walking distance.

Vacancy rates in the high street are low, indicating some resilience to change, although marginal. Great change is on the horizon in the areas surrounding the town centre. Significant development in the Old Oak Common and Park Royal Development will bring a major influx of more affluent residents to the area. This in turn will present new opportunities and some challenges for independent businesses on the high street. Those businesses will need to adapt to these changing markets. Brent will become the London Borough of Culture in 2020 which provides an important focus.

The high street economy already attracts a range of boutique retailers, creatives, artists and musicians. There is an opportunity to build on the existing creative talent and cultural activity on the high street to act as a catalyst for town centre change and development.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Old Oak and Park Royal Development
This is currently the UK's largest regeneration scheme, bringing 25,500 new homes and 65,000 jobs. This potentially will include the links to HS2 and Crossrail, setting the long-term context for Harlesden over the next 20–30 years. 'Early activation' projects are already underway, improving wayfinding to the site from Willesden Junction, and also to Harlesden's town centre.

London Borough of Culture 2020
LB Brent will be the London Borough of Culture in 2020. Through an innovative programme of activities, the borough will be exploring and celebrating the different stories and art which make Harlesden the place it is today. Local grassroots organisations will be supported to run a range of activities to celebrate the town centre.

Business support
Harlesden has a strong Business Association, whose members actively participate in local consultations and suggest strategies for improving the high street. The council has a town centre manager whose role is focussed on capacity building within the business community. The council also provides wider resources for businesses, including online signposting and a business events programme.

Policy and strategy
A Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted by the local community (2019–2034). It aims to build on Harlesden's evolving cultural identities, combat deprivation, and improve well-being by supporting a thriving local high street and local economy with increased access to opportunities in a safe and clean environment.

Town centre study
The town centre design and planning study helps to create a long-term strategic vision for the town centre whilst also developing shorter-term proposals to stimulate socio-economic growth. Local input and consultation ensures studies are relevant and reflect local priorities.

Context plan

Roundwood Park

High Street

High Street

Willesden Junction

Old Oak & Park Royal Development

High street building
Early activation way-finding
Town Centre boundary
London Opportunity Area (2015)
Old Oak & Park Royal development
Green space

0 25   100   200

PROPOSITION

Support the high street economy for a future shaped by experience and convenience

As high street economies evolve, some businesses need support to adapt. The case study focus is therefore on targeting funding to support high streets innovation and social integration.

A three-strand approach to supporting innovation on the high street

Systems interventions: Providing economic support to improve equal opportunities and resilience for high street traders	• Design a business skills support package for existing and new local businesses • Introduce a microfinance initiative for small businesses who struggle to access traditional finance • Establish a Challenge Fund for alternative access to funding • Address systemic barriers to gaining permissions within the council • Set- up a place-based, cross-departmental 'Events Action Team' that facilitates temporary programming • Build momentum by identifying a small group of 'early adopter' businesses for the initial rounds of funding who will help to encourage others to get involved later • Structure interventions around funding cycles to help build incrementally towards a common vision
Cultural interventions: Facilitating stronger relationships across different groups	• Use cultural and creative activity as a test bed for new ideas, bringing together different groups to share experiences • Understand cultural and economic relationships on the high street, through their supply chains and informal networks • A culturally diverse local population has London-wide and global connections; include this 'reach' in the design of cultural programmes
Physical interventions: Creating better places for the benefit of all	• Target investment around Good Growth principles • Improving the fabric of the high street will require capital investment • Systems and cultural interventions can inform where and how best to make physical changes • Successes from the systems and cultural interventions could help form an investment case for future funding • Shop fronts are important, but internal spatial arrangement also affects how a business operates • Create a pedestrian friendly, healthy environment on the high street • Individual units have an impact on the public realm; encourage cultural expression on the high street through planning

Delivering the high street experience

WELCOME TO THE HIGH STREET !

2019

2020

2022

2025

2027

Systems interventions

+

Cultural interventions

+
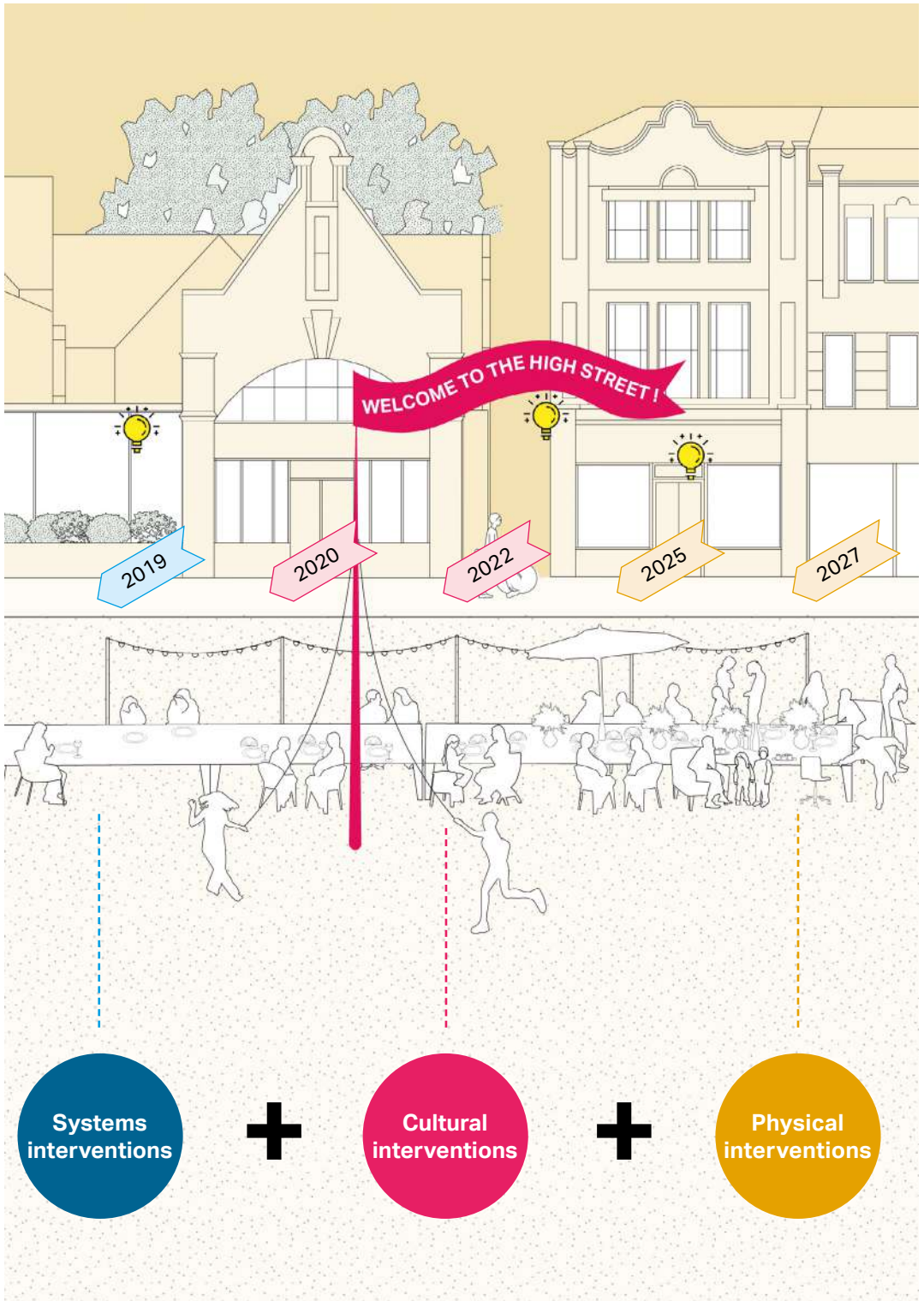
Physical interventions

Fair Finance
A social business offering financial products and services designed to meet the needs of people who are financially excluded. Businesses can borrow between £10–£30k for 6–36 months, at an Interest rate according to applicant's financial status (ranging from 1.2–4.2 per cent per month).
Image Credit: The London Data Company

Tottenham Opportunity Investment Fund
LB Haringey and the Mayor of London provide a programme to enable investment for small businesses. Loans are typically £100k with competitive interest rates repayable over several years. A support package includes a 30 per cent business rate discount for 3 years and business advice.
Image credit: Craving Coffee

Alexandra Rose Fruit & Veg Project
The voucher scheme supports low income families to access healthy, fresh food. It benefits local businesses by working with market traders to encourage regular trade. It has achieved a 95 per cent increase in fruit and veg consumption in Lambeth, with 94 per cent of people using the market more as a result.
Image credit: Alexandra Rose Charity

Burnt Oak Opportunity Support Team (BOOST)
A multi-agency employment support team with a place-based approach. The team works across departments, for example training, housing and benefits to ensure that local residents receive all of the support that they need.
Image credit: We Made That

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Build momentum with 'early-adopters' to demonstrate the benefits of getting involved.
- Design interventions around local community needs and networks.
- Test out new ideas quickly, and on a small scale first.
- Design experimentation into the funding process; use cycles of funding to build towards a vision incrementally.
- Develop the operational mechanisms that enable new activity on the high street.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Develop Theory of Change to map innovation process and behaviour change.
- Focus on experience and perception rather than £Gross Value Added and jobs.
- Carry out bespoke primary research allied with social media scraping / mapping.

Useful references

- Historical review of place based approaches, Lankelly Chase
- A Compendium of Innovation Methods, NESTA
- Good Growth Fund prospectus, including evaluation handbook, outputs and outcomes framework, outputs and outcomes database.

RETAIL RETROFIT

Creatively reuse vacant or underused retail units and department stores to support strategic values

The West End is unique in London as a global shopping destination. Yet it faces challenges around the evolution of retail like other high streets. This case study explores how huge retail stores can evolve alongside changing consumer behaviours. It sets out which regulatory tools play a part in facilitating this adaptation

WEST END, LB WESTMINSTER

Oxford Street, LB Westminster

EXISTING CONTEXT

This International Centre[1] attracts 200 million visitors annually to Oxford Street alone. The forthcoming Crossrail stations could see this figure rise by another 90 million. As one of the city's largest employment centres,[2] the West End generates 90 per cent of Westminster's economic output and 3 per cent of the UK's (around £50 billion annually).[3]

Uniquely, many of the capital's Great Estates are concentrated in the West End. Between them they own most of the property within the area and each applies a bespoke curatorial approach, tailored to the qualities of their property portfolio.

The West End is characterised by grand boulevards and both heritage and modern department stores which are occupied by the country's most well-known and fashionable brands. The restructuring of retail and fast-changing consumer landscape pose many challenges for the area's retailers. Large format department stores can be burdensome with long leases, an inherent difficulty to attract shoppers above the second floor, and planning use class limitations which can result in underutilised space, especially on upper floors. Added pressures can arise if retailers decide to economise, scale back or go into administration.

Unlike shopping malls, public streets are central to the consumer's experience of this retail destination. Improving air quality, reducing road congestion and providing more and better public spaces are all essential goals for the West End.

Key actors involved in helping the West End adapt to challenges and meet aims include Business Improvement Districts and the council's planning and licensing teams.

1   London Plan classification
2   An ambitious vision for the Oxford Street District, City of Westminster: Oxford Street District
3   ARUP. West End Good Growth: Identifying future growth scenarios for Oxford Street and the West End. GLA and City of Westminster, 2018

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Established BID (Business Improvement District)
Over 600 businesses in the Bond, Oxford and Regent Street areas
are represented by the New West End Company (NWEC). NWEC have
identified their own vision for the area with key objectives largely centred
around supporting business and improving the street environment. They
piloted a logistics scheme which resulted in a 95 per cent reduction
of refuse vehicles on Bond Street. The scheme is now available to all
members. NWEC's longer term future vision also addresses global
environmental concerns.

The West End, Vision 2030, West End Partnership (WEP)
WEP are a public-private sector partnership, including academic experts
and resident representatives. Their vision is to create "the world's best
outdoor street shopping experience," which includes supporting growth,
cultural offer and reducing traffic.[1]

**Oxford Street District: Place Strategy and Delivery Plan, Westminster
City Council**
In preparation for anticipated increase in footfall and a need to restore
the high street, this ambitious, holistic and evidence-based approach
outlines improvements to the streetscape, landscape, and movement
networks of the Oxford Street District. Bridging complex land ownership
arrangements, the strategy outlines overarching principles and the
delivery plan identifies streets and spaces.

Westminster City Council licensing team
In Westminster, there is a high demand for licensing permits. The team has
been working with the planning department for almost a decade to align
permits with planning objectives to enable interesting things to happen
including a mix of uses and events.

Other trends
Recently, technology firms have shown an interest in the area opening
shops and large offices, selecting desirable inner city locations to engage
with customers and attract employees. In line with trends focused on
experiences which cannot be obtained online, the former large format
BHS store is being converted into the UK's largest food hall.

1   The West End, Delivery Plan 2015–2030. The West End Partnership

Context plan

New Food Hall
within former large
retail unit (BHS)

Microsoft Store
A store with workshop
and event space.
Consumers can test new
products and learn new
tech skills.

Facebook
The office
supports 3000
employees

Areas behind the major
shopping streets,
sometimes accessed
by alleyways, support a
rich variety of activity
and street life

**Tottenham
Court Road**

**Bond
Street**

**Oxford
Circus**

OXFORD STREET

OXFORD STREET

Soho

Carnaby

Mayfair

0 25   100   200

The area is characterised by grand boulevards, historic squares, the Great Estates,
established residential neighbourhoods, and academic institutions

High street buildings

Oxford Street department stores and flagships

Forthcoming Crossrail stations
(Tottenham Court Road & Bond Street stations)

PROPOSITION

**Creatively reuse vacant or
underused retail units and department stores
to support strategic values**

To support retail innovation and an industry shift towards entertainment, food, drink, health, wellbeing and the experience economy, this case study shows how a major shopping street can adapt building stock and enliven surrounding public realm through coordinated action across BIDs, planning policy and licensing.

ADAPTABLE FLOOR PLATES

REGULATORY SUPPORT

1. BID/Landlord control
Establish aims, pilot projects, build networks, support businesses

2. Planning policy
Planning use class flexibility, Area Plans, planning conditions to support the vision

3. Licensing process
Align with planning and public realm vision, pre-application service, social value conditions
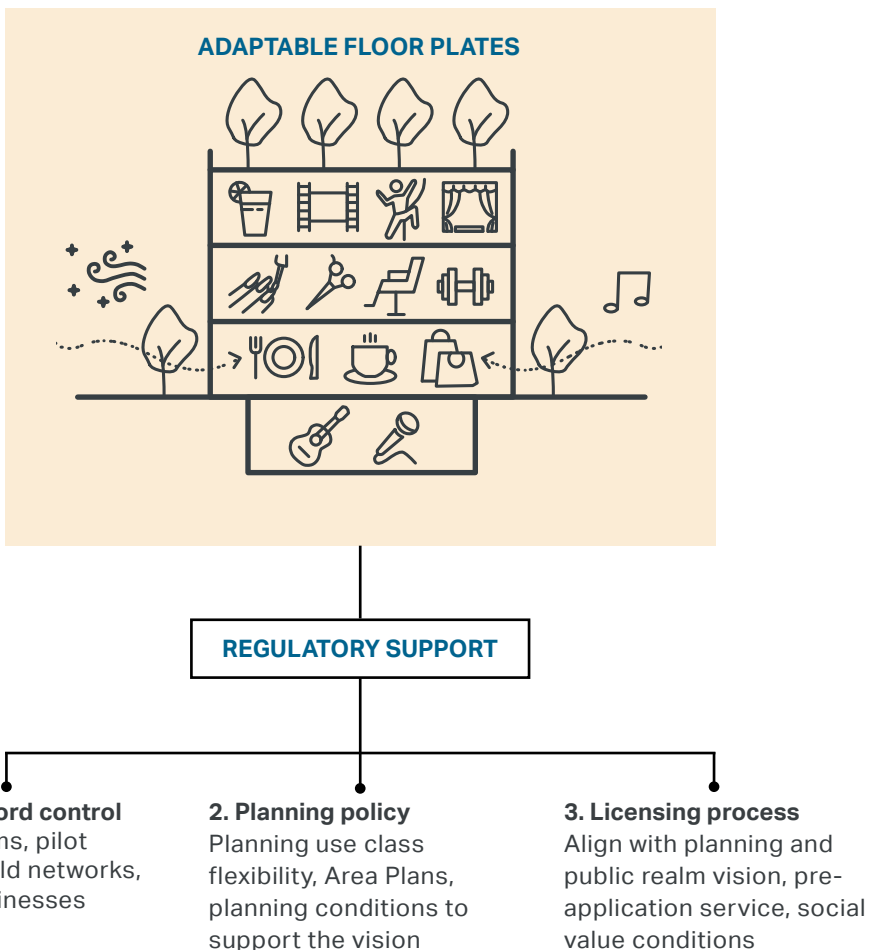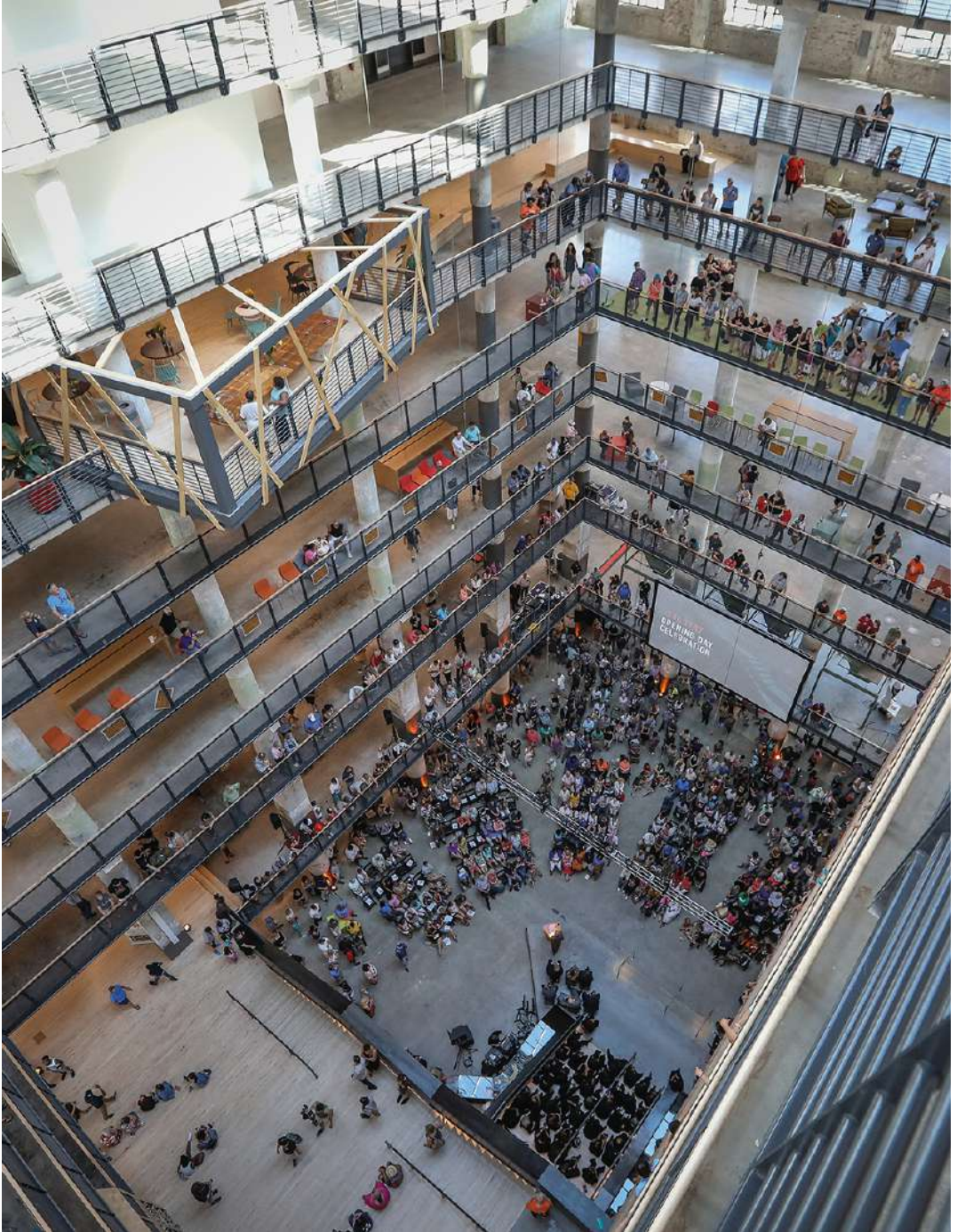
Crosstown Concourse, Memphis
After sitting empty for nearly 20 years, the former Sears retail and distribution centre was transformed into a vertical, mixed-use village comprising eateries, shops, salons, a FedEx store, pharmacy, gym, events space, workshop, healthcare, financial, educational facilities, more than 200 apartments and more. Image credit: Crosstown Arts

Adaptable floor plate for varied uses

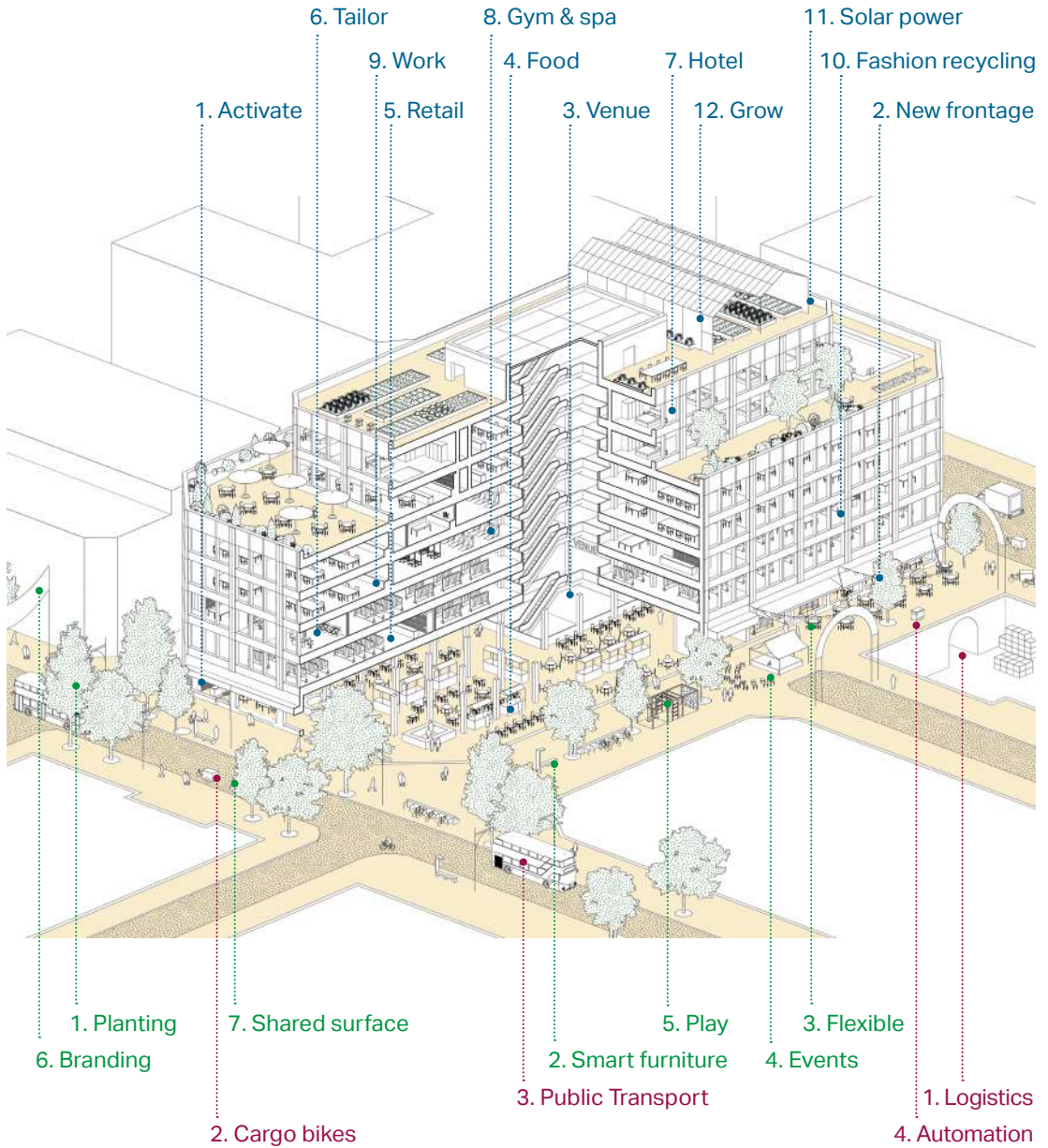Building on the West End's strengths, business sectors and future aims, this study considers how a department store can support new ideas and innovation fit for the multifaceted experience economy, supported by an enlivened public realm and streamlined logistics network.

Department store and surrounding public realm reimagined

Building	1. Active frontages. Shop windows provide an opportunity to engage the public. They should be vibrant and could be used for demonstrations, activities or workspace. 2. New shopfronts. Former department store windows are converted to small side street shops to promote enterprise and street life. 3. Venue. The underutilised basement is converted into a space for music, theatre, lectures and more – a curated day to night cultural programme. 4. Market Hall. Welcoming and active ground floor use, treated as an extension to the public realm and open late to support the venue. 5. Retail. Complimentary to the anchor use at ground floor level, switching to fashion on the upper levels. 6. Small zones to let for uses complimentary to retail (hair, beauty, nails, tailors, cobbler, embroidery) to promote circulation within the building. 7. Hotel to support tourism and business. Hotel facilities such as the bar, pool, and meeting rooms could also be used by the public or tenants. 8. Gym and spa for use by locals, tenants, or visitors staying in the hotel 9. Co-working / office space. Support enterprise at upper levels as retail is less successful above 2nd–3rd floor levels. 10. Fashion recycling facilities for resale in store. Offer upcycling workshops. 11. Solar panels to power the building and supply excess to the national grid 12. Urban growing. Food grown supplies the buildings markets and restaurants. Outdoor space to host workshops or dinner clubs.
Public realm	1. Increased street planting to improve air quality. 2. Intelligent street furniture, with charging facilities, and public wifi. 3. Flexible furniture which can also be used for events/activities. 4. Curated programme of temporary events (music, theatre, etc.). 5. Space for play (parklets, water features, swings, etc.). 6. Promote place and build identity with localised branding. 7. Shared surface to support future events and street closures. Incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems where possible.
Logistics	1. Consolidation delivery centre, logistics network (BID). 2. Last-mile delivery cargo bikes and parking to reduce vehicle traffic. 3. Improve access to public transport to reduce vehicle traffic. 4. Automated vehicles for deliveries and shuttles.

6. Tailor

8. Gym & spa

11. Solar power

9. Work

4. Food

7. Hotel

10. Fashion recycling

1. Activate

5. Retail

3. Venue

12. Grow

2. New frontage

1. Planting

7. Shared surface

5. Play

3. Flexible

6. Branding

2. Smart furniture

4. Events

3. Public Transport

2. Cargo bikes

1. Logistics

4. Automation

Regulatory support

The regulatory framework needed to support the future scenario shown on the previous page involves BIDs / landlord control, planning policy and licensing.

1. BID / landlord control

BIDs and landlords have an important role to play in defining the character of the high street, along with their members and tenants. BIDs give businesses a collective voice to guide and prioritise what members want for their area. Together with landlords, BIDs can help to set standards to enact change. This could include:

- Promoting the high street by defining a clear vision and brand developed from the specific characteristics of the area.

- Delivering a curated mix of uses, public realm initiatives, and events in support of the vision.

- Liaising with the council, Transport for London, and / or other professional or public bodies.

- Investing in pilot initiatives to test ideas for change, for example, around delivery, recycling waste, social impact or carbon footprint reduction in support of the vision.

- BID membership conditions / lease conditions and covenants can be used to help manage environmental and social impact. For example, determining delivery strategies, waste collection services or mandatory waste collection or office goods suppliers to reduce traffic / deliveries.

- Landlords can provide long-term, wide ranging business support services to tenants for mutual benefit: successful businesses will make more resilient tenants, more able to take on longer leases. Support services may also help businesses develop their capacity to deliver on the area's vision over time, for example around environmental or social impact.

2. Planning policy

For high streets to evolve alongside the changing consumer economy there will often be a need to respond with speed and agility. Planning policy can proactively help to support the adaptability of existing buildings to host a variety of uses and to enliven and improve the street environment, including logistics:

- Coordinate Local Plans, Area Plans and Town Centre Strategies across council departments (for example planning, licensing) to agree aims and ensure buy-in from the outset.

- Area Plans allow for standards and conditions to be set which may support varied uses or activation of public spaces.

- Area Plans allow for different or more flexible planning use classes within certain area boundaries whilst still retaining a retail-focused core where necessary.

- Local Development Orders could also be used to provide presumption in favour of development for specific uses within designated areas, improving decision-making efficiency and certainty for lease / freeholders (eg locally determined, extended permitted development rights).

- To enable experimentation, temporary permissions can be granted which could allow entrepreneurs/businesses to test an idea for a certain period (for example a trial run to test a use on an area or a meanwhile use of a vacant building).

- Planning conditions can be used to support the aims of Area Plans or Town Centre Strategies. For example, a condition could allow a certain amount of floorspace to be designated for another use to give a degree of flexibility. Another example would be to condition that a development signs up to a specific delivery or servicing scheme serving the whole area. This would be part of an effort to improve air quality and reduce road congestion.

3. Licensing

Like most high streets, the West End is comprised of a complex lattice of public and private landowners. This means that temporary installations or a rolling programme of events in the public realm are more difficult to achieve in comparison to single owner retail destination competitors, such as shopping malls. Concerns over the commercialisation of public space also limit outdoor temporary projects or activities. Licensing permits are required for any unapproved use not on private land. Learning from Westminster City Council's licensing team on items that could help to streamline the process includes:

- Consulting the licensing team on key future masterplans for the area. Together the planning and licensing teams could agree the uses and standards which should be permitted. These standards could then be embodied within further guidance (for example SPGs). This alignment means that certain licensing permits can be automatically granted if they are granted planning approval, such as the amount of spill out space in front of a restaurant.

- Introducing a quick turnaround licensing pre-application service, for a minimal fee, in order to make the system more straightforward and accessible.

- Establishing a separate City Promotion and Events Service whose team acts as a facilitator between planning and licensing and the applicant.

Other considerations include:
- Social value conditions within permits for corporate/commercial led events or temporary pop-ups. For instance, permits could require license holders to employ local people, use local suppliers/contractors, provide training opportunities and involve young people.

- Masterplans or visions generally last for 20 years while consumer behaviours change at a faster rate. Councils could consider reviewing aligned licensing and planning guidance regularly to ensure it meets the needs of a changing economy.

'Meet in the Street,' Gehl Studio
An evolving programme to reinvigorate a historic downtown street in Denver, which included steps to make the street more pedestrian / cyclist friendly and a series of experiences to increase dwell time such as play, live music, interactive art, dance theatre, games and lawn furniture.
Image credit: Gehl Studio

PRECEDENTS

Bikini Berlin
The world's first concept shopping mall has revitalised a former heritage-listed building in Berlin's City West. Once dedicated to fashion and textiles in the 1960s, the building now comprises shops, artists showrooms, gastronomy, workspaces, a cinema, leisure facilities, and hotel.
Image credit: Dagmar Schwelle

Market Hall West End, London
The West End's former BHS store will this year be converted into the UK's largest food hall by Market Halls Group. Over three floors, there will be space for 800 covers, 12 food vendors, four bars, a children's play area, dedicated event spaces, TV recording studio and a demonstration kitchen.
Image credit: Timeout

Half Term – Let's Play Festival, Coal Drops Yard, Kings Cross
A full programme of family events is held in the public spaces and surrounding units at Coal Drops Yard. The events are ticketed or free and include storytelling, making, exercise workshopssoft play, cinema and more.
Image credit: Kings Cross website

Logistics Pilot, New West End Company
To reduce road congestion and improve air quality, NWEC piloted a preferred supplier scheme to streamline business supply and waste/recycling collection services. The pilot resulted in a 95 per cent reduction of refuse vehicles on Bond Street. The successful scheme is now available to all members.
Image credit: New West End

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Innovative adaptation of large format retail units and department stores should incorporate other uses to complement retail.
- The pedestrian experience is central to the success of major shopping streets.
- Coordinating public realm events with adjacent ground floor activities can improve the street experience.
- Streamlining delivery and waste logistics can improve the street environment (air quality, road congestion).
- BIDs and landlords can help to establish strategies and pilot initiatives in line with the overall vision (deliveries / waste management, carbon reduction, etc).
- Area Plans, Local Development Orders, planning conditions and 'agent of change' policies can help support adaptation.
- A coordinated council (planning and licensing) approach can enable the efficient delivery of the high street vision.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Extend the reach of data dashboard to track real time change. Consider the use of a data trust as a third party to ensure that businesses and residents benefit from products such as a data dashboard.
- Pool private operator data, using the internet of things to understand changing patterns of use.
- Use mobile phone, credit card, Twitter, Uber, TfL and BID data, to understand catchment, behaviours, perceptions and consumer preferences.

Useful references

- When can conditions be used to grant planning permission for a use for a temporary period only?, Government Guidance: Use of planning conditions, Last updated 23 July, 2019
- Local Development Orders, Guidance for councils on preparing local development orders, Planning Advisory Service, March 19
- eCargo Bike Grant Fund, Department for Transport

INTENSE MIXED USES

Build on what already exists to plan for a successful mix of activities and uses on the high street

This case study explores the development of a ground floor strategy as part of an integrated area-wide approach to provide a clear vision for the future of the 'new build' high street

OLD KENT ROAD, LB SOUTHWARK

Old Kent Road, LB Southwark

EXISTING CONTEXT

Old Kent Road is a significant arterial route and industrial corridor for London with a rich history and character. Parts of the historic high street that once ran the length of the Old Kent Road have remained more or less intact, the largest stretch running between the Bricklayers Arms roundabout, tailing into East Street, up until Burgess Park. This stretch of mostly Victorian terraces is home to a range of new and relatively well-established businesses, including general and specialist grocers, cafes, restaurants, churches, hair and beauty services and community-based services. The southern end also contains fragments of high street uses but is largely characterised by heavy traffic and a car-dominated noisy environment. LB Southwark are being proactive in exploring a breadth of strategies to fulfil the ambitions for a continuous high street and have worked with the GLA to prepare an Area Action Plan to set out a vision for the Old Kent Road.

Post-war redevelopment has changed the Old Kent Road's character. The current low-density development, characterised by large format retail units, has resulted in inefficient land use and poor permeability between the high street, industrial and residential areas behind. The area is now undergoing a significant change. It is identified as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan as part of the major growth areas of Central London and the Bakerloo Line Extension Growth Corridor.

Old Kent Road is home to many businesses located in the high street hinterlands, and a combination of industrial, storage and warehouse uses occupy the area due to its proximity with Central London. Many of the businesses serve customers based in this location but collectively they are part of a wider high street ecology.

Large underutilised areas along the Old Kent Road will soon be reconfigured through Southwark's Area Action Plan, which supports the opportunity to reinstate the role of the high street and a 21st century high street experience.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Old Kent Road Area Action Plan (AAP)
The masterplanning policy sets out how best to deliver large scale development, providing high-level design guidance and policies on building massing, scale and use. Existing 'big box' retail and other uses will be re-provided in mixed-use blocks to provide new frontages on the high street. LB Southwark are proactively acquiring land and focusing on land assembly to unlock parts of the high street and deliver the necessary infrastructure. A key aim of the AAP is to provide 20,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs in the Opportunity Area over the next 20 years. Other interventions support cleaner, greener and safer development such as the Healthy Streets initiative, which aims to rebalance the road for use by pedestrians, cyclists and road users. The high street ambitions advocated in the AAP are being trailed and tested through projects such as the Livesey Exchange and East Street Library.

Future developments
Two very large schemes in the town centre, the Cantium Retail Park (Aviva and Galliard Homes) and the Ruby Triangle (Avanton) received planning permission. Together these schemes provide over 2,278 new homes, 21,641sqm of commercial space and significant contributions to new parks.

Future High Streets Funding
Old Kent Road has been shortlisted for the Future High Streets Fund to support growth and diversification on the high street. Ambitions include how local authority led development can help unlock major parts of the high street and town centres by focusing on land assembly and curation. The proposed project aims to facilitate retail evolution and make the high street more resilient by integrating new development within the existing parades.

Bakerloo Line Extension
The Bakerloo Line is planned to be extended from Elephant and Castle to Lewisham via the Old Kent Road. This will enable two new underground stations, improving transport connectivity in the area to serve the existing and new communities alike. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments on successful planning applications will contribute towards the new transport infrastructure.

Context plan

0 25   100   200

● AAP areas
1. Bricklayers Arms
2. Crimscott Street and Pages Walk
3. Mandela Way
4. Dunton Road
5. Cantium
6. Marlborough Grove, St James' Road & stables
7. Sandgate Street and Verney Road
8. Devon Street & Sylvan Grove
9. Old Kent Road South (Toys R Us)
10. Hatcham Road and Ilderton Road
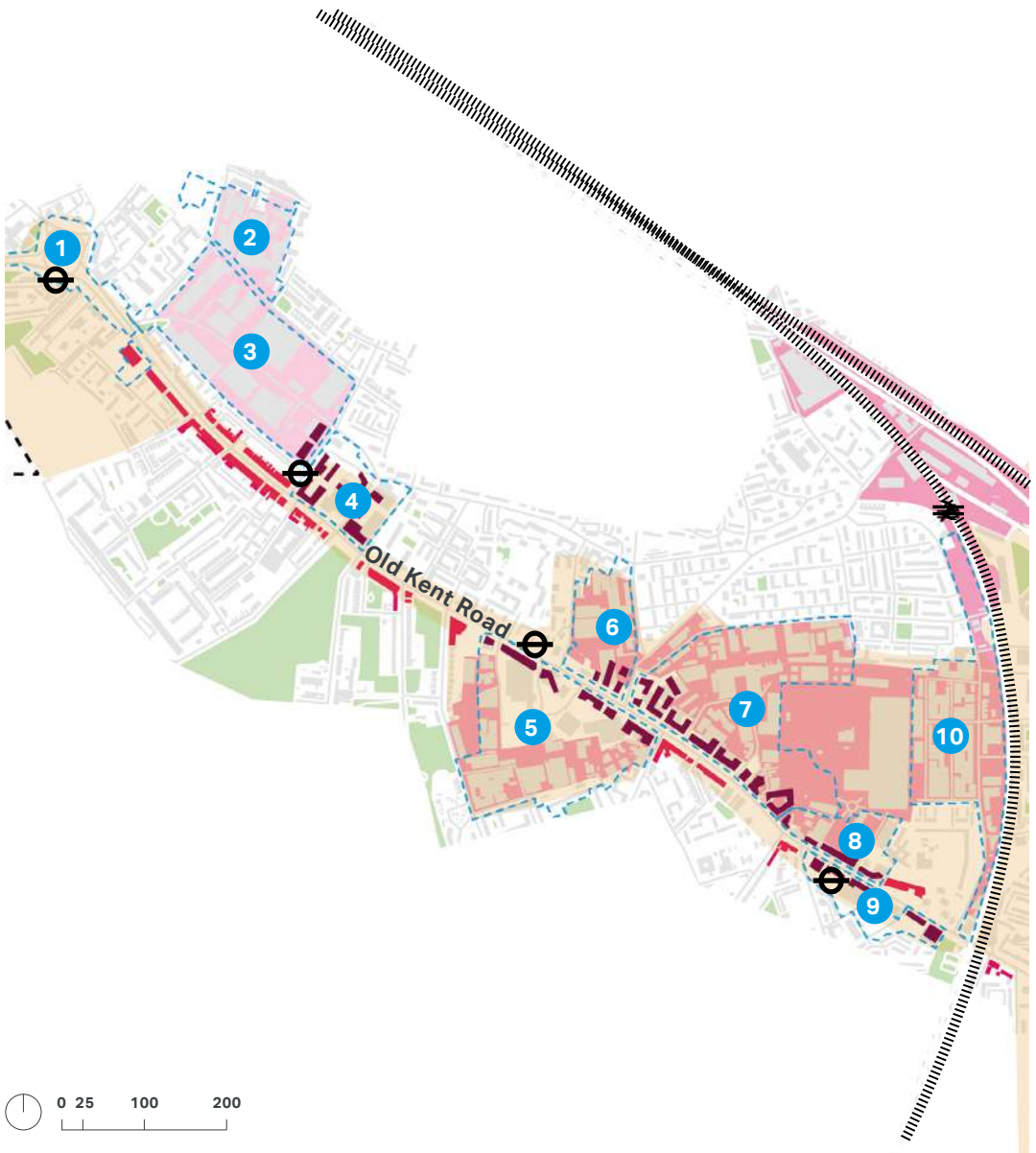
■ Existing high street building
■ Proposed High Street building
⊖ Proposed Bakerloo Line Extension
■ Strategic Industrial Land (SIL)
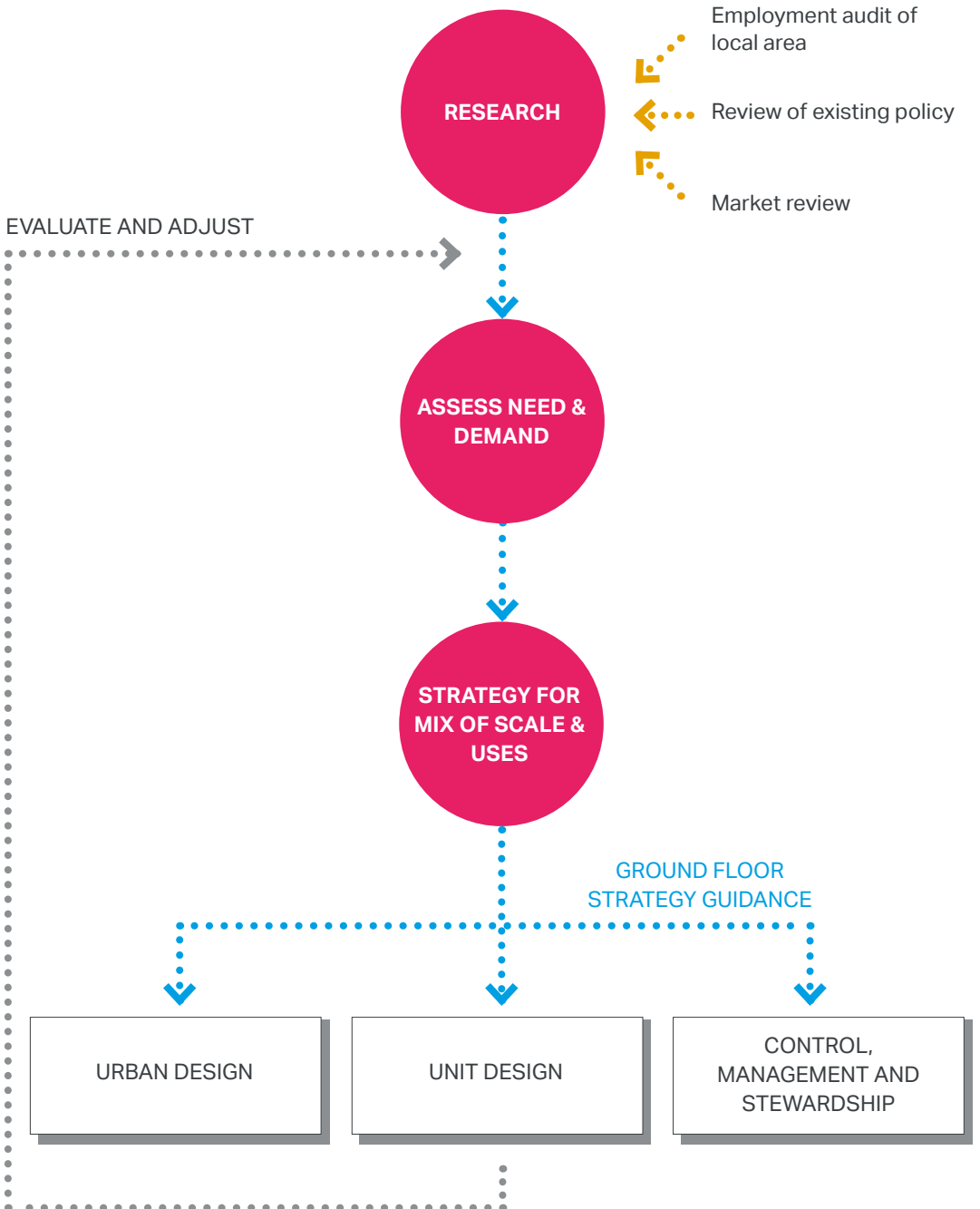■ Locally Significant Industrial Site (LSIS)
■ Green space

PROPOSITION

Build on what already exists to plan for a successful mix of activities and uses on the high street

The challenge for Old Kent Road is to deliver integrated mixed-use development that supports a vibrant high street environment and surrounding public realm. This will help to realise the ambitions of the borough's Social Regeneration Charter. A particular challenge is how a mix of uses and users interfaces with servicing and back of house requirements. Careful consideration of the high street experience and retention of the existing businesses in the area is essential. A Ground Floor Strategy would provide a clear vision for the creation of a successful mixed-use high street, as a supplement to the Southwark Old Kent Road Area Action Plan. It would promote a co-ordinated approach to planning and development by setting a clear brief for applicants to follow. The strategy should include a selection of policy, urban and unit design recommendations that aim to improve the overall high street experience and ensure successful integration with surrounding development. The ground floor strategy guidance should also be developed and read in conjunction with the policy within the Area Action Plan.

Developing a Ground Floor Strategy

A co-ordinated approach to the development of a Ground Floor Strategy will help to create a high street that has a successful mix of uses and activities, building on what already exists. An overall vision for the ground floor strategy is essential. This should respond to existing policy, buildings and the local economy to generate detailed design advice. This design advice should consider public realm and spaces, individual unit design and overall management and stewardship of the spaces. This guidance should refer to existing policy and provide further detail in order to support diversity and neighbourhood cohesion. Following this process will support a vibrant high street where culture and creativity can thrive amongst a growing number of residential uses.

Ground Floor Strategy Process

RESEARCH

Employment audit of local area

Review of existing policy

Market review

EVALUATE AND ADJUST

ASSESS NEED & DEMAND

STRATEGY FOR MIX OF SCALE & USES

GROUND FLOOR STRATEGY GUIDANCE

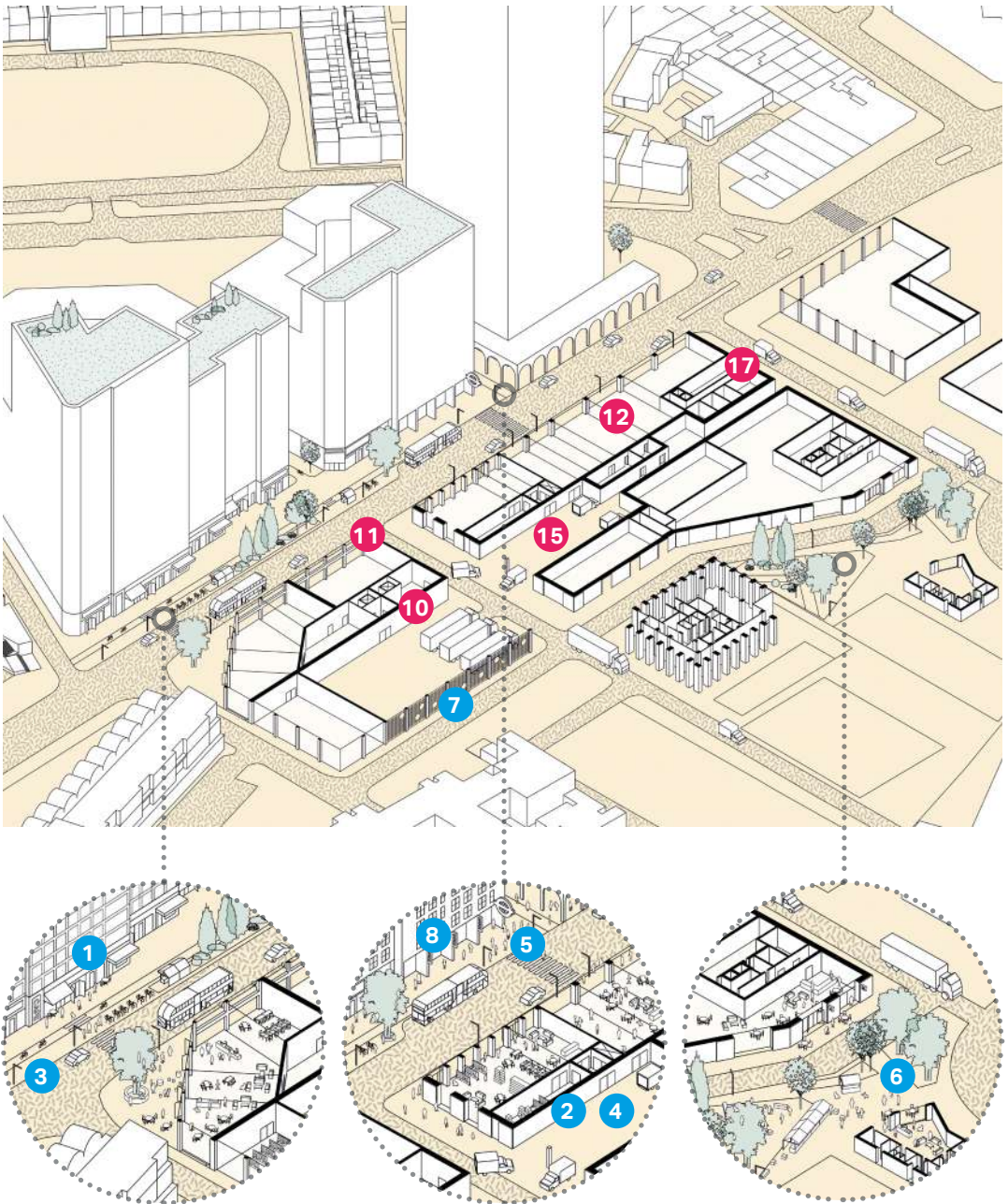URBAN DESIGN

UNIT DESIGN

CONTROL, MANAGEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP

Components of a Ground Floor Strategy

This table contains examples of the sorts of guidance that should be included to create a vision for a vibrant high street.

URBAN DESIGN	1. Activate street frontages through mix of use classes such as A1, A3 (shops, cafés), A2 (professional services), B1a, B1b or B1c (business) and B2. 2. Ancillary spaces, such as bike storage and parking, can be a buffer between residential, commercial or industrial use. 3. Create a hierarchy of movement. Separate vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access to industrial sites and consider boundary treatment. 4. Manage HGV access and avoid roadside loading and deliveries. 16m yard depth for LGV access. 27m yard depth for HGV access to individual units. 5. Promote active transport to reduce air pollution. Design junctions that are safe and easy to cross for pedestrians and cyclists, for example improving lighting and road crossings. 6. Create well designed public spaces promoting people and environment with connections to the high street and green links to parks. Activities for leisure, culture and play will encourage social interaction and attract business. 7. Consider how the public realm character of the high street links with secondary streets to promote pedestrian wayfinding and consistency of landscaping. 8. Consider proximity of use to public transport such as higher employment densities (B1c) in areas with higher Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) 9. Consider flexible threshold spaces between high street and ground floor.
UNIT DESIGN	10. Separate circulation for residential access, staff, visitors and services. 11. Minimum 6-8m ceiling height for medium sized industrial spaces with space on facade for signage. This allows for optional mezzanine space. 12. Maximise flexibility with non-structural dividing walls and large, clear spans to increase adaptability and subdivision for tenants. 13. Provide fit out and service provision appropriate to use such as radiator heating to office areas. Radiant heating panels, 3 phase power supply and petrol interceptor for industrial use. Gas provision for creative workspace. 14. Fit out beyond shell and core required for affordable units. 15. Delivery loading doors with 4m height and 2.4-3m width of opening. 16. Consolidate waste handling and collecting between adjacent sites. 17. Wide corridors for ease of movement without becoming an attractive storage location. 1800mm for creative studios, 3500mm for small industrial.
CONTROL, MANAGEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP	18. Use planning policy to control a co-ordinated approach to developments eg. stewardship team as part of S106 agreements. 19. Consider the use of an Infrastructure Delivery Steering Group to oversee delivery of projects. Set clear briefs and expectations for delivery. for management and control of letting space. 20. Consider use of property management agent with connections to local Boroughs to oversee lease arrangements. 21. Consider methods to secure affordable premises and define rent levels and service charges to support mix use provision. 22. Consider hours of operation of different uses. There must be sufficient sound insulation to mitigate this and allow for future change of use.

Illustrative proposition

PRECEDENTS

LB Hackney Property Portfolio, Dalston
LB Hackney s buying ground floor units in order to have a more curatorial role in the town centre. LB Hackney are working with Hackney Co-operative Developments to provide affordable workspace and are using Social Value Lease clauses to control outcomes.
Image credit: Thomasons Estate Agent

Travis Perkins Kings X, London
Cooley Architecture developed a scheme with Travis Perkins and Unite student housing to co-locate industrial and residential uses.
Image credit: Savills

Royal Albert Wharf, London
Phased scheme development of mixed tenure homes and commercial space at ground floor, providing a mix of creative workspace and flexible ancillary spaces. Newham council included terms in the section 106 so that the developer targeted creative industries to occupy the ground floor.
Image credit: Delvendahl Martin Architects

More Than Housing, Zurich
Largest cooperative housing programme in Europe, comprising housing units at subsidised rent, retail units and community spaces. The residential buildings enclose two public squares, with commercial and communal use at ground floor.
Image credit: Co-operative Housing International

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Study the area to understand existing operation and performance.
- Understand the existing businesses and local economy to support provision of appropriate mixed uses. Audits of existing uses can help to build an evidence base.
- Co-ordinate discussion with developers early on.
- Use policy and best practice principles to establish and guide a clear vision.
- Observe and learn from buildings in use, particularly to do with control, management and stewardship of ground floor.
- Set clear briefs and expectations for delivery.
- Conduct footfall and high street experience analysis.
- Compare to best practice principles and policy guidance.
- Include policy, urban and unit design recommendations into strategy.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Better articulate the reference case / do nothing scenario through research.
- Blend survey and technology to understand footfall and movement.
- Be honest on standards of evidence relative to secondary benefits (environmental and economic).

Useful references

- London Borough SPDs and Local Plans
- MHCLG Future High Streets funding proposals
- Industrial intensification and co-location study: design and delivery testing, We Made That, 2018
- Healthy High Streets: Good place-making in an urban setting, Public Health England
- Old Kent Road Social Regeneration Charter, LB Southwark
- Cultural Infrastructure Plan, GLA, 2019

RETAINING COMMUNITY VALUE

Ensure existing community value is retained and enhanced within a process of change and significant restructuring

This case study explores a long-term commercial curation strategy for community value-generation in the context of a big estate regeneration masterplan, using a portfolio of ground floor non-residential uses, insulated from standard financial models

CHURCH STREET, LB WESTMINSTER

Church Street, LB Westminster
Image credit: Jan Kattein Architects

EXISTING CONTEXT

Church Street in the north of Westminster is one of the most diverse and dynamic yet deprived places in the city. It is bounded by places of extreme wealth and opportunity, yet has suffered decline in both its physical environment and economic performance over the last decade. The area is also the focus of a highly ambitious regeneration programme that will take place over the next 15–20 years.

The street is a popular neighbourhood shopping destination, which attracts both local residents and visitors. Church Street is comprised of a high proportion of independent businesses, who provide affordable and specialist goods to a multi-cultural local population. Vacancy levels are low; however, due to the uncertainty caused by future redevelopment plans, businesses are often reluctant to invest in the property they occupy.

Unusually, the high street is composed of two very distinct halves. The southern end is dominated by post-war estates with ground floor commercial uses and a bustling street market. On Saturdays the market extends the entire length of the high street. The northern end of the street is comprised of mostly Georgian and Edwardian buildings which house high-end antiques shops, all of whom are graduates of Alfie's, a well-known indoor antiques market operating from Church Street since the 1970s.

Exceptionally, Westminster City Council (WCC) owns over 80 per cent of ground floor high street spaces, concentrated in the southern end of the street. This presents a unique opportunity to re-think the role that commercial spaces can play in the positive evolution of an area, in the context of forthcoming regeneration.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Church Street masterplan, a 15 to 20-year plan for regeneration
The Church Street masterplan proposes 1,750 new homes, new community and well-being facilities, increased greening and public space, increased connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, expanded market facilities and new retail, enterprise and creative spaces.

Regeneration Base, WCC
In 2015, a former shop became a 'Regeneration Base' for the council: a dedicated space where the community can drop in to learn about future plans. The Regeneration team continue to occupy the space, along with colleagues who support local employment and the market. The base provides WCC with a front door on the high street and has enabled the development of an in-depth local knowledge and rapport with the community.

Pre-development strategy
To prepare and build momentum for large-scale change, WCC developed a five-year plan which unites the positive interventions already happening and suggests interim actions. The purpose is to enliven spaces which might otherwise sit empty, to continue to consult and build a community network, to identify uses valued by the community and embed them in future development.

Vacant possession tracker
To plan for redevelopment, WCC have assembled a comprehensive and interactive record of their high street assets in order to clearly understand what they own, plan negotiations with businesses, better understand the social and financial value businesses provide and encourage a proactive and innovative curation of commercial units.

Current projects and Good Growth Fund
The council are undertaking numerous projects to support and improve the high street such as: destination marketing, business support, and the provision of free internet connectivity along the street. The Church Street Triangle project, supported by the GLA's Good Growth Fund, re-purposes vacant buildings and underused public space to create enterprise, arts and community facilities.

Context plan

Regent's Canal

Church Street Triangle
This project aims to bridge the divided street and promote activities throughout the day and evening

CHURCH STREET

Alfies Antique Market

Primarily antique shops

Saturday market extends to Lisson Grove

Clear division between North and South marked by Salisbury Street

Varied retail offer in post-war council buildings

Regeneration Base
Daily fruit, veg, clothes market

College

Edgware Road Station

UNDERGROUND

High street

Market on high street

High street building

Council-owned high street buildings (80%)

Church Street Masterplan Development Sites

0   25   100   200

Pre-development strategy

The strategy identifies objectives and potential actions which could be undertaken now. An example is set out below, paired with relevant recent projects by WCC. The emphasis is on building buzz, identity, capacity and trust with the local community.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
Help the community to play a more active role in the future of the area	**Enhanced participation and capacity** Ongoing conversations with local citizens to build capacity and actively engaged in the high streets' future (e.g. Regeneration Base)
Take a more holistic approach to the use of council-owned buildings	**Proactive asset strategy** Use the council's property to prototype new uses - blend businesses, retail, community and culture to change perceptions and better meet local needs
Develop a stronger sense of trust and civic pride	**Inward investment approach** Market the high street to change perceptions of the area and build buzz (e.g. Destination Marketing)
Prototype new approaches for business, local support and asset management	**Diversify the workspace offer** Test new managed workspace & maker spaces in council-owned property on the high street to inform future development
Support the diversification and scaling of existing positive activities, including the market	**Diversify and reimagine the market** Develop a market strategy based on meeting the needs of the diverse users. (e.g. New market stalls and support)
	Public realm and focal points Deliver exciting and engaging public realm to encourage greater use of the high street and to embed local identity (e.g. Church Street Triangle project)
Develop stronger arrangements for monitoring change and project success with data standards / trusts	**Impact measurement** Establish process to measure and reflect areas change, democratising data to enable greater participation

Vacant Possession Tracker

The tracker allows the council to pro-actively curate its assets through a period of change. It can be used to help plan the relocation of different businesses within the local area and contribute towards the safeguarding of businesses and the curation of the future high street. It can also aid in gaining vacant possession. While it may appear common sense, such information is not always comprehensibly managed. The tracker identifies:

- Lease terms and the specific time when the council can take control of an asset.
- Limitations on what they can do (specifically the Landlord and Tenant Act, 1954).
- Information about rateable values, which inform compensation.
- The type of social or economic activity which could be accommodated in the space.
- A ranking system which balances financial and social gains in order to inform lettings across the whole portfolio. This system will be fully informed by a framework developed through engagement with the local population.
- Recorded items within the tracker can be usefully colour coded and plotted to a map.

Tracker keyed to map

Examples of items to record:
Property type
Floor area
Use class
Existing tenant
Ownership / lease and length
Rateable value
Compensation payable
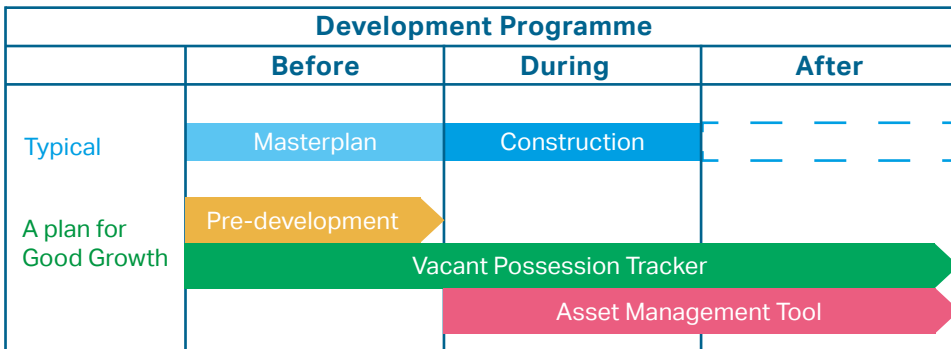Desirability to retain (community value)
Action plan

PROPOSITION

**Ensure existing community value is retained
and enhanced within a process of change
and significant restructuring**

WCC has recognised its ability to intervene to enable exciting and differentiating activity to take place on the high street. This case study highlights the good actions WCC have already taken to retain community value, by starting early before development to build trust and influence legacy uses. It then considers how this could be pushed further through the development and post-development phases, recognising the need to generate commercial uplift within operational phases.

Development Programme			
	Before	**During**	**After**
Typical	Masterplan	Construction	
A plan for Good Growth	Pre-development		
	Vacant Possession Tracker		
		Asset Management Tool	

Social and locally focussed activities often only apply to the 'meanwhile' phase of a changing area. However, due to Church Street's significant commercial portfolio there is an opportunity to apply these principles beyond the pre-development phase into the delivery phase – building in social value in perpetuity. By doing this from an early stage, WCC can build capacity within the local community and business base to ensure that they can engage commercially in the future and enable more value to be retained in the local area.

There is an opportunity to approach regeneration projects differently; however, it requires a flexible and responsive attitude to citizen engagement, stronger support from partners, beyond simple consultation activities, a cohesive willingness to try new things and an enthusiasm for the street and its potential.

Beyond the delivery of the physical masterplan, to build a legacy of an aspirational high street, comprised of many locally-owned and locally-managed community-valued uses, some units will need to be removed or insulated from standard financial case-making. The private sector commonly uses a curated approach, balancing financial viability and other benefits. The difference suggested here is to introduce explicit community value-building objectives.

Retaining community value during development and operation phases

The development and operational phases present an opportunity to do things differently. A typical commercial property scenario would build a range of commercial rates of return into the business case from an early stage, based on the advice of commercial property agents. Units would be let through commercial agents on completion, often with no consideration of the resultant nature of the street. However, commercial values upon completion can never be fully predicted. Indeed, recent changes in high street retail property values have resulted in lower rents and some retailers being granted zero rent leases, paying only business rates.

An alternative scenario considered here is to build in a flexible allowance for certain commercial units within the overall business case, while still ensuring that model is financially viable. Isolating some commercial properties from financial case-making from the outset and seeking other values in return, gives the opportunity to think innovatively and plan long term for the uses that will generate most community value and embed existing stakeholders in the process of change.

An asset management tool for the development and operational phases would allow for stakeholders to develop a coordinated approach to post-development occupation, including pre-existing and new tenants.

Asset Management Tool

The curation, support, and engagement process could continue through the delivery and operational phases to ensure that the established 'good growth' foundation continues. An example of objectives and actions to guide these phases for the next 15 years is set out below. They are more technical and process driven and aim to transition easily from the pre-development to operational phase.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
Retain locally valued assets throughout the redevelopment of an area	**'Ask' of developers and procurement** Develop a sophisticated 'ask' of developers to secure long-term engagement and retention of identified valued assets within the local area
Ensure developer partners buy into the overall objectives of the strategy **Ensure continuation and scaling of projects from the pre-development phase** **Ensure that anchor operators & those providing social value are retained through the development process**	**Total value retail strategy** Retain anchor assets and operators who deliver social value to the street. Ensure that the high street continues to serve the local population. Continue to support ongoing pop-up space to enable ongoing innovation in the offer.
Support the diversification and scaling of existing positive activities, including the market	**Decant and business support** Mitigate the disruption of the development process, ensuring that innovation and diversification of the commercial offer can continue through the development period **Compensation strategy** Adequately compensate those operators who are negatively impacted by the construction process
Embed social value aims within high street property management **Develop stronger arrangements for monitoring change and project success**	**Assessment and monitoring strategy** Develop a tool to assess and monitor social value targets for potential and current tenants. Establish a baseline and an ongoing approach to evaluation including qualitative evaluation.

Illustrative proposition

The illustration below imagines a proposed scenario for a masterplan development site guided by the actions identified in the three phases.
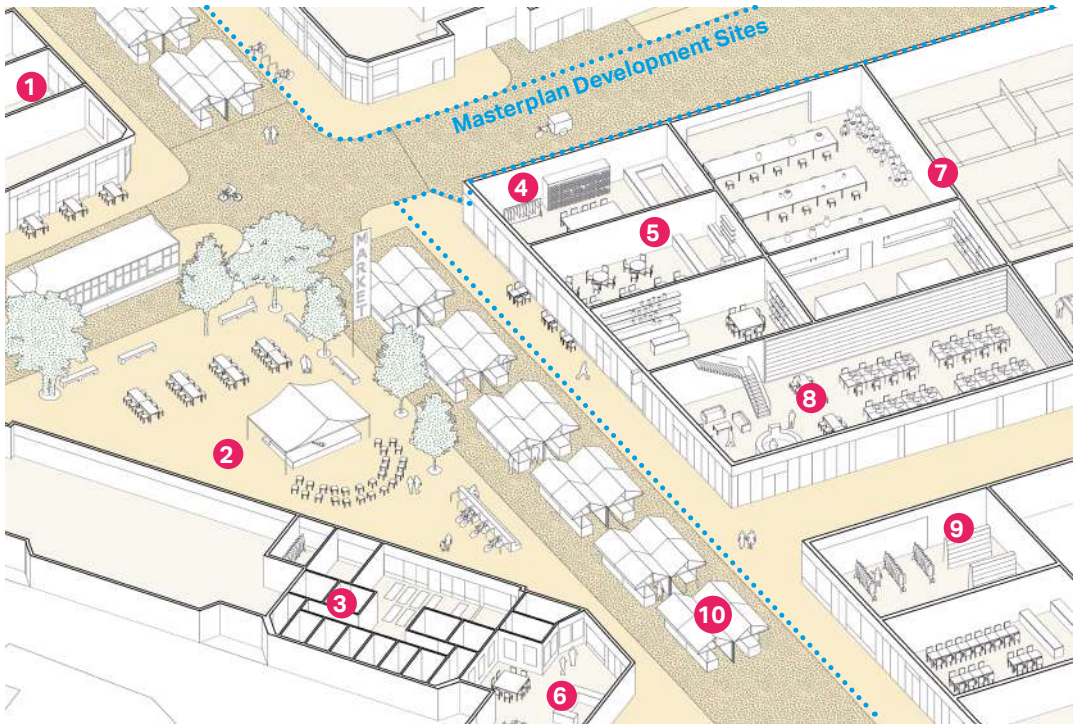
1. Second Shot: A coffee shop with social mission curated by the council (potential social value lease arrangement)

2. Church Street Triangle: Improved public space, lighting and shopfronts to support a vibrant day and evening street life

3. Enterprise, Arts and Community Space: A council property which supports an ongoing pop-up space to facilitate further innovation. Nesting uses could be incorporated such as evening yoga classes.

4. Fashion School: A new prototype use which supports valued existing business sectors

5. Church Street Cafe: A community valued asset which has been retained and relocated

6. Regeneration Base/Urban Room: Continued dialogue with local citizens and developers. Council offices offering business and market support, decanting and compensation advice.

7. New community centre and makers space: Managed by a community group who provide workshops and after school activities for young people, funded by S106 contributions

8. Library: with computers, meeting rooms and space to work.

9. Valued market tenant who wanted to expand their business offered a ground floor unit

10. Market stalls dedicated to test innovative ideas (for example youth enterprise) or provide training in prominent local business sectors (eg antiques, food, retail)

PRECEDENTS

International House Workspace, Brixton
A council owned asset let to an intermediary at low cost to deliver social and economic outcomes. It is cross subsidised and supports a balance of market, affordable and free rent spaces. Free spaces are available for community organisations. The project is also within the Mayor's Creative Enterprise Zone.
Image credit: Lambeth Council

Folkestone Creative Quarter
Managed by an independent local charity, a portfolio of acquired high street properties in Folkstone are offered to tenants at a low cost or sometimes free initially to stimulate cultural activity. The project has evolved to deliver 500 jobs and 90 per cent of rents are now at market value rate.
Image credit: Creative Folkstone

CoLab Dudley, based in the town centre
This social lab, with both an online platform and physical space, operates by building a core team of local people, with a range of skills to share to deliver often experimental community projects. Projects include: Repair Café, Crafternoon and Trade School Dudley.
Image credit: CoLab Dudley

Roeselare West Flanders, Belgium
Proactive and dynamic town centre management. Inspired by discussions with Bill Grimsey, Roeselare councillors developed a plan which identified 50 actions to rejuvenate the town centre. Actions include: empty shop tax, encouraging business back to the centre, pop-ups, etc.
Image credit: Institute of Place Management

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Start the process early to build trust and legacy uses.
- Consider commercial properties as a whole. Protect a proportion of them from financial case-making, building community and social value into the case from the outset.
- Consider the range of uses to make a vibrant street including those that extend into the night such as evening classes.
- Make a Pre-development Strategy: build buzz, identity, capacity and trust with the local community.
- Use a Vacant Possession Tracker, record ownership, leases, local authority influence and which businesses and facilities are providing community value.
- Continue to curate ground floor uses with the participation of stakeholders, through the development and operational phases and beyond, safeguarding and providing opportunities for community valued businesses.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Develop Theory of Change to establish the principles behind changing behaviours.
- Build better information measurement and data collection into social value leases.
- Undertake resident and business research to reflect on experience through area change.
- Refer to Good Growth Fund prospectus, including evaluation handbook, outputs and outcomes framework and outputs and outcomes database.

Useful references

- Repair Café starter kit, Repair Cafe Foundation
- Participatory City, Participatory City Foundation. See published research
- Community Lover's Guide. See Collections and Open Source Projects
- Urban Rooms Network
- Incubator Units, Blackburn Market
- Boston Main Streets. See business resources
- Creative Enterprise Zone prospectus

DATA INSIGHTS

Use data insight to support businesses on the high street

Using Dalston town centre, this case study explores how an inclusive, technologically-enabled high street can benefit local businesses and market traders. It explores how the experience and performance of the high street can be improved when data insight is used as part of an evidence base for public decision making and policy

DALSTON, LB HACKNEY

Ridley Road Market, LB Hackney

EXISTING CONTEXT

Dalston, in Hackney, is a major centre, an important part of the City Fringe Opportunity Area, and a cluster for Night Time Economy uses. Key areas and local assets include Ridley Road Market, Gillet Square, and Dalston Eastern Curve Garden which offer community and retail focal points. Kingsland Shopping Centre and Dalston Square offer a focus for commercial retail. The Creative Quarter includes several publicly owned buildings on Ashwin Street and focuses on generating social value.

The borough has an ambitious digital vision for Dalston, with Good Growth Fund to support economic growth, increase the economic sustainability of Ridley Road Market and make the town centre more digitally inclusive. This aims to tackle inequality and improve access to information and opportunities across the borough, particularly for hard to reach demographics.

Hackney has one of the world's largest and fastest growing technology sectors, comprising many micro and small businesses. The Council will work with this sector to develop social and commercial digital interventions aimed at improving the town centre experience.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Digital connectivity
Embracing smart technology as part of a long-term plan,
LB Hackney aims to improve infrastructure borough-wide through
the Digital Connectivity Programme, with inclusivity as a key driver.
The programme will provide free or low-cost internet access to
council residents and tenants.

Business communities
Ridley Road Market hosts 4000 traders per month on a permanent
and casual basis. The Market Traders Association and the Dalston
Business Association led by small enterprises, enable businesses to
collectively self organise.

Curating the high street
LB Hackney has been acquiring ground floor units in new mixed-
use developments to curate the balance of uses in the town centre.
This is helping the borough to deliver core services through revenue
generation, and create space that serves local needs such as
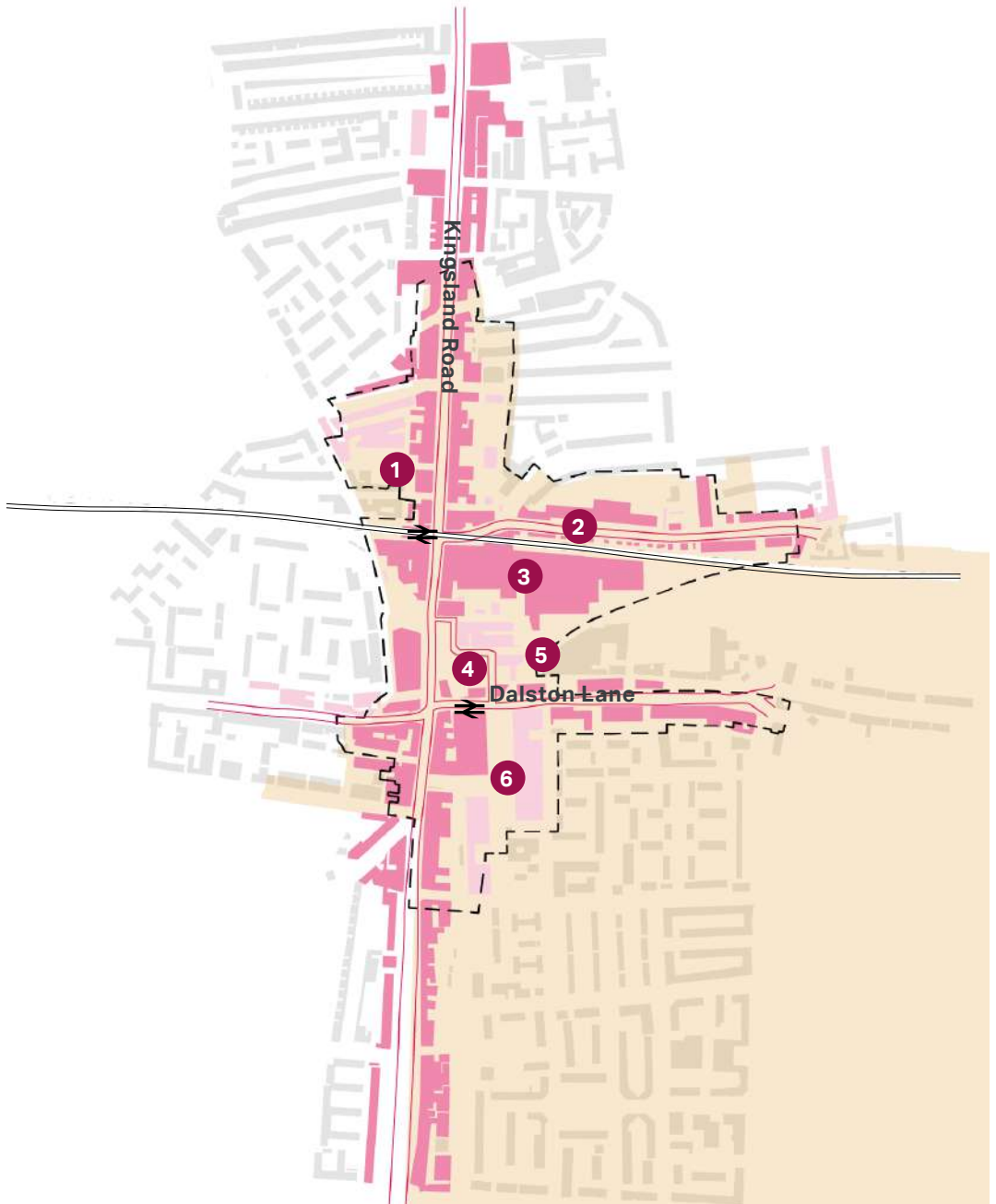affordable workspace.

Emerging policy
Based on extensive primary research and data from
'Dalston Conversations', a new Supplementary Planning Document
is due to be published in Autumn 2020. LB Hackney have also
developed an engagement strategy to understand how young
people use the physical and digital public realms.

Good Growth Fund project
LB Hackney have successfully bid to the Good Growth Fund to
deliver 933sq m of public realm improvements by the end of
March 2021. This includes new stalls for the Ridley Road Market
traders, a better market layout and the installation of contactless
card payment machines for market traders. This is accompanied
by training to equip traders with the skills needed to digitally
future proof their operations, with free wifi at key locations across
the town centre.

Context plan

Kingsland Road

Dalston Lane

0 25   100   200

● Key areas
1. Gillet Square
2. Ridley Road Market
3. Kingsland Shopping Centre
4. Ashwin Street
5. Eastern Curve Garden
6. Dalston Square

▪ High street building
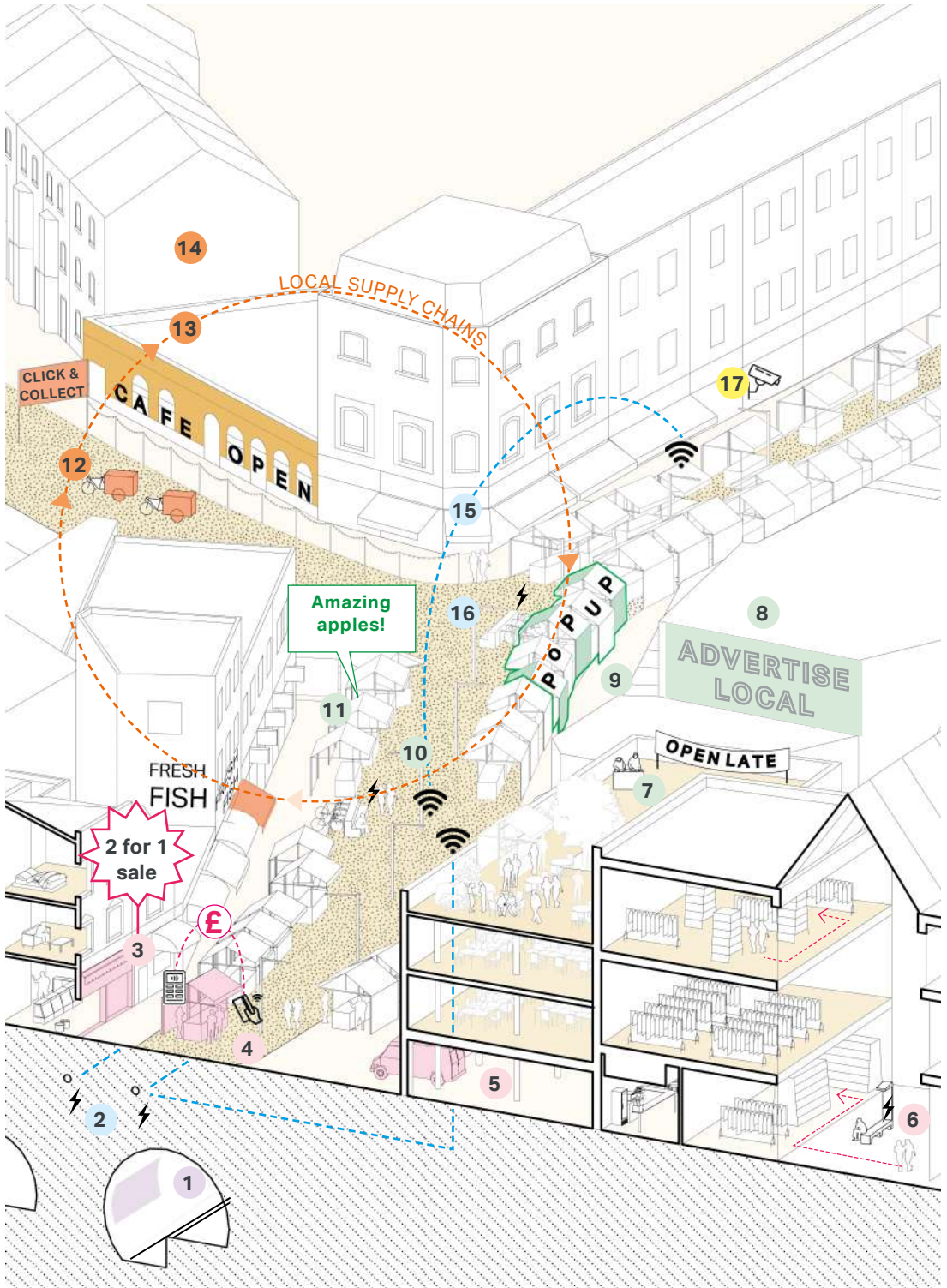⬚ Town Centre boundary
▪ London Opportunity Area 2015

PROPOSITION

Use data insight to support businesses on the high street

The table below describes several ways that data can be used on a digitally-enabled high street.

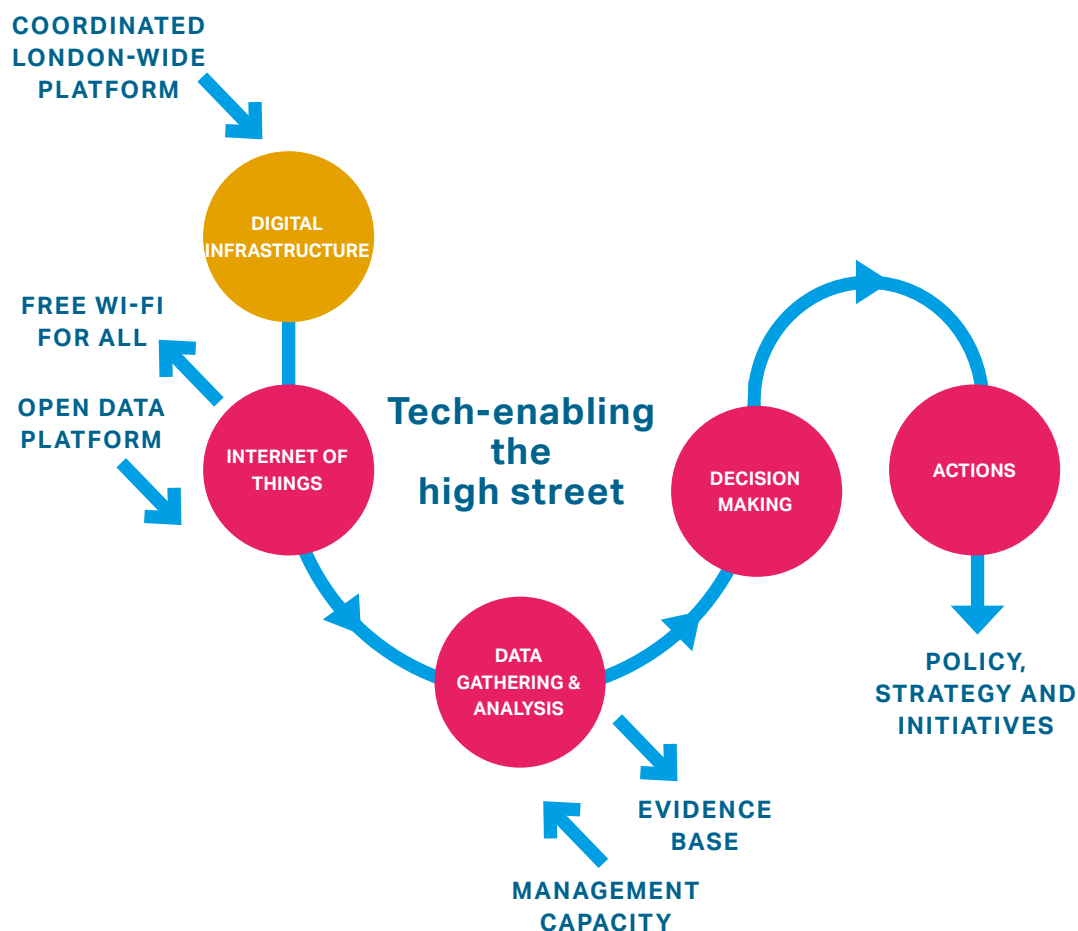|	Data & digital infrastructure	Insights and management opportunities	
Transport	• Public transport schedules • Mobile ticketing • Electric car charge points • Parking space availability • Traffic management • Accessibility for mobility impaired	• Improved public transport connections and information on the high street • Consolidated deliveries driven by data and live APIs on stock • Efficient last-mile logistics for market stalls and retail units	1
Retail and Consumer	• Stock and orders • Visitor spend (VISA payments) • Demographics and Census • Visitor volumes • Movement patterns • Frequency of visits • Prices	• Deals and promotions to buy local • Enable market traders to access wider customer base • Coordinate stock and delivery logistics • Strategic oversight for town centre management	3 4 5 6
People and Public Realm	• Demographics • Web-pages searched in locations • Social media posts • Footfall monitoring • Roaming route tracking • Sentiment • Dwell times • Reviews	• Increase night time economic activity • Informed place-branding and promotion of local assets • Market pitches management and innovation • Audience targeted provision of civic infrastructure • Locating sites to test temporary interventions and inform permanent public realm design	7 8 9 10 11
Environment	• Resources and supply chains • Food waste • Noise pollution monitoring • Air quality monitoring • Water and energy management	• Supporting a circular town centre economy • Food sharing and waste reduction schemes • A better evidence base for licensing policy	12 13 14
Infrastructure	• Connectivity • Data visualisation and modelling • Smart street lighting • Energy consumption • Device charging points	• High speed internet for businesses and visitors • Light and free wifi amenity for all • Public seating integrated with street furniture	2 15 16
Security	• CCTV • Crime • AI tracking and surveillance	• Activating public spaces to prevent crime • Artificial Intelligence to coordinate information for first response emergency services	17

Delivering the digital vision

CLICK & COLLECT

CAFE OPEN

LOCAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Amazing apples!

POP UP

ADVERTISE LOCAL

OPEN LATE

FRESH FISH

2 for 1 sale

£

14

13

12

15

16

11

10

17

8

9

7

3

4

2

1

5

6

Supporting the vision

The table on the previous page outlines the types of data available and indicative insights and actions that boroughs can take with the benefit of that intelligence. Data insight can help boroughs to support businesses and organisations that add social value to the high street, reinforcing the high street as a piece of shared civic infrastructure with a vital role to play in achieving the Mayor's aims for social integration.

A digitally enabled high street can inform an evidence base for public decision making and policy. With the right skill-set and capacity in local authorities, data can improve this process and therefore the performance of places.

COORDINATED LONDON-WIDE PLATFORM

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

FREE WI-FI FOR ALL

OPEN DATA PLATFORM

INTERNET OF THINGS

Tech-enabling the high street

DECISION MAKING

ACTIONS

DATA GATHERING & ANALYSIS

EVIDENCE BASE

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

POLICY, STRATEGY AND INITIATIVES

High street data partnerships

OPEN DATA PLATFORM

Good Growth Fund Pilot

Social Value Charter

Conditions for using public data:
1. Provide opportunities for local businesses
2. Strengthen local participation
3. Provide digital skills training
4. Improve sense of place and public life
5. Provide ways into work
6. Promote community and cultural exchange
7. Improve social integration
8. Improve transit and connectivity

LOCAL AUTHORITY

Code of Ethics
1. Consult on use of public data and tracking technologies
2. Work with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for any use of tracking technologies
3. Set clear parameters for purpose of data use
4. Assess proportional representation of data
5. Consider use of a data trust to both provide data and regulate data use
6. Promote scaling of platform to other boroughs via London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI)

BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

INSTITUTIONS

THIRD SECTOR

RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS

Digital infrastructure

A digital town centre strategy should consider the layering of types of digital infrastructure, their life cycles, and how to manage these systems as a constant process of change and evolution.

	Layers of digital infrastructure	Life cycle
1	**Physical space** Fixed digital devices, equipment and infrastructure. For example, ducting, street furniture including lamp posts, seating.	**Very slow life cycle** Baseline requirement.
2	**Digital connectivity** Enables connectivity between devices and locations. For example, cabling and wireless protocols. Creates a platform for different systems integration For example, data LANs, gateway controllers and servers	**Longer life cycle** 10-15yrs, baseline requirement. Dependent on business requirements.
3	**Platforms** Front and back end platforms that user applications plug into. For example, management platforms, CCTV and baseline data collection/sharing.	**Short life cycle** Dependent on specific user needs.
4	**User applications** Services and processes that the end-user digitally interacts with For example, payment app, delivery notifications, virtual loading bay, vacant unit and business matching, last mile cycle deliveries, recycling guidelines, council services.	**Very short life cycle** User dependent, often provided by third parties.
5	**End-user devices** Any device that the end-user interacts with. For example, smartphone, smartwatch, laptop or street totem.	**Very short life cycle** Often end-user owned.

A LAYERED DIGITAL STRATEGY
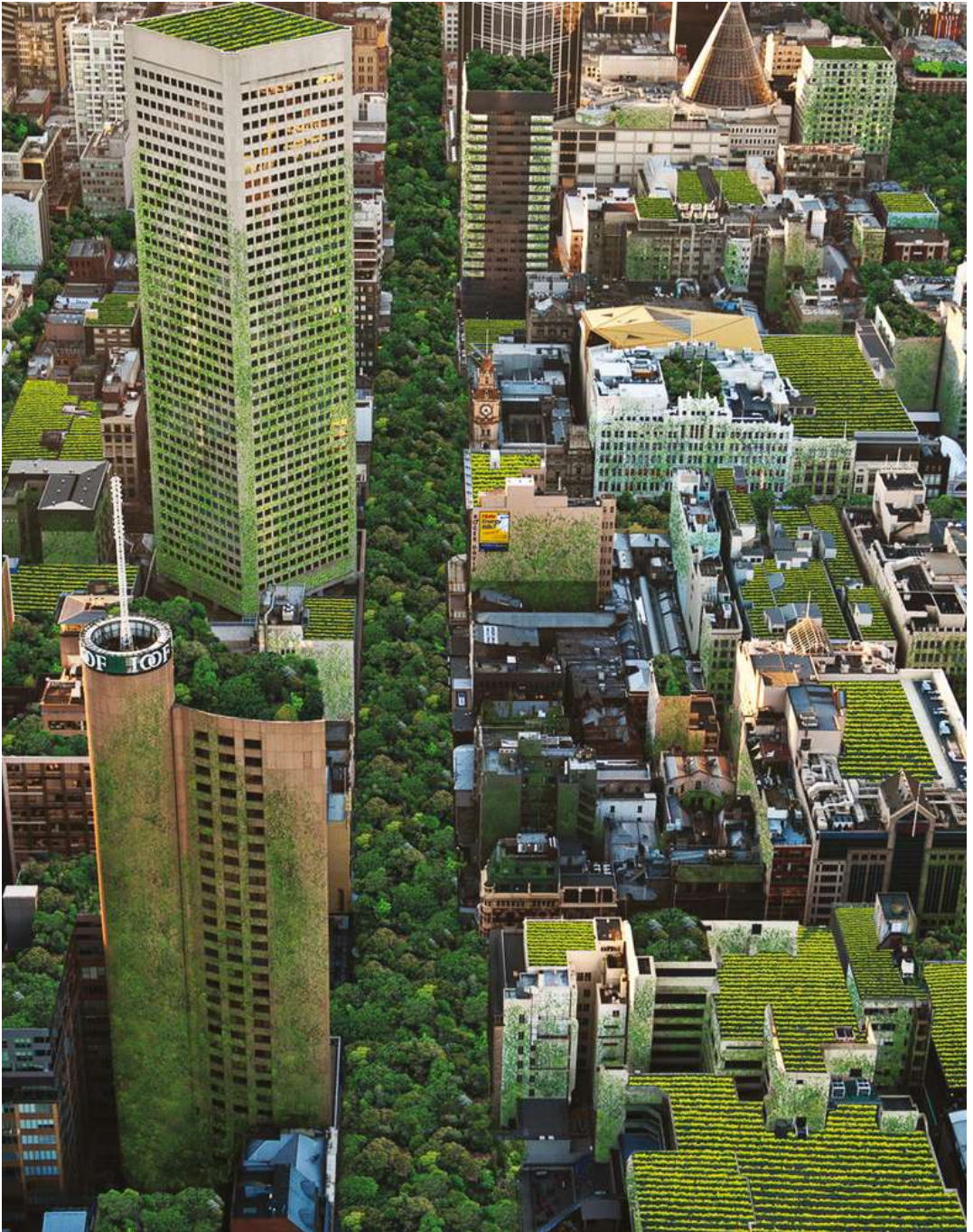
Melbourne Urban Forest Project
Data on all trees in the public realm is made available via the City of Melbourne's Open Data Portal. The data allows the city to set out Urban Forest Precinct Plans, containing a ten-year planting schedule. Community priorities are factored into the plans and the data helps to increase biodiversity in the city and improve public realm and air quality.
Image credit: Anton Malishev

PRECEDENTS

Open Data Bristol
A data-sharing platform that offers data management, data sharing across public and private sectors, and the ability to create new services and foster community engagement. The prototype dashboard for the One City Plan provides a shared action plan across multiple sectors.
Image credit: Wikimedia Commons

Market Street Prototyping Festival, San Francisco
The festival connected designers, artists and makers with neighbourhoods and encouraged them to develop and test ideas to enliven the sidewalks. A collaboration between San Francisco Planning Department and Yerba Buena Centre for the Arts.
Image credit: Alexandra Nicole Solis-Sison

Bath High Street Strategy
Movement Strategies provided data-based insights for Bath's Business Improvement District. A Head of Data has been employed to review spend data and movement insights through a dashboard portal. The strategy includes push notifications for targeted offers and discount information.
Image credit: Wikimedia Commons

Reducing Food Waste, Borough Market
FoodSave, Plan Zheroes and Borough Market have worked together to collect surplus food from markets and redistribute it to local charities to significantly reduce food waste.
Image credit: Vicky Couchman, Evening Standard

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Invest in digital infrastructure borough-wide.
- Improve digital inclusivity by making access to the network free.
- Coordinate data standards within the borough and across London.
- Integrate new systems with London-wide networks and protocols.
- Prioritise cyber security of personal data over profit.
- Define a code of ethics for how and why data can be gathered and used by third-parties.
- Attach social value outcomes to the use of public data.
- Set up a data partnership for data that should not be open but should be shared.
- Work collaboratively to test and develop initiatives to improve the management and experience of public realm.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Develop research 'institute' approach to understand the questions enhanced data can help to answer.
- Balance data approach with behavioural insights, understanding how data can be better used to influence policy and business decision making.
- Work with the Mayor's City Data Analytics Programme.

Useful references

- City Data Analytics Programme
- Wifi data collection, TfL
- Anonymisation: Code of Practice, managing data protection risk, Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
- International Data Corporation, Data as a Smart City Asset
- London Data Store
- London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI)

SOCIAL VALUE

Promote social integration and deliver social value through enterprise on the high street

This case study builds on a decade of capacity building within the council and local community. It explores how social value can be delivered through making the best use of council assets, lease arrangements and community asset transfer opportunities

TOTTENHAM HIGH ROAD, LB HARINGEY

639 Tottenham High Road and Tottenham Public Room, LB Haringey
Image credit: Angus Leadley Brown

EXISTING CONTEXT

LB Haringey has been working closely with the GLA and its residents and businesses for over a decade, to build strong partnerships and address local social and economic challenges. The 2011 riots, which were closely connected with the dynamic of the high street, were a pivotal point. The council's approach, skills and resources have evolved in a sophisticated way to respond to socio-economic inequality. Strategies for the area cut across economic development and regeneration departments and have Tottenham High Road at their heart. There is a long-term approach to social value-creation and community wealth-building that sees the benefit of robust stakeholder partnerships.

The Tottenham High Road wider context is undergoing significant change including large-scale estate regeneration projects and the recent completion of White Hart Lane stadium and associated masterplans.

LB Haringey owns numerous properties along and around Tottenham High Road. Many of these buildings have significant heritage value and a relationship with the surrounding public realm which could be better used to create spaces for the community to come together.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Strategy for Tottenham High Road, a 10-year plan
A multi-disciplinary strategy for a vision to strengthen the high street has recently been adopted after detailed consultation. Funded in part by the Good Growth fund, Enterprising Tottenham High Road (ETHR) is the first major project of this strategy. See diagram (right).

Economic Development Strategy, to be published soon
Community Wealth Building is embedded in the updated strategy. It coordinates delivery priorities, milestones, budget considerations and objectives across departments to achieve desired outcomes in 2–4 years. The outcomes prioritise growing business, supporting the high street, improving residents' employability skills, and inclusive regeneration.

Asset Management Plan (AMP)
LB Haringey maintains a corporate AMP, which records their property estate (stock type and asset status / insurance values) and achievements, describes the capital programme, and makes recommendations for corporate governance, organisation and procedures for all property matters. The AMP is coordinated with regeneration strategies.
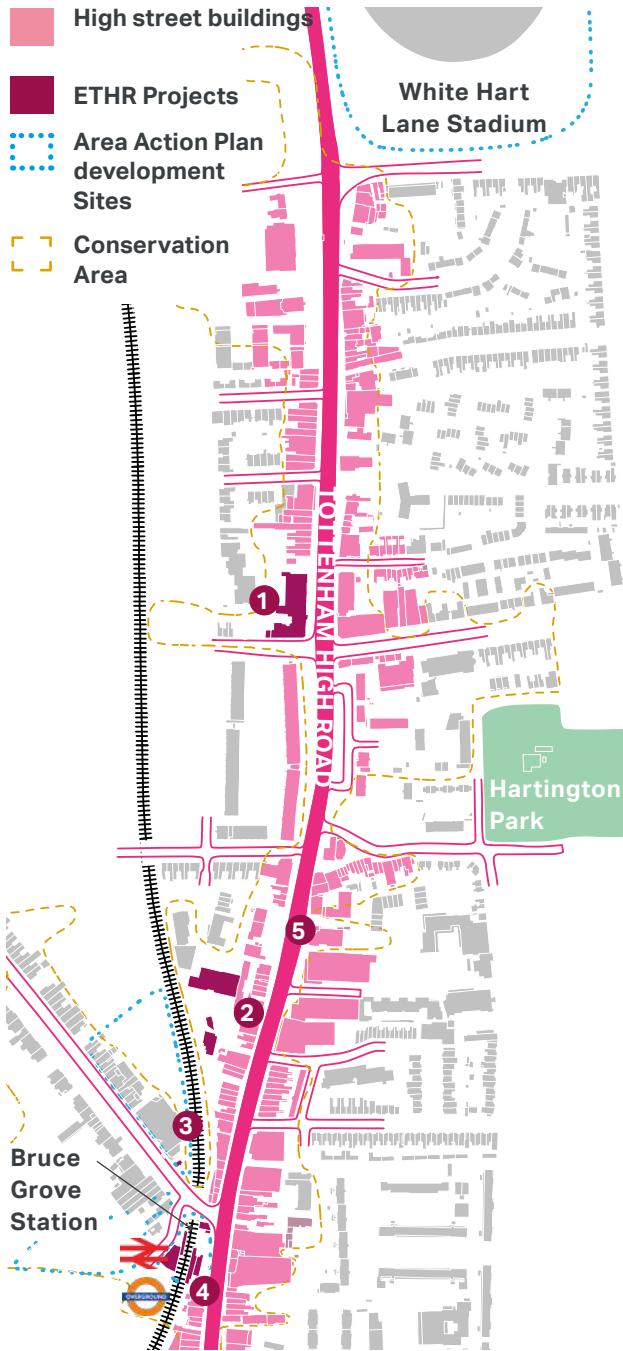
Social Value Lease
LB Haringey is in the process of developing its own social value lease. This is a rental agreement where discounts are applied based on certain outcomes to encourage best practice. It is described in more detail on the next page. The Good Growth Fund offers a unique opportunity for LB Haringey to pilot social value as part of the funded schemes. The approach is innovative
and the council's experience may help embed such practices elsewhere across London.

Opportunity Investment Fund (OIF), a £3.67m programme
Funded jointly by LB Haringey and the GLA, the OIF provides low interest rate loans to small businesses in Tottenham who up-skill local people. Businesses supported include: Roller Nation, Five Miles brewery, Loven Bakery, The High Cross, and more.

Plan showing existing initiatives

High street buildings

ETHR Projects

Area Action Plan development Sites

Conservation Area

White Hart Lane Stadium

TOTTENHAM HIGH ROAD

Hartington Park

Bruce Grove Station

0 25   100   200

Enterprising Tottenham High Road
This is a series of interlinked projects to improve town centre resilience, support business, embed community participation and promote inclusive change. Includes the five projects listed below:

1.   639 Tottenham High Road:
The works include modifications largely to the ground floor of the existing community Enterprise Centre, to provide additional workspace and better activate the street frontage. Business support services will be offered from the operator of this building.

2.   551b Tottenham High Road:
This underused site will be transformed into a new workspace, food and beverage facility, and semi-public garden for community dining and events. The works include restoring a locally listed building. LB Haringey are piloting a new Social Value Lease arrangement for this scheme.

3.   Bruce Grove toilet:
Restoration and extension of a much-loved Grade II listed heritage building for a new socially conscious operator.

4.   Station forecourt:
Extension to the railway station to create additional commercial space.

5.   Pride on the high road:
Community-led placemaking projects including local commissioning and public realm improvements.

Existing social value lease

The Social Value Lease being piloted at 551b Tottenham High Road aims to attract local independent businesses with a social mission to deliver inclusive regeneration and long-term benefits.

A Social Value Lease offers a way to establish a consistent method of quantifying, monitoring and evaluating social value outputs from potential operators / tenants. This enables councils to demonstrate social value contributions to both internal departments and other boroughs in an objective way and to build an evidence base for future projects.

Social Value Lease

In short, the Social Value Lease structure offers a discount (as an annual rebate), on the total rental price a year to tenants who deliver on social value indicators, for example:
- Providing jobs to people who are local, of BAME background, NEET, long-term unemployed, rehabilitating young offenders, or disabled.
- Spending locally and contracting local supply chains.

The tender exercise to select tenants incorporates social value by:
- Quality/Price split which favours the type of organisation over the price they are able to pay.
- Using a Quality Criteria Assessment to determine the type, quantity and deliverability of social value the tenant can pay.

Lease approach:
- Lease clauses enable the Council to retain the full rental price or review tenancy arrangements if social value outputs are not delivered.
- Tenants are asked to sign up to the voluntary local Charter, to ensure local residents benefit directly from investment.
- Business support is provided by the council (For example HEST).
- The council will help guide the initial delivery and monitor social value outputs.
- Five to 15 year leases are offered with the potential of a short initial rent-free period (six months).

Visualisation for 551b Tottenham High Road. Image credit: DK-CM

639 Tottenham High Road co-working space. Image credit: The Trampery

PROPOSITION

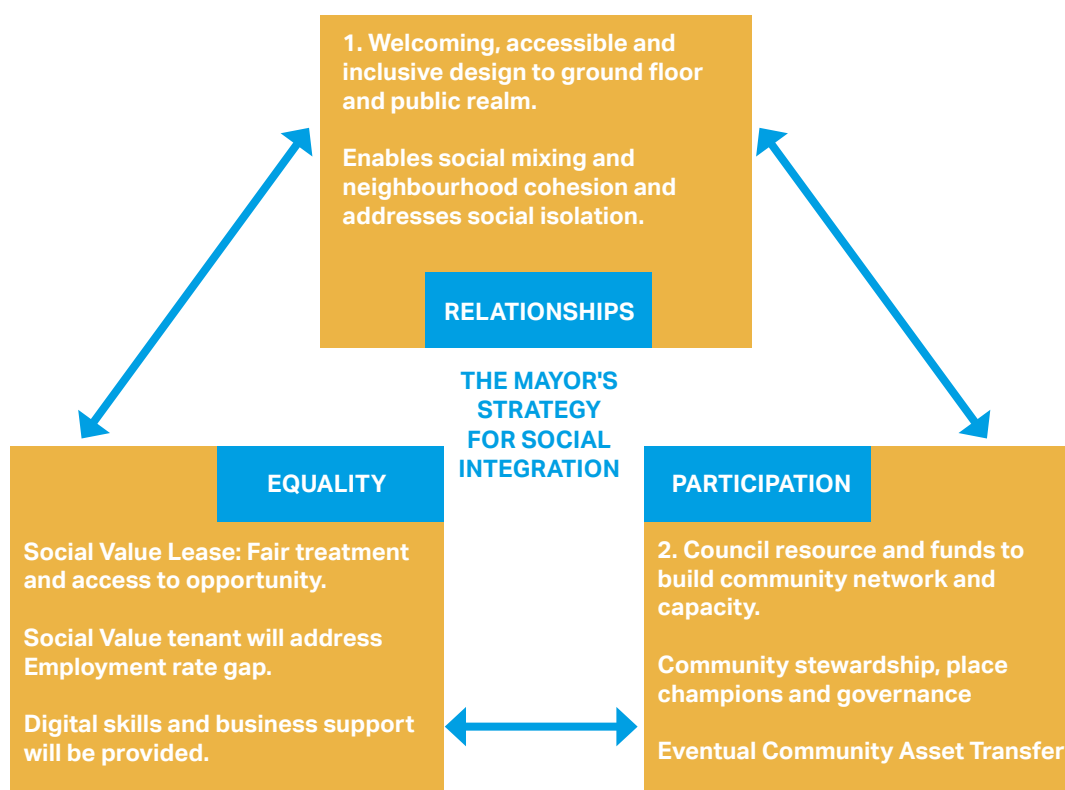## Promote social integration and deliver social value through enterprise on the high street

LB Haringey has been pro-actively investing in its property portfolio and bridging internal teams (regeneration and property) to act on the objectives of the Strategy for Tottenham High Road, Economic Development Strategy and Asset Management Plan. This approach optimises council-owned assets for local enterprise and community services, while helping to ensure the council's own future financial resilience. The Social Value Lease pilot (at 551b Tottenham High Road) is at the convergence of three overarching strategies.
LB Haringey have been building an evidence base to inform their approach to social value over the years, largely through investing in their own assets and piloting projects.
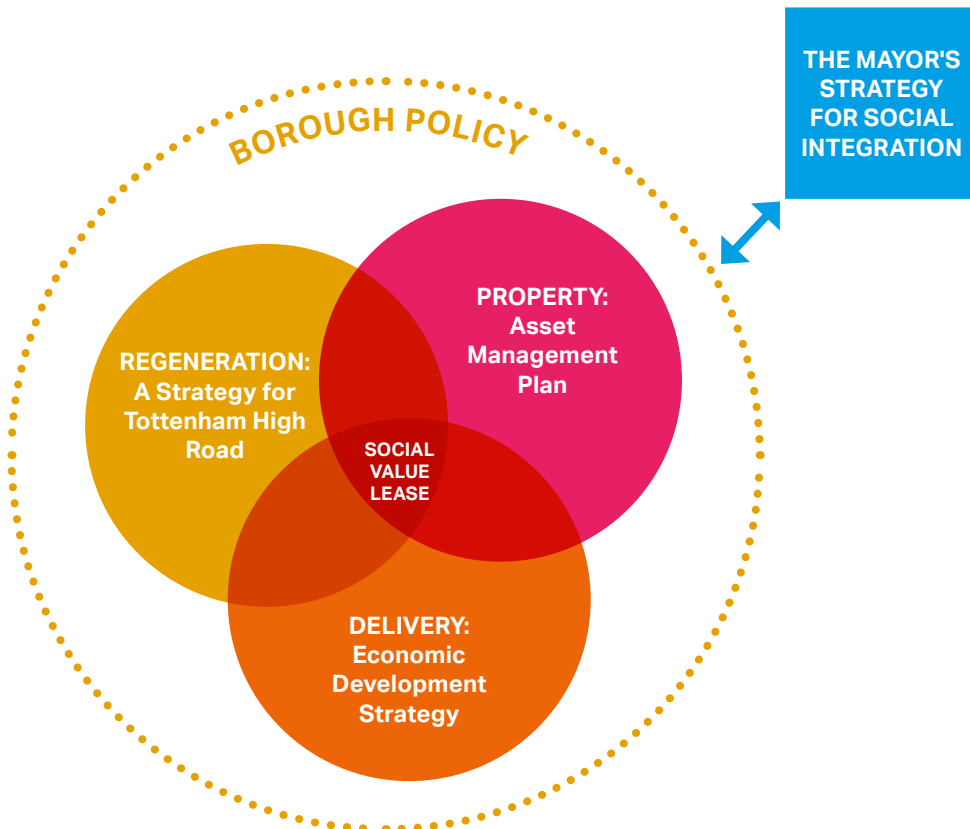
Promoting social integration

Although not explicitly part of the original vision for the project, many of the ETHR project aims align with the recently published Mayor's Strategy for Social Integration, All of Us (2018), as shown below. Learning from the council's approach to both 639 and w551b Tottenham High Road, this case study considers how social integration and social value can be amplified in the following ways:

1. 639 Tottenham High Road is an established enterprise centre which is regularly evaluated and monitored. The ground floor of the existing asset could be enhanced by learning from this process to become a welcoming public room to support community interaction and local enterprise.

2. Long-term community value for both projects could be amplified by working towards community management with a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) which would help to promote participation and access to community valued assets and services.

1. Welcoming, accessible and inclusive design to ground floor and public realm.

Enables social mixing and neighbourhood cohesion and addresses social isolation.

RELATIONSHIPS

THE MAYOR'S STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION

EQUALITY

Social Value Lease: Fair treatment and access to opportunity.

Social Value tenant will address Employment rate gap.

Digital skills and business support will be provided.

PARTICIPATION

2. Council resource and funds to build community network and capacity.

Community stewardship, place champions and governance

Eventual Community Asset Transfer

# 1. Learning from evaluation

Using the ground floor street fronting spaces of the successful 639 Tottenham High Road enterprise centre as an example, the below shows how dynamic evaluation can be used to make ongoing improvements to the value created using a council asset.

Process	Description	Example: 639 Tottenham High Road
1. Evidence and reflection	Carry out routine evaluations and monitoring to understand project strengths and areas for improvement. Build evidence base. Use reflections to improve offer to businesses and the public.	Evaluation findings: • High occupancy rates and good business support services. • Tottenham Living Room is well used. • The building could feel more open and welcoming to increase footfall. • The ground floor space hasn't yet found its functional fit. • The co-working space at second floor level space is too remote from the entrance and the interior could be more attractive. • Marketing could be improved. • The popular cafe could play a stronger role in activating the ground floor space.
2. Brief	Learning from the evaluation, develop a brief and identify potential stewardship opportunities for zones in or around the building.	Proposed brief: • Reinforce the spatial relationship and physical links to the Tottenham Living Room. • Improve entrance accessibility and visibility. Activate street frontage. • Relocate co-working space to ground floor level fronting the street. • Support local skills in the Food and Beverage sectors. Install a commercial grade kitchen which can be used by micro-businesses.
3. Design	Use best practice design principles to maximise potential. Design professionals can provide advice.	• See overleaf "Enhancing the Asset"
4. Curation	Select business operators in line with social mission.	• Incorporate social value principles within lease arrangement (See social value lease).
5. Community Asset Transfer	See overleaf	• Upskill staff or interested community group. • Council to provide initial business support.

Enhancing the existing asset: 639 Tottenham High Road
A proposition for design intervention in a key public sector asset. By learning from evaluation, the ambition is to create a public room for interaction that both brings the community together and activates the high street.
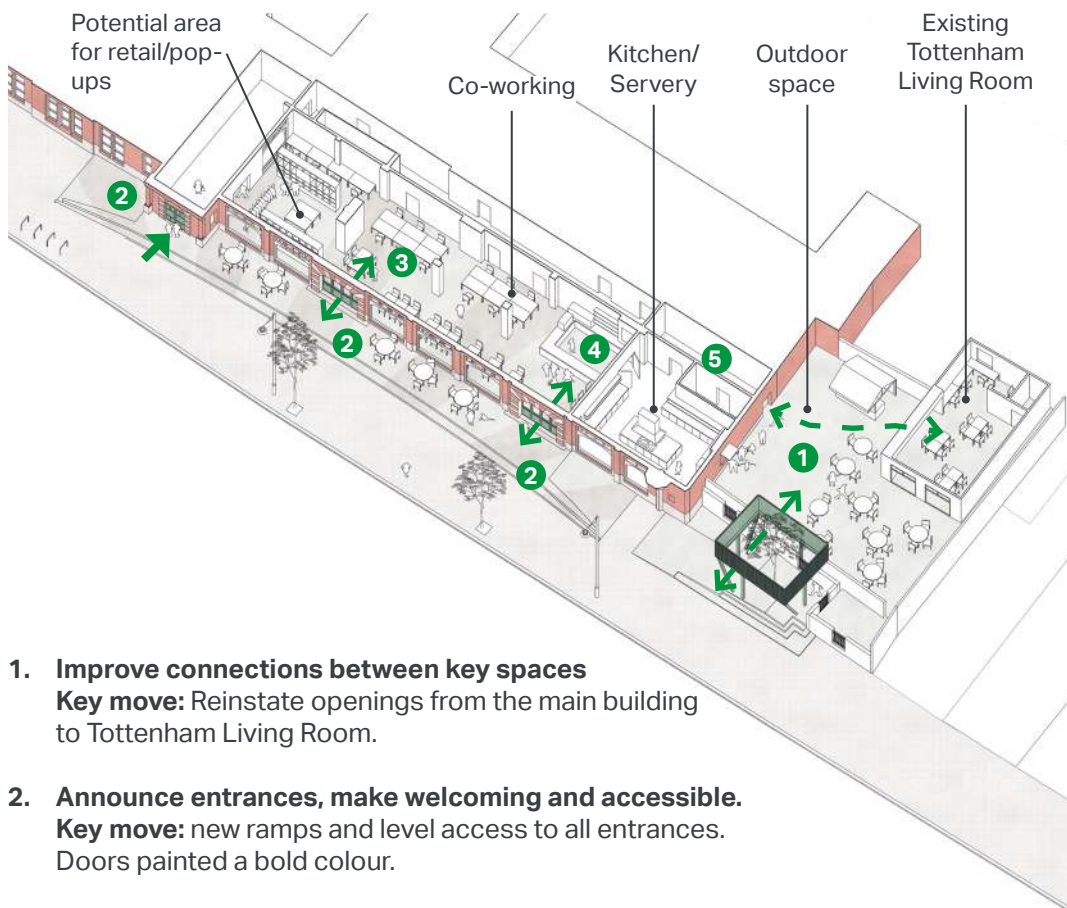
1. **Improve connections between key spaces**
   Key move: Reinstate openings from the main building to Tottenham Living Room.

2. **Announce entrances, make welcoming and accessible.**
   Key move: new ramps and level access to all entrances. Doors painted a bold colour.

3. **Declutter windows to improve transparency.** Ensure furniture is flexible and easy to move, and that adequate storage space is provided to allow for a variety of uses.
   Key move: furniture set back from windows, which can also stack or fold and be hung on the wall.

4. **Work with a community-focused operator with a strong vision for the space** who will best deliver a community programme and the social value objectives.
   Key move: Cafe and flexible community event space, with direct access to the street and co-working space.

5. **Support the fully-fitted commercial kitchen** as a place for pop-up / workshops and business incubation.

2. Community Asset Transfer

Although not currently part of the ETHR strategy, both 639 and 551b Tottenham High Road have the future potential to be owned and operated by the community through a Community Asset Transfer (CAT). A CAT is an established process, used to empower communities and support local social, economic or environmental well-being initiatives – giving communities control to develop their local area. It works by transferring the ownership arrangement of a publicly owned asset (land or buildings) to a community organisation. The arrangement is usually a long-term lease, often +25 years, at below market value; however, freehold sales are possible.

What are the benefits?
- Opportunity to generate and retain long-term social value. Community value supported by that asset could be lost for good if the asset is sold on the open market.
- To protect valued local amenities, often a source of civic pride, from falling into disrepair and to ensure they remain open to the public for perpetuity.
- Potential for new services / offer for the community.
- Strengthen relationships between the boroughs and communities.
- Financial savings for councils, as the community organisation will be financially responsible for the asset.

How do you do it?
- Inventory or map council-owned assets. Identify their current offer and community value.
- Refer to or create a CAT policy to ensure consistency and transparency. Agree expectations, governance and audit method.
- Third party organisations can support both local authorities and community groups through the CAT process. They can also offer community group leaders business planning, investment, finance, and building management advice to help long-term viability.

Stanley Hall, The Stanley People's Initiative, South Norwood
Stanley Hall was recently leased for 35 years to The Stanley People's Initiative through a CAT. This group, made up of SE25 residents, is committed to repairing the building and keeping it open as an entertainment, arts and enterprise venue for the community.
Image credit: Stanley Halls

PRECEDENTS

New Economy, Greater Manchester
Working on behalf of the council, New Economy is an organisation that formed to promote economic growth and prosperity. Their pioneering cost benefit analysis work considers the financial and social value of interventions. This work helped inform LB Haringey Social Value Lease.
Image credit: New Economy

Cottrell House, Wembley, London
A former retail unit was refurbished to provide a small cafe, a shared studio, eight fixed desks, and a hot-desking space. Commissioned by Brent Council, and delivered by Meanwhile Space, Cottrell House offered affordable workspace to local start-ups and entrepreneurs in Wembley.
Image credit: The Decorators

Wealdstone Youth Workshop
We Made That, Spacemakers and Europa
This project connected a need to enhance an unloved public space with the lack of activities for local young people. The workshop produced a multi-purpose furniture component for purchase. Proceeds return to the project and workshop youths.
Image credit: Spacemakers

Beyond Food, a London based charity
Beyond Food train vulnerable adults, impacted by homelessness, for meaningful employment in the hospitality sector. They offer programmes to develop kitchen and professional skills, apprenticeships, outreach, and events. Staff can help with matters like housing or benefits.
Image credit: Beyond Food

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Bridge internal council teams, for example Regeneration, Property, Culture, and Economic Development, to achieve social and economic objectives.
- Make best strategic use of council-owned assets.
- Initiate pilot schemes and record the process to build a coherent evidence base for future projects.
- Learn from routine evaluations and monitoring to inform future adaptations.
- Design indoor and outdoor spaces to ensure they are functional, enjoyable and inclusive.
- Incorporate social value objectives within lease arrangements.
- Build capacity and explore Community Asset Transfer.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Develop a reference case and Theory of Change to clarify desired short and long term impact of social value approach.
- Build data collection responsibilities into social value leases.
- Track local users and habits to consider social impact (community reach) and economic impact (reduction in leakage from the area).

Useful references

- Social Integration Design Lab: Prospectus for local authorities in London Shaping how we all live together, GLA, December 2018
- Opportunity Investment Fund, Tottenham Regeneration, LB Haringey and GLA
- Social Value in New Development: An introductory guide for local authorities and development teams, UK Green Building Council, March 2018
- Social Value Toolkit for Suppliers 2017 V1.1, Manchester City Council, 22 August 2019
- Research Institute Report No. 3: A common interest: The role of asset transfer in developing the community business market, New Local Government Network, November 2016

HIGH ROAD TO HIGH STREET

Make the high street a model for sustainable living and public well-being

This case study explores the measures and resources required to transform the vehicle-dominated thoroughfare Stratford High Street into a healthy environment that can support a growing community

**STRATFORD HIGH STREET, LB NEWHAM /
LONDON LEGACY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (LLDC)**
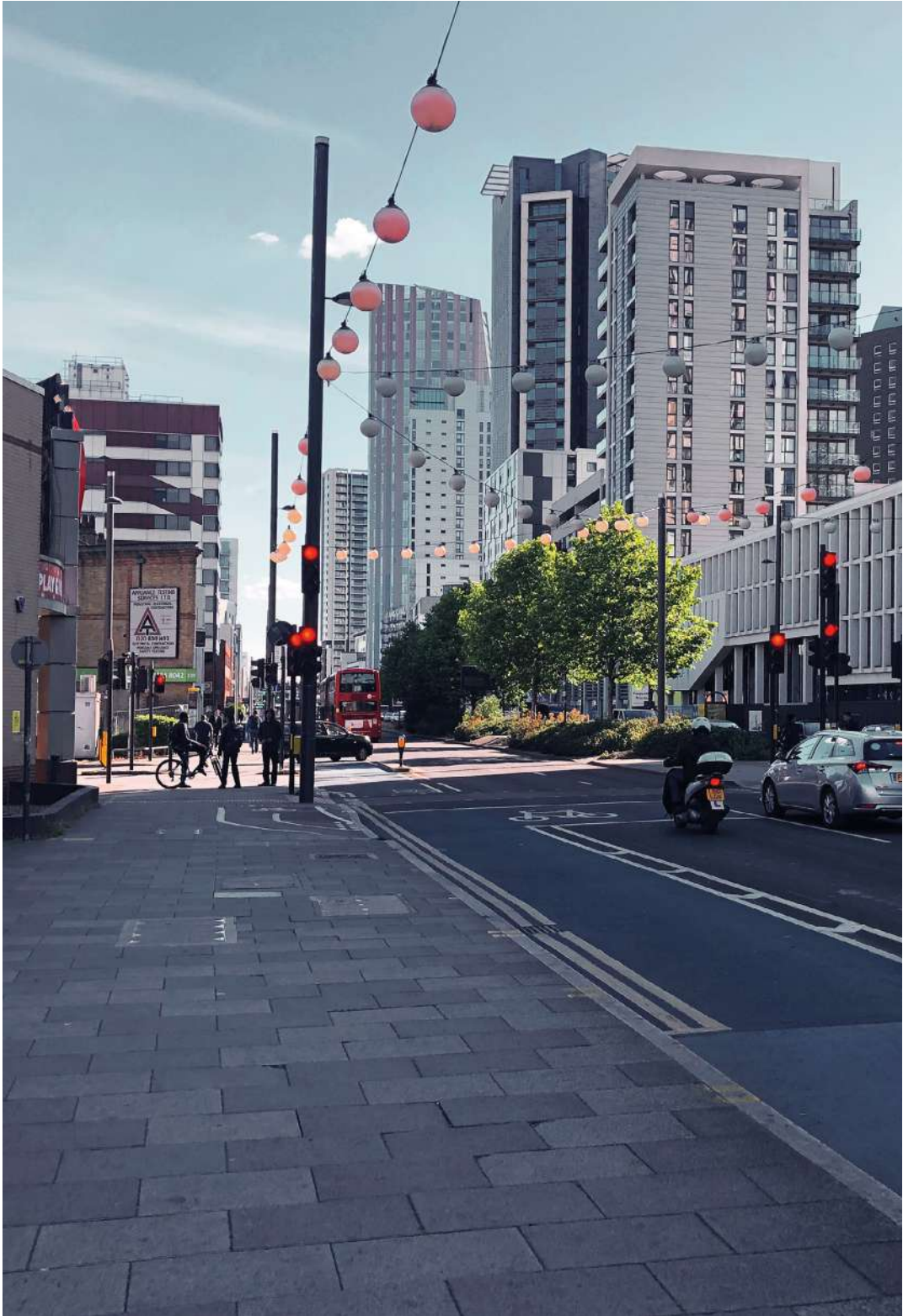
Stratford High Street, LB Newham / LLDC

EXISTING CONTEXT

Stratford High Street is strategically very important for east London. A road since Roman times, its character now varies considerably along its length. The finer grain old town is clustered around the north-eastern part of the high street. It is fronted by many handsome historic assets juxtaposed with prominent 1960s modernist insertions. Stretching to the southwest the road broadens, the traffic increases, and recently completed high-rise developments line the road butting up against low-density modernist neighbourhoods and heritage industrial areas. Now an important bus corridor, the road culminates at the busy Bow Roundabout and flyover. The diversity of Stratford's built environment has been captured in a recent character study which illustrates the need for a localised bespoke contextual approach for any future proposition.

The 2012 Olympic Games brought optimism, investment and significant redevelopment to the area including new sports, entertainment, leisure and shopping facilities along with new housing. Towers (up to 32 storeys) and medium-rise buildings now line the north side of the high street in contrast to the medium and low-rise buildings which line the south. The high road as a place, however, has been left behind. The polluted four-lane thoroughfare is vehicle-dominated. There are limited crossing points for people walking and little consideration for cyclists. Noticeably, many ground floor non-residential units are vacant, other newer units often do not engage with the high road, sometimes due to the design of the street elevation or shopfront with opaque decals.

The area surrounding the Olympic Park which meets the high road is in a state of large-scale transition from a secure sporting events ground, with an industrial fringe, to a new piece of integrated city including the development of East Bank, a new cultural, education and innovation district. The numerous large-scale development projects either under construction or in the pipeline will significantly increase the area's density and see the local living and working population surge. This gives new urgency to the need to repair and revitalise the existing hostile street environment.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Stratford Metropolitan Masterplan (2011): In preparation for unprecedented change brought by the Olympic games, LB Newham developed a masterplan to guide future regeneration, encourage a diverse economy and improve the street environment, public transport access and links across Stratford High Street. A new masterplan is in progress developing from this previous work.

Characterisation study (2019): The London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) commissioned this comprehensive study which explains and maps the evolution of the area, heritage assets, and current and future context incorporating buildings permitted or under construction and key policy areas.
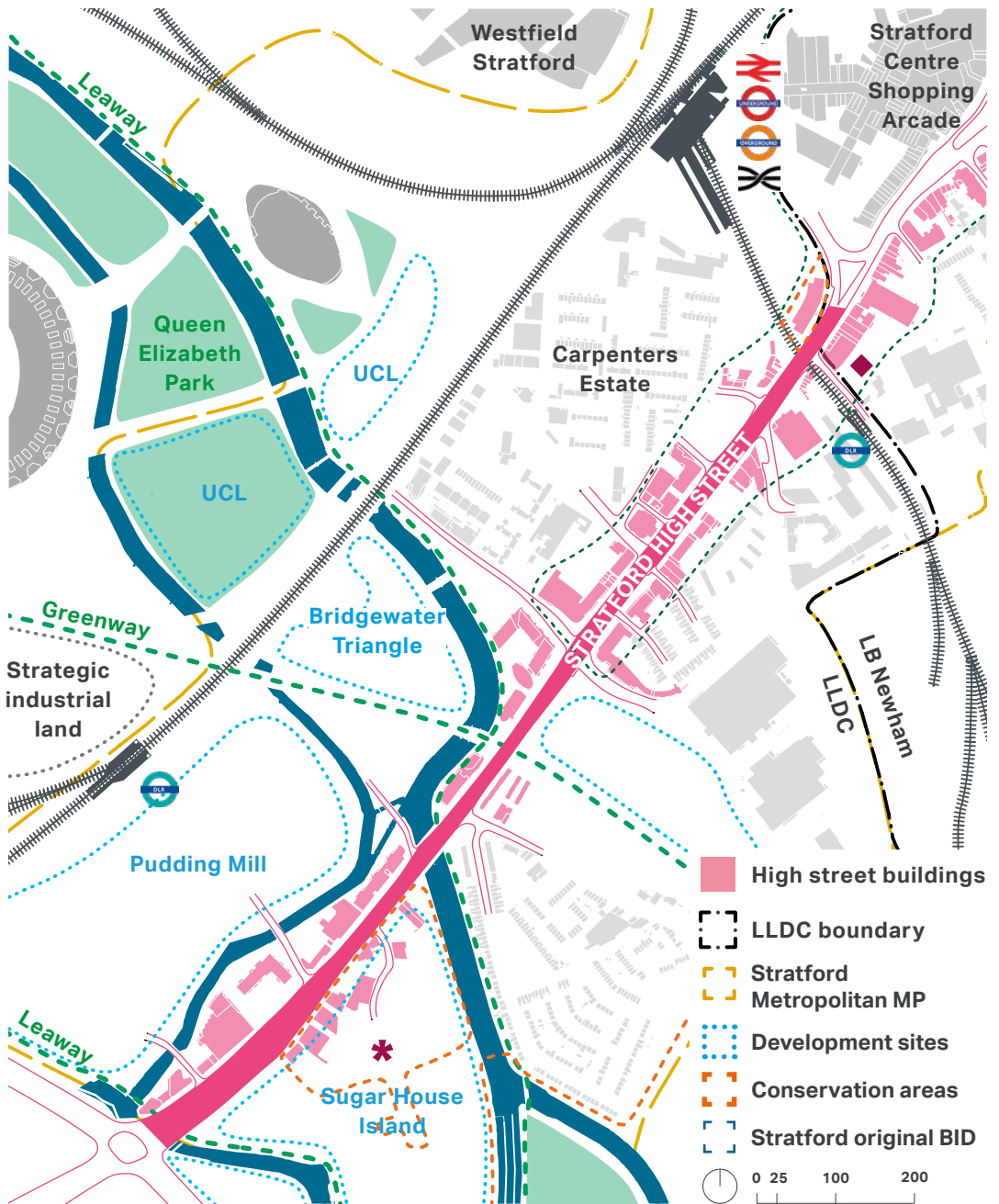
Transport projects: TfL's healthy streets programme was at the heart of LB Newham's recently completed work to the Stratford old town gyratory. The improvements reduced traffic movement by 18%. At the opposite end of the high street, a 'Flyover Street Party' proposed for the Bow Flyover would radically test how the high road could be bettered. Spurring on future transport and public realm improvements to the Bow Road flyover and the Sugar House Lane, 'all-movement' junction aimed to reduce traffic speeds and enhance pedestrian accessibility.

Business support in neighbouring Hackney Wick: The LLDC, LB Hackney and LB Tower Hamlets together employ a Business Engagement Manager who works across the planning, property and regeneration teams to support existing businesses through large-scale change, by for example, matching them with vacant spaces.

Stratford original BID (formed in 2015): Stratford Original BID promotes members, organises events, subsidises waste and recycling solutions, and more. In 2017, they commissioned colourful wayfinding graphics and signage around the shopping arcade.

Interim uses: The LLDC commissioned 'Learning from Others' which included a ' Methods Manual' which analysed delivered interim projects in order to build an evidence base and reference guide. This has successfully influenced and steered current and future meanwhile projects.

Context plan

Westfield Stratford

Stratford Centre Shopping Arcade

Leaway

Queen Elizabeth Park

UCL

UCL

Carpenters Estate

STRATFORD HIGH STREET

LB Newham

LLDC

Greenway

Bridgewater Triangle

Strategic industrial land

Pudding Mill

Leaway

Sugar House Island

High street buildings

LLDC boundary

Stratford Metropolitan MP

Development sites

Conservation areas

Stratford original BID

0 25   100   200

◆ **Recent interim projects**. ZAPSpace, a former theatre retrofitted to be a trampoline park Pitch, a yard behind ZAPSpace converted into a vibrant food, drink and outdoor cinema venue.

✱ **National Talent House for Urban Culture.** A UK first which acts as a catalyst for driving cultural uses. Delivered by East London Dance, Urban Development, LB Newham, LLDC, Vastint, Peabody and Bow Arts Trust with the support of the GGF.
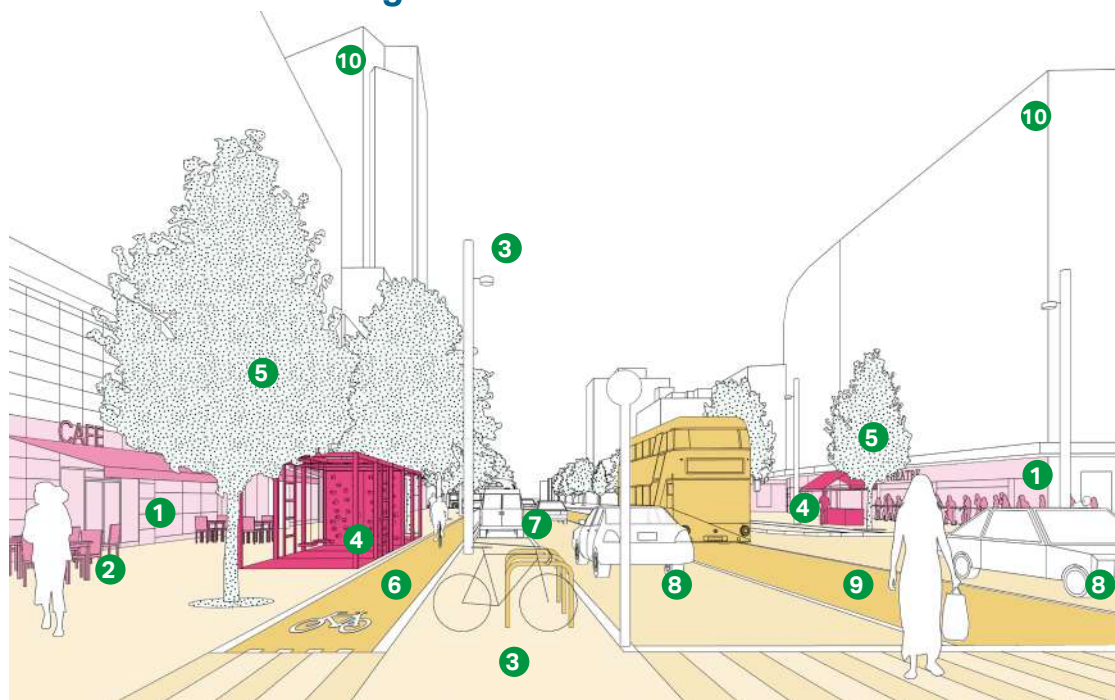
PROPOSITION

Make the high street an exemplar for sustainable living and public well-being

Building on the aims of the Stratford masterplan and learning from initiatives discussed on the previous pages, this case study looks at the middle of Stratford High Street and considers the process for delivering aspirational changes to improve the high street environment. This starts with generating a coordinated mission.

A mission should set out in clear and actionable language the objectives and direction in which investment-led growth can be guided. It should include achievable and usefully quantifiable goals with time limits. The mission requires top-level political support which can take time to build. Temporary or phased projects that test bold ideas can generate momentum at modest cost to help build the case and refine the goals for permanent changes in the future. A successful delivery strategy will work 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' simultaneously. It is important to coordinate the mission across relevant boroughs, council departments and stakeholders while also designating personnel to champion the project and focus on delivery.

TOP LEVEL POLITICAL BUY-IN

MISSION
STATEMENT & GOALS

TEMPORARY / PHASED PROJECTS TO BUILD CASE

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The long-term mission illustration

KEY COMPONENTS TO DELIVERING THE MISSION GOALS

1. Masterplan vision supported by planning policy
2. Transport measures / 'Living Lab'
3. Third party property portfolio & Business Engagement Manager

This phased future scenario reimagines Stratford High Street as a healthy place to work, live and play. Traffic lanes are reduced dedicating a central zone solely to public transport. The central medians or barriers are removed and crossings improved. Bicycle lanes are isolated from traffic and pedestrians. Hardy leafy trees are planted and the street is well lit. Ground floor uses and pavement market stalls or pavilions are curated by the Business Engagement Manager.

Note: This mission has been shaped with initial input from TfL's Innovation team

1. Active ground and first floor uses

2. Generous pavements and space for businesses to spill-out

3. Decluttered public realm and well-considered street lighting

4. Enterprise / innovation zone for work, play or public realm installations supported by an evidence base (See useful references: Public Life Data Protocol)

5. Radical greening and sustainable urban drainage

6. Isolated cycle lane

7. Kerbside managed parking bay alternated with cycle parking

8. Single lane traffic

9. Single (alternating priority) or two-way bus lane / space for future sustainable transport modes

10. Controlled height and development

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Key components to delivering the mission goals

Three fundamental components to delivering the goals of a shared long-term mission for a healthier high street environment are detailed below. The following pages show how this could be incrementally achieved.

1. Masterplan supported by planning policy

Informed by the characterisation study, stakeholder consultation, and pilot projects, the High Street Masterplan will define the long-term coordinated mission for the street as a healthy place to live and work. Managed through planning policy, the masterplan should be kept up to date, championed, planned and funded together by boroughs whose boundaries meet or overlap.

2. Transport measures and 'living lab' approach

Alterations to roadways are complex, with many stakeholders to consider. However, roads like Stratford High Street, where intense development is already happening, must adapt to improve air quality, connect a severed urban grain, respond to future transport technology, and improve the user experience to support future growth. To build stakeholder confidence and political buy-in the road could be treated as a 'living lab,' altered incrementally and carefully monitored and adjusted throughout the process.

3. Third-party vacant property portfolio

A Business Engagement Manager is one means to help activate and curate ground floor uses within vacant properties owned by third parties. This role could be funded by one or several intersecting boroughs. An alternative could be to establish a charity or trust, which could take over the leasehold of the ground floor uses with the agreement of participating landlords. Working with local partners, the charity could curate uses and deliver a mix of events to improve the experience, service offer, and environment of the high street. A charity would benefit from business rates relief and could ultimately be self-sustaining by collecting tenant rents or 'finder's fees.' Alternative funding streams are available to assist councils in setting up the charity and occupier fit-out costs which are often a barrier for small businesses. Pilot projects could help embed the management approach and overcome landowner concerns. Discretionary business rate relief could be offered by councils for social enterprise tenants to encourage this type of use.
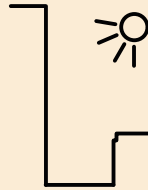
1. HIGH STREET MASTERPLAN SUPPORTED BY PLANNING POLICY
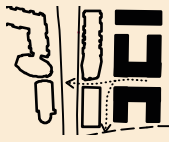
Connect new developments to the high street and to wider neighbourhood links such as the Greenway
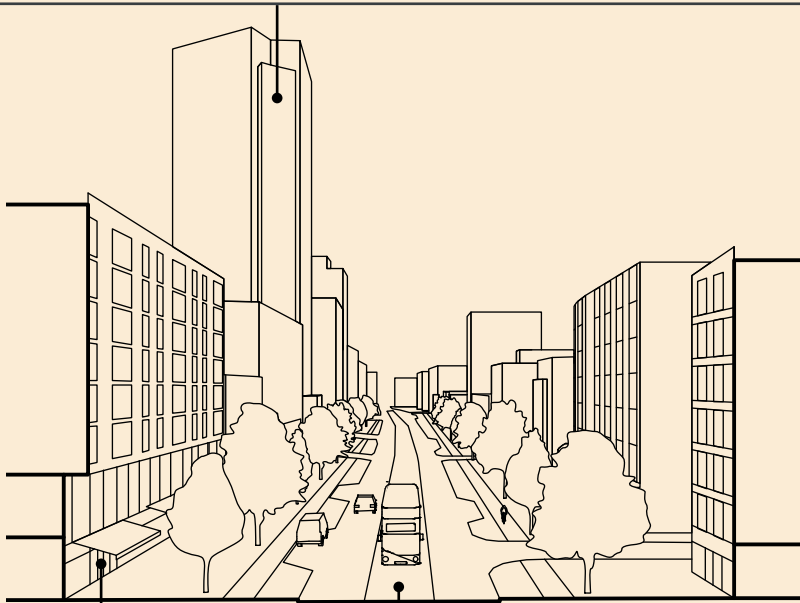
Promote healthy streets guidance as a baseline.

Control building heights: Consider the impact of overshadowing on street environment.

CIL payments fund improvements on the High Street.

ARTICLE 4

Article 4 suspension to high street blocks preventing conversion of non-residential to residential.

2. TRANSPORT MEASURES

3. THIRD PARTY PROPERTY PORTFOLIO

Town Centre and
Business Engagement Manager

Benefits for:

Owners
Financial savings on business rates and maintenance. Improved property appearance.

Agents
Test potential new markets which could take up long term residency.

Councils
New spaces and experiences aid place-making and animation.

Occupiers
Lower risk space to try new things and access new markets.

An adaptive incremental approach to delivering the goals
'Living Lab' example

Phase 1: Data analysis
Year 1
- Build evidence base through anonymised data collection (e.g. pedestrian, bus, and traffic movements patterns) to help inform the masterplan. See Dalston case study.
- Create an inventory of vacant ground floor units. Consider identifying a cluster of units to test a curation approach and build a critical mass of activity.

Phase 2: Communication
Years 1–2
- Analyse data collected and continue to build / shape evidence base.
- Engage with stakeholders. Signpost / communicate that a temporary trial will be undertaken and why.
- Evaluate and agree a Third Party Property Management approach.

Phase 3: Interim intervention
Years 1–2
- Close one lane of traffic in each direction. Give buses priority. Test reducing the speed limit. Use paint to enlarge the footway and allow businesses to spill out. Install temporary planters with trees.
- Measure impact on the high street & surrounding streets.
- Begin to curate interim uses.
- Consult the public.

Phase 4: Analyse performance of interim interventions
Years 1–2

- Run data analysis.
- Review response from intervention and public consultations.
- Councils to agree to proposed interventions together, review mission, and update masterplan.
- Develop a proposal based on the evidence collected.
- Continue to curate vacant ground floor units.


Phase 5: Street improvements
Year 3–4

- Install first phase permanent public realm and transport measures following 'Healthy Streets' guidance, with bus lanes prioritised.
- Incorporate space for future transport improvements.
- Support and monitor ground floor uses to ensure that they contribute to a lively street.
- Market and publicise the street.

Phase 6: Adapt to future
Year 5–10

- Improve public transport offer.
- Permit pavement zones for enterprise or innovation uses.
- Continue to monitor and review the performance of the street measured against the intended mission.
- Continue to review and update the masterplan.
- Continue to promote the high street.
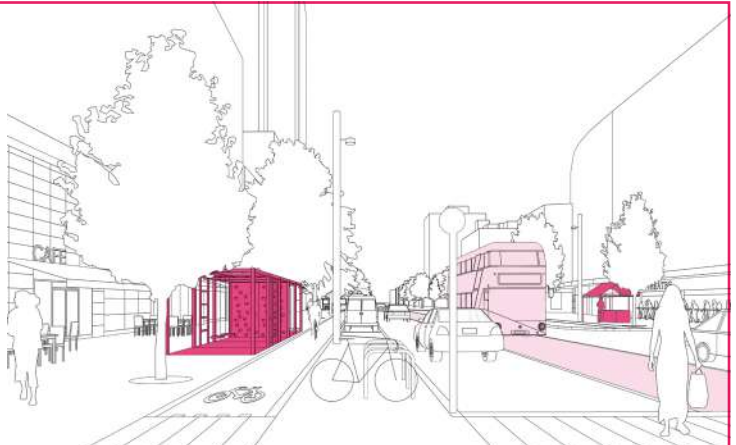
PRECEDENTS

Green light for Midtown, NYC
Commissioned by the NYC Department for Transportation, this innovative project piloted public realm improvements which were monitored and then constructed. Using road paint and street furniture, the pavement was extended and traffic re-routed.
Image credit: Agile City

San Francisco Living Innovation Zone (LIZ)
The LIZ programme invites the community to help shape the public realm. The City first identifies and then advertises potential high street sites. Anyone can apply and, if accepted, projects are realised in partnership with the city, community group and/or sponsoring project partners.
Image credit: Liz Manual

Passeig De St Joan Boulevard, Barcelona
A new urban green zone extends to Ciutadella park. Road widths were reduced from three to two-lanes, the cycle path was centralised, existing trees retained, and new landscaping, sustainable urban drainage, lighting, seating and play equipment activate the widened pavement.
Image credit: Landezine

**Invest in Hackney
Area Regeneration Service**
LB Hackney offer a support service to businesses who would like to relocate or move to the area. The team can help with finding a premise, planning matters, networking with complementary local industries and more.
Image credit: Invest in Hackney

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Develop a coordinated mission across boroughs, council departments and stakeholders to build both top-level and bottom-up support.
- Engage with or develop proposed changes with key organisations such as the GLA (and associated departments where relevant, like the Mayoral Development Corporation in this case) and Transport for London.
- Bring together collective aims within an up-to-date masterplan.
- Enable experimentation with a 'Living Lab' approach.
- Implement temporary projects through a phased approach to help build a case for radical interventions.
- Adopt a third party property management approach (Town Centre and Business Engagement Manager or established charity or trust) to help to activate streets by matching local or desirable businesses with available space.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Establish enhanced monitoring of air quality, identifying appropriate comparators.
- Build research process to understand the impact of unused ground floor space. What are the costs and who pays?
- Use evidence to challenge landowner perceptions.

Useful references

- Creative Land Trust
- Streets as Ecosystems, MORE
- Streets Toolkit, TfL
- Cycling Toolkit, TfL
- Liveable Neighbourhoods, TfL. Grant scheme
- Public life data protocol version 1.0, Gehl Institute, October 2017
- How to Build a Better Block, Better Block Foundation
- Urban Street Design Guides, National Association of City Transportation Officials
- Discretionary Rate Relief Policy, LB Waltham Forest, March 2019

PLACE FOR WORK

Enable a flourishing culture for work on the high street

Using Sutton Council as a civic anchor tenant, this case study explores how a mix of uses, both enterprising and cultural, could be established to reinvigorate an evolving Metropolitan Centre

SUTTON HIGH STREET, LB SUTTON

Sutton High Street, LB Sutton

EXISTING CONTEXT

Sutton town centre is London's ninth largest Metropolitan centre and the retail and leisure destination for the borough. The linear high street is pedestrianised, nearly one mile long, and slopes down almost thirty metres from south to north. A prominent gyratory loops around the high street. Many of the historic finer grain high street buildings of this suburban centre have been replaced by large-format shopping centres and big box retail to generate a large amount of retail floorspace.

Sutton high street has lost the largest amount of office space to permitted development, of any London town centre. The retail vacancy rate is above the London average particularly in the northern end. The high street also has a lack of diversity especially in leisure, food and beverage and night time uses.

To address these challenges and meet changing economic demands the council is now pursuing an ambitious approach to revitalise this tired high street and attract new investment and development.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Sutton town centre masterplan (2016)
LB Sutton's future plans are set out in the masterplan. A key aim is to bring business back to the high street. The masterplan aims to deliver 2,000 new jobs, improve the day and night time offer, street market, digital connectivity, public realm, shopfronts, and transport network. Taller buildings and 3,500 new homes are planned. The council are considering locations for the redevelopment of the Civic Centre which would incorporate civic, community and cultural uses. The London Cancer Hub to the south of Sutton Town Centre will bring investment and improved transport connections, with the Sutton Link (tram line).

Smart Sutton and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
Sutton is considering a smart cities approach to help realise some of the masterplan aims. Measures include locating civic and community services within walking distance, providing local consolidation centres and encouraging last mile delivery. Sutton is also part of the LEP, trialling an 'Internet of Things' project, which aims to improve the current patchy internet connectivity, making Sutton more attractive for investment.
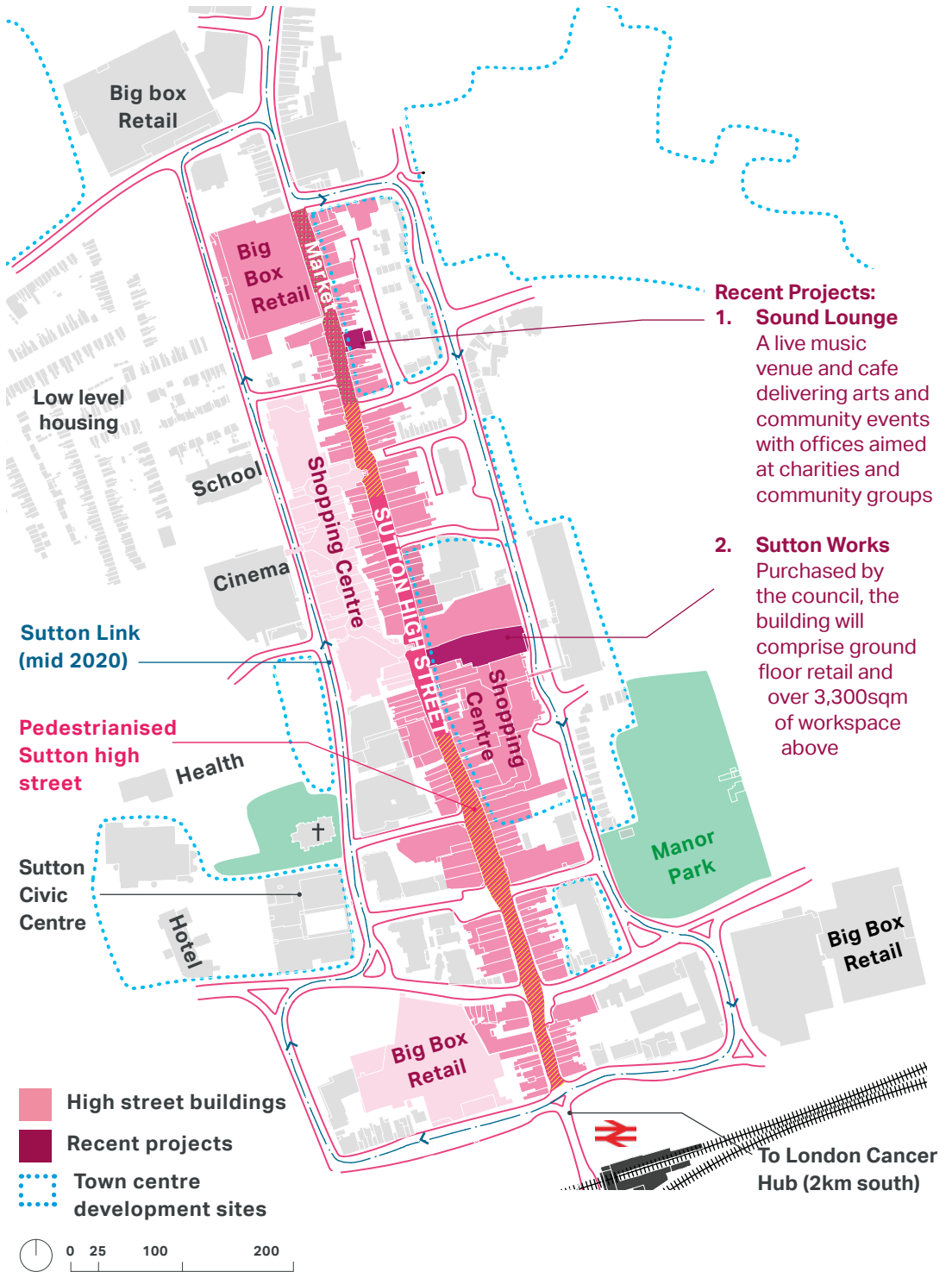
Recent projects and events
Demonstrating its commitment to the high street, LB Sutton is actively growing its property portfolio to facilitate local opportunities. Two recent projects include a music venue, the Sound Lounge, and a workspace above a shop, Sutton Works, through which the council has taken on leases to help improve the area's cultural, evening and workspace offer.

A recent pop-up market enterprise event successfully supported 88 local entrepreneurs and supplied business support training.

Context plan

Big box Retail

Big Box Retail

Market

Low level housing

School

Shopping Centre

SUTTON HIGH STREET

Cinema

Sutton Link (mid 2020)

Pedestrianised Sutton high street

Health

Shopping Centre

Sutton Civic Centre

Hotel

Recent Projects:

1. Sound Lounge
A live music venue and cafe delivering arts and community events with offices aimed at charities and community groups

2. Sutton Works
Purchased by the council, the building will comprise ground floor retail and over 3,300sqm of workspace above

Manor Park

Big Box Retail

Big Box Retail

To London Cancer Hub (2km south)

High street buildings

Recent projects

Town centre development sites

0   25   100   200

PROPOSITION

Enable a flourishing culture for work on the high street

Building on the established masterplan vision, the redevelopment of the Civic Centre site provides an opportunity to relocate the council offices and services to the high street. The council could act as an anchor tenant and catalyst for good growth. The proposition, illustrated on the next page, considers a phased approach initiated by the council to re-establish the centre as a place for work supported by a rich day and evening offer.

Tools to safeguard future mixed-use growth: Agent of Change

A rich mix of uses benefits the whole community. Bringing back vitality to town centres is an incremental process which could take many years. It is important to first establish, and then insulate, non-residential uses and activities to build momentum and buzz in the area prior to any significant residential development. Non-residential activity is almost impossible to retrofit.

To co-exist, the planning process can help ensure that any future residential development does not limit surrounding non-residential day and evening activities through 'Agent of Change' principles. For example, where noise levels inside new residential units are likely to be a concern, planners could require specific noise mitigation measures within the conditions to ensure that the developer (the 'Agent of Change') uses good design (for example orientation, innovative typologies, flat layouts) to mitigate any potential conflict with existing uses. Developers should inform prospective residents about the measures introduced to reduce the risk of complaints.

Planners could consider measures to create space for future non-residential activity to grow in key areas by requiring any new residential development within those boundaries to include measures to mitigate potential future conflicts with noise and other potential nuisances such as smell.

Platf9rm business community, Brighton and Hove Town Hall
The council has shared its Town Hall with co-working operator, Platf9rm, since 2017. Working with a local designer, the interior of this prominent high street building was transformed to provide spaces to work, meet, learn, eat, socialise, exercise and more for its now 750 members. A rolling programme of events is often open to the public as well as a café.
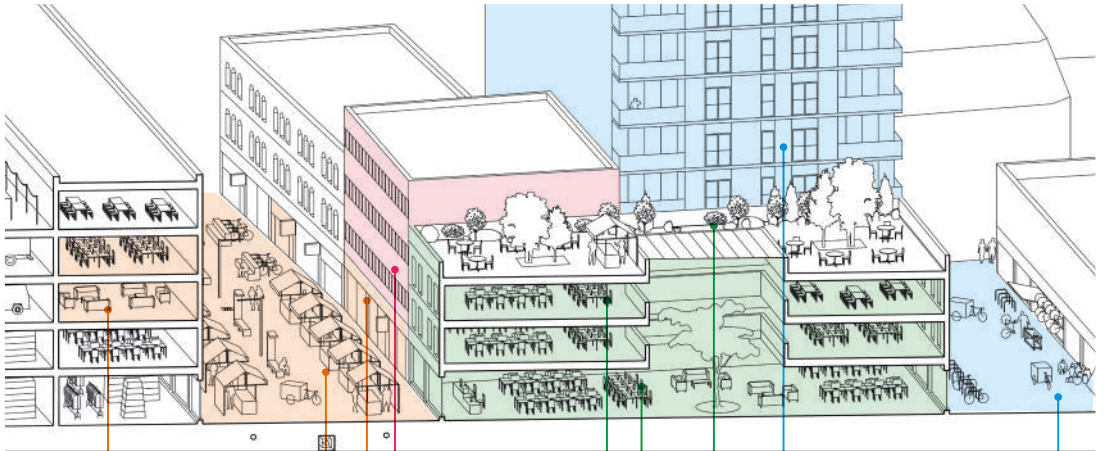Image credit: S&G Shopfitters Ltd.

Phased development approach

PHASE 1	Demonstrate intentions and kick-start change by relocating civic offices or service to the high street. Pilot projects, meanwhile uses, and events.	• Assess council-owned property portfolio. • Incrementally invest in and activate existing high street buildings for use as council offices/services, workspace, community or cultural activities. • Establish the council's presence on the high street at ground floor level. Entrances should be open and welcoming. • Use a strong and accessible civic presence to yield an intimate local knowledge to help guide change that a community can unite around. • Support non-residential uses first to build vitality and momentum prior to any significant residential-led development. • Activate vacant units with pilot projects, meanwhile uses or local tenants / initiatives. • Improve digital connectivity to support enterprise. • Gather focused data to build evidence base.
PHASE 2	Take steps to enable long-term change	• Evaluate pilot projects and analyse gathered data to inform brief. • Acquire property in strategic locations. • Approach potential tenants who align with the vision.
PHASE 3	Embed the vision: Workspace, civic and culture uses	• Refurbish and improve existing non-residential building stock where necessary. • Increase non-residential floorspace capacity by extending or building new. • Curate tenants to embed vision. • Embed non-residential uses and activities as a priority to be protected by Agent of Change policies, NPPF.
PHASE 4	Enhance the vision: Mixed-use development	• Take momentum and promote / market the area. • Meet and partner with developers who align and enhance the overall vision.

PHASE 1   **PHASE 2**   **PHASE 3**   **PHASE 4**

Renovate existing
buildings and pepper-pot
council offices / services
around the high street.
(See 639 Tottenham High
Road).
Forge links with Cancer
Hub to develop a
programme in support of
enterprise and innovation

Enliven public realm with
temporary installations, artwork,
street furniture, lighting, etc.

Open a council run Urban Room
to engage with the community
about proposed changes and
for the community to use as a
meeting space (See Church Street
– Regeneration Base)

Purchase property

Build new workspace
(extend or build new)

Council to occupy a more
permanent high street
location

Occupy rooftops and establish
activity including cultural and
evening events programme

New mixed-use
development with non-
residential uses at lower
levels

Allow for appropriate servicing
and yard space for non-
residential space

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PRECEDENTS

Tower Hamlets Civic Centre
The Royal Hospital site on Whitechapel High Street is being refurbished and extended to create a new civic centre. Council services, currently located across the borough, will be consolidated here to provide an easy to access one-stop shop for constituents. The ground floor is to be allocated for public use.
Image credit: AHMM architects

Catford Mews, Really Local Group
A new, much-needed leisure venue for Catford town centre which comprises a bar/cafe, food hall, community space, live music venue and three screen cinema. A bespoke programme of events and food offer has been developed by the community for the community.
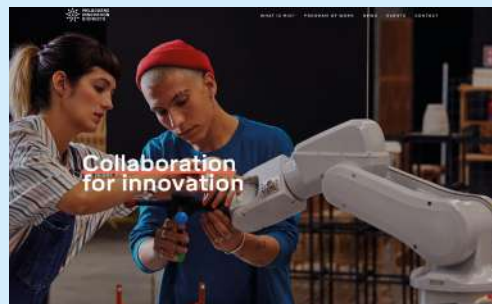Image credit: Really Local Group

Startup Mall, Kings Mall, Hammersmith
A new concept startup programme is revitalising Kings Mall. Formerly vacant units within the mall are being offered to entrepreneurs, makers and technologists who want to test new ideas. The units will host experimental pop-ups, outlets and an incubator programme.
Image credit: Kings Mall

Melbourne Innovation Districts (MID)
The City of Melbourne has partnered with two inner city adjacent universities and dedicated a zone to innovation. MID connects researchers, industry and the community, through a public realm, social innovation, enterprise, institutional design, and digitally-enable tech programme.
Image credit: MID

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Agree a coordinated mission across all council departments.
- Shrinking retail needn't shrink the commercial high street.
- Adapting the high street context and character towards high quality workspace to revitalise the town centre, including upgrading existing buildings.
- Enable wifi on the high street and provide high speed internet for workspaces to support business growth.
- Create a new civic centre embedded in the high street.
- Embrace innovative asset management including property purchase, new place-specific non-commercial KPIs and residential intensification.
- Build momentum and buzz with a phased approach and meanwhile use.
- Embed non-residential activity prior to any significant residential-led development.
- Ensure new development fronting existing high streets is mixed in use and as active as possible

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Develop an accurate baseline of businesses based within the town centre.
- Acquire IDBR (inter departmental business rates) disclosive data and Companies House data to track diversity, growth and scaling.
- Undertake primary surveys to track business sentiment and use credit card data to track changes in spending.

Useful references

- Learning from others – methods manual for interim use, urban research project, Interim East, commissioned by London Legacy Development Corporation
- Supporting Places of Work: Incubators, Accelerators and Co-working Spaces, commissioned by the GLA
- Government Guidance: Noise. Last updated 22 July, 2019 See Agent of Change
- Camden Town Unlimited
- National Market Traders Federation: Business Support Guides

CIVIC AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Adapt the high street to support cultural and civic life to foster social inclusion and interaction

Looking at Walthamstow high street, this case study explores how through multifunctional use, civic and cultural institutions can serve a diversity of functions and users. This can help to further support social integration, inclusion and interaction on the high street

WALTHAMSTOW, LB WALTHAM FOREST

Walthamstow High Street, LB Waltham Forest

EXISTING CONTEXT

Walthamstow is Waltham Forest's major town centre of which the well established, 1km long, high street market is an intrinsic part. The library, public spaces, shops and market stalls all contribute to making the high street an important piece of civic and cultural infrastructure.

As the London Borough of Culture for 2019 and first ever Night Time Enterprise Zone, Waltham Forest have been proactive in strengthening their cultural offering and own an increasing number of sites around the town centre. The high street is positioned in the context of major mixed-use developments which are expected to bring new residents to the area.

The library is an important civic asset at the heart of the town centre and high street, demonstrating the relationship and co-dependencies between civic and cultural institutions in an age of public sector cuts.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

Civic assets
LB Waltham Forest own a number of sites within the town centre where they are testing innovative approaches to ownership and management. One example is the Central Parade building, where a Social Value Lease clause is being utilised to support a curated mix of use and users, to ensure the right outcomes and a fair return on public investment. A related matrix has been developed to evaluate the social return on investment in these publicly owned assets.

Walthamstow library
Walthamstow library is adjacent to the high street, market and town square. The library is an important civic asset on the high street. It houses facilities such as the street trading team, traditional library services, and until recently, a post office. LB Waltham Forest are adopting an innovative approach to library services around the borough through the Library Plus scheme. The scheme broadens the programme of civic and cultural offerings and is testing programmes such as a barista training scheme in the cafe.

Town centre development
Residential mixed-use developments in the town centre include the planned extension of the mall shopping centre which is adjacent to the town square and library. The council completed the Walthamstow High Street strategy in 2018 which provides a vision for the future of the high street with concept proposals for public realm improvements, lighting, greening and wayfinding.
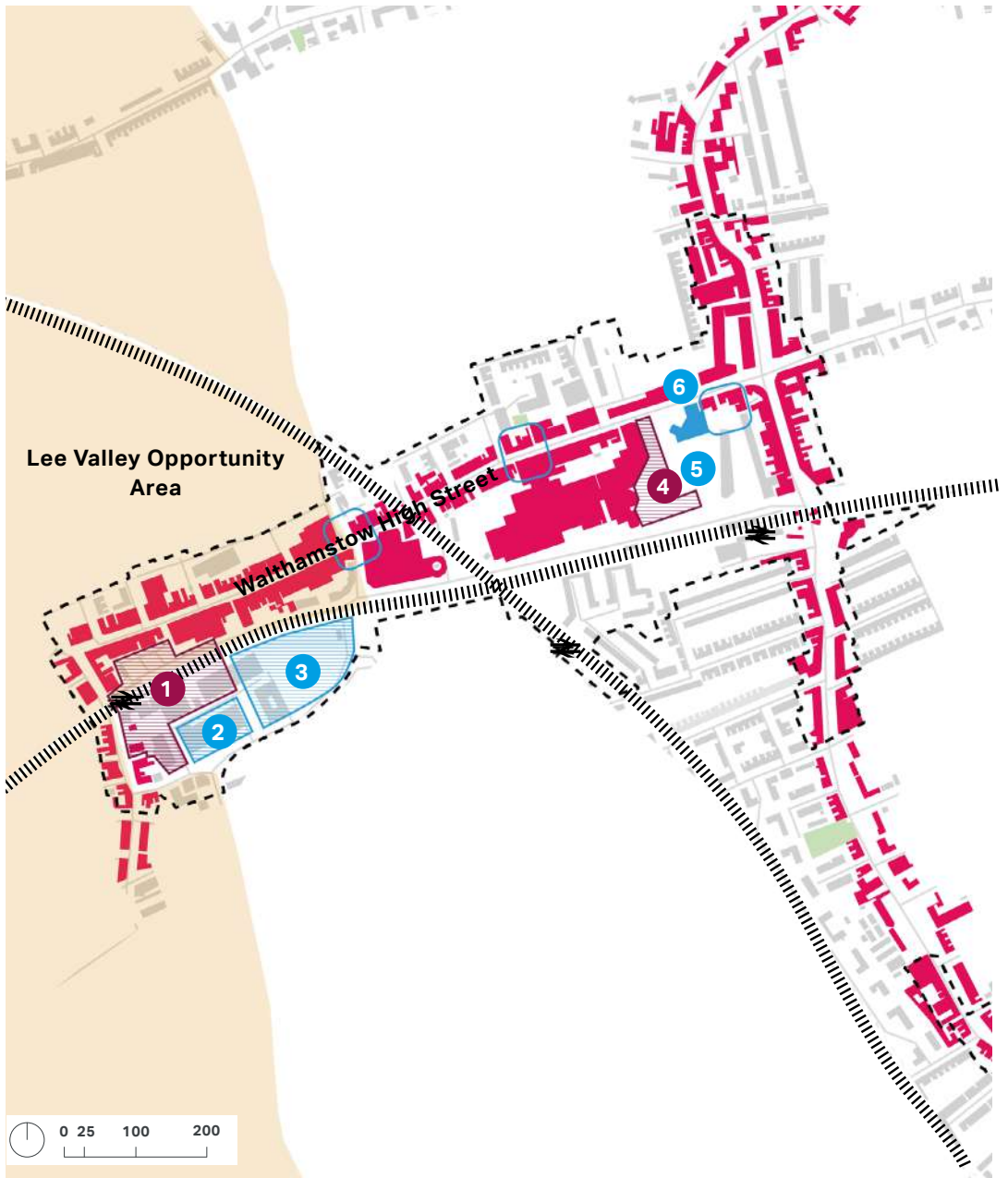
High street pilot projects
The council has worked on facilitating and implementing a programme of small pilot interventions as part of a high street strategy. These interventions test and evaluate concept proposals to inform detailed design development for long-term improvements.

London Borough of Culture 2019
As part of their year as London Borough of Culture, LB Waltham Forest hosted 'Art Night' in Walthamstow and Kings Cross. A curated arts programme and series of events brought the high street to life out of hours.

Context plan

Lee Valley Opportunity Area

Walthamstow High Street

■	High street buildings
▨	Planning in progress
▨	Under construction
☐	Pilot project
⌐⌐	Town Centre boundary
▬	Lee Valley Opportunity Area
▬	Green space

Key
1. St James Quarter masterplan
2. Essex Brewery
3. South Grove
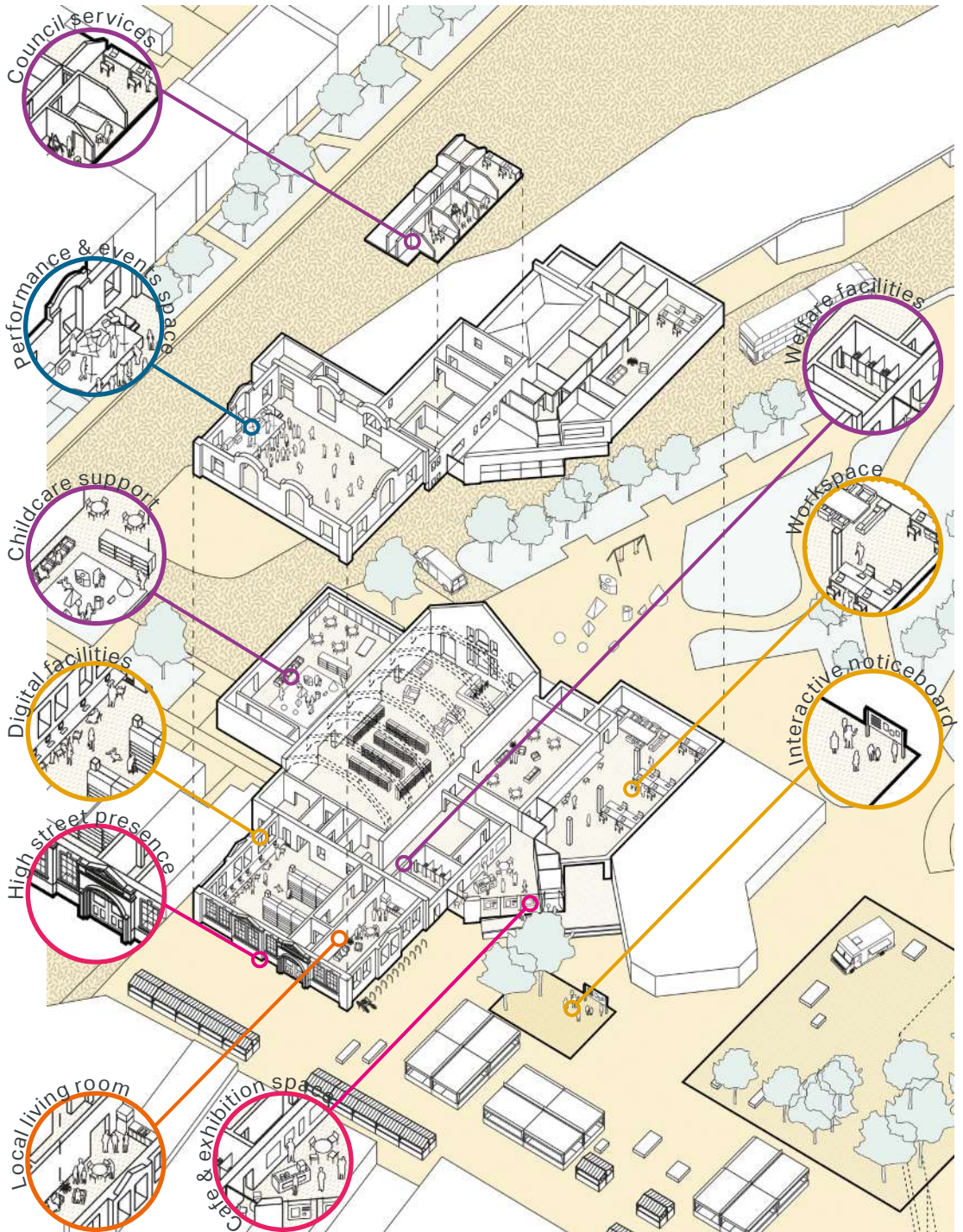4. The Mall shopping centre extension
5. Walthamstow Town Square
6. Library

PROPOSITION

Adapt the high street to support cultural and civic life to foster social inclusion and interaction

The library is an important civic institution recognised as a place that provides open and inclusive public space for people to come together. Many libraries are heritage assets and require new layouts and a re-programming of activities to be fully utilised as a place to support the cultural and civic life of the high street, including the 24-hour economy. Presence on the high street can be enhanced by using external public space to promote civic activities and interaction, such as supporting markets. The diagram demonstrates a range of possible programmes. Libraries can become multi-functional hubs by strategically re-programming spaces, utilising council services and providing leisure activities. This will support skill building through expanding opportunities, improving participation and building relationships on the high street.

LATE NIGHT ACTIVITIES

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

PEOPLE'S ARCHIVE

SHOWCASE BREADTH OF POSSIBILITIES

LOCAL LIVING ROOM

NEW PROGRAMMES

STORY TELLING

PERFORMANCE SPACE

DELIVERY SERVICES

SUPPORTING CULTURAL & CIVIC LIFE ON THE HIGH STREET

WELFARE FACILITIES

COUNCIL SERVICES

WORKSPACE

ADULT LEARNING

CHILDCARE SUPPORT

WELL-BEING SUPPORT

EQUIPMENT LOANS

ACTIVITY NOTICE BOARD

MAKERSPACE

CIVIC SUPPORT

RETROFITTING

Illustrative proposal for the library as a multifunctional hub

Council services

Performance & events space

Childcare support

Digital facilities

High street presence

Local living room

Cafe & exhibition space

Welfare facilities

Workspace

Interactive noticeboard

PRECEDENTS

Wellcome Collection Reading Room
The space is a hybrid of library and museum which holds events and an 'Open Platform' which invites proposals focused on low-tech participatory activity. This helps create conversation and shares ideas among a small audience.
Image: Wellcome Collection

DOK Centre, Delft
An art school, library and music school combined to create a concept library that offers a range of cultural and civic programmes. Innovative technology is used where possible to invite users to contribute to library collections.
Image credit: Wiki

St Luke's Community Centre, Islington
A modern community centre on the high street that provides a space for local people to gather and socialise. Facilities enable exercise classes, art studios, fully equipped cookery school and employment support.
Image credit: Peter Robertshaw and Victoria Dawe.

Exeter FabLab
Exeter FabLab is a successful MakerSpace on the ground floor of Exeter Library, next to the Business and Information Hub. Services are open for designers, makers, local business and school groups to make, share resources and knowledge.
Image credit: FabLab Devon

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Establish a clear list of local authority assets in the area.
- Explore whether assets can deliver new services, possibly through spatial reconfiguration.
- Research and engage with local communities to establish social integration and service provision challenges.
- Secure investment to support a range of activities that build on and expand current uses.
- Test a range of 'out of hours' activities, such as late night openings to raise the profile of the space.
- Respond to social integration and service provision challenges identified in a research phase.
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of each round of funding before adjusting to the initiative in the next round.
- Compare to challenges identified in research.
- Explore where capacity of existing services can be built to expand provision.
- Re-programme civic assets to support social inclusion on the high street.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Develop Theory of Change linked to the contributory relationship between civic assets, business performance and social policy goals.
- Verify research with visitor surveys understanding motivation, sentiment and perception.

Useful references

- GLA, Social Integration Headline Measures 2019, London Datastore
- Arts Council England, The library of the future, 2013
- Libraries Taskforce and DCMS, Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021
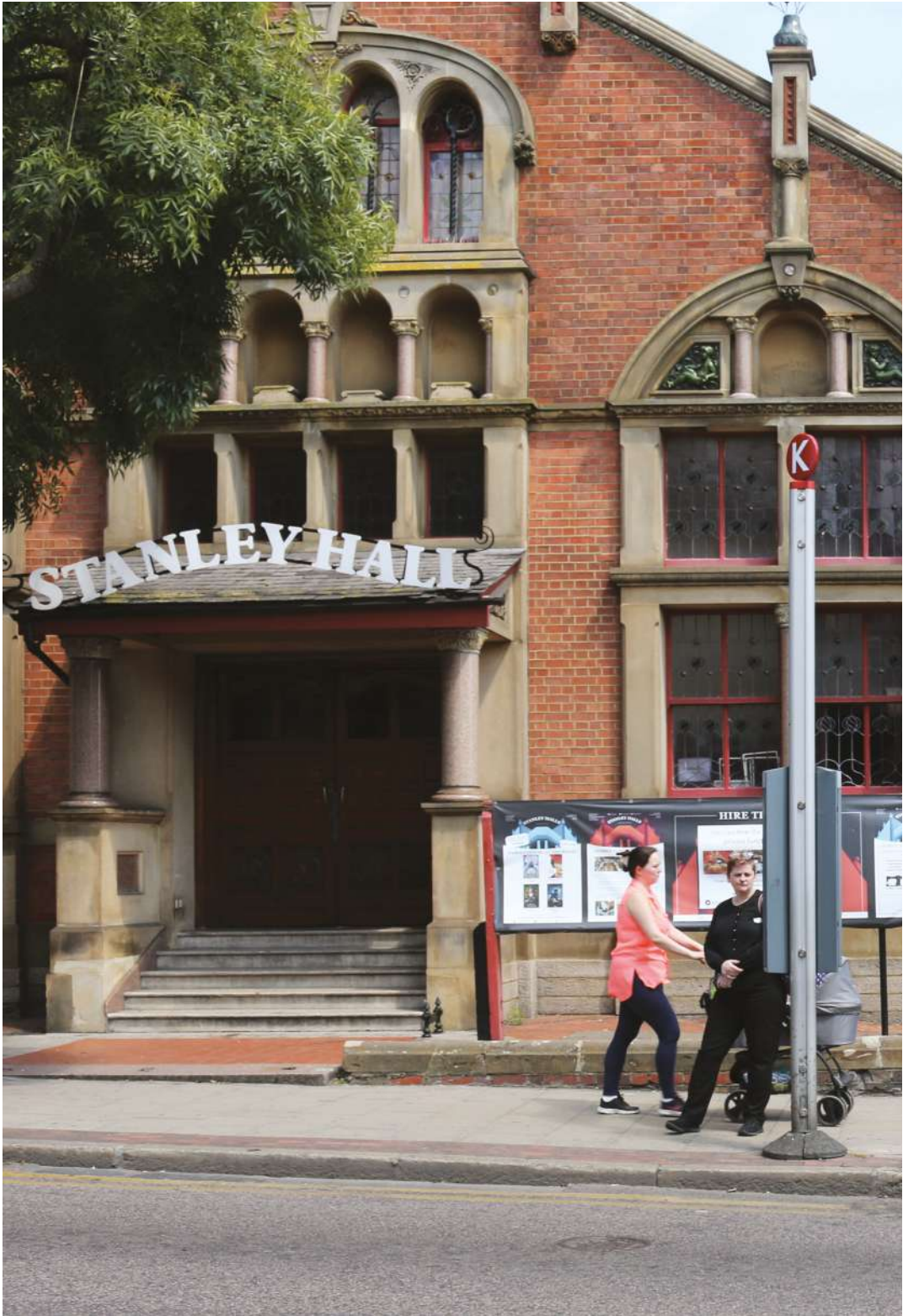
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY NETWORKS

Embed community participation as part of a long-term strategy for the high street

This case study proposes that a community group, with established connections, take on the role of managing property on the high street

SOUTH NORWOOD, LB CROYDON

Stanley Halls, South Norwood Hill, LB Croydon

EXISTING CONTEXT

South Norwood is a vibrant neighbourhood in LB Croydon with good transport links, access to green spaces and a thriving and diverse community. South Norwood has two high streets, Portland Road and the High Street, with one of the highest vacancy rates in the borough. This is accompanied by a strong demand for shop units and workspace from the local community.

The recent development of the Community Plan worked with local residents, businesses, landlords, and community groups to highlight the strong community networks already established. Following a successful Good Growth Fund bid, a strategy for putting the Community Plan into action is in progress.

A challenge for the future will be to maintain momentum of participatory processes beyond these funding time frames in order to activate future change. There is a high demand for workspace from active community interest and there is need for a different governance model to address this.

EXISTING INITIATIVES

We Love SE25

Established in 2016, We Love SE25 is the Town Team for South Norwood. Voluntary members include local councillors, businesses, residents, community groups and organisations. We Love SE25 was formally constituted in 2018 and has a committee elected by member organisations.

Community Plan

The recently published Community Plan was commissioned by LB Croydon and We Love SE25. An in-depth consultation process established understanding of the complex network of community initiatives. The proposed strategy for a revived high street area was identified in relation to four key themes; identity and placemaking, workshops and shops, hubs and public buildings and community initiatives.

Current funding

The Community Plan contributed to a successful Good Growth Fund bid in 2019. Creative Enterprise Zone funding has also been secured for the borough, with South Norwood identified as an area with a concentration of creative activity which will benefit from the tailored business support in the later years of the programme.

Council assets

There are few council owned assets. Five assets will be developed as hubs of community activity, as identified in the Community Plan. LB Croydon plan to negotiate occupancy of further vacant units under a range of agreements including direct and third-party leases.

Context plan

Legend

- High street buildings
- Community Plan areas
- Good Growth funded shop units
- Town Centre boundary
- Green space

- Community Hubs (Community Plan)
1. Samuel Coleridge Taylor Centre
2. South Norwood Library
3. Stanley Halls
4. Socco Cheta
5. Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation

0 25   100   200

High Street

Portland Road

PROPOSITION

**Embed community participation
as part of a long-term strategy for
the high street**

High street asset management can be used as a structure
to support ongoing community participation through direct
engagement and revenue generation. A 'Community Connector' is
an established group with sufficient local knowledge to be able to
match interested individuals or groups to vacant space. Selecting
one group will help to synthesise complex networks of community
groups and work towards a common goal.

In the case of South Norwood, this role could be taken on by the
Town Team, We Love SE25. We Love SE25 currently rely on voluntary
participation and have limited access to space. Building capacity,
adopting a new governance model and defining a role for the
Community Connector group will help to develop a self-sustaining
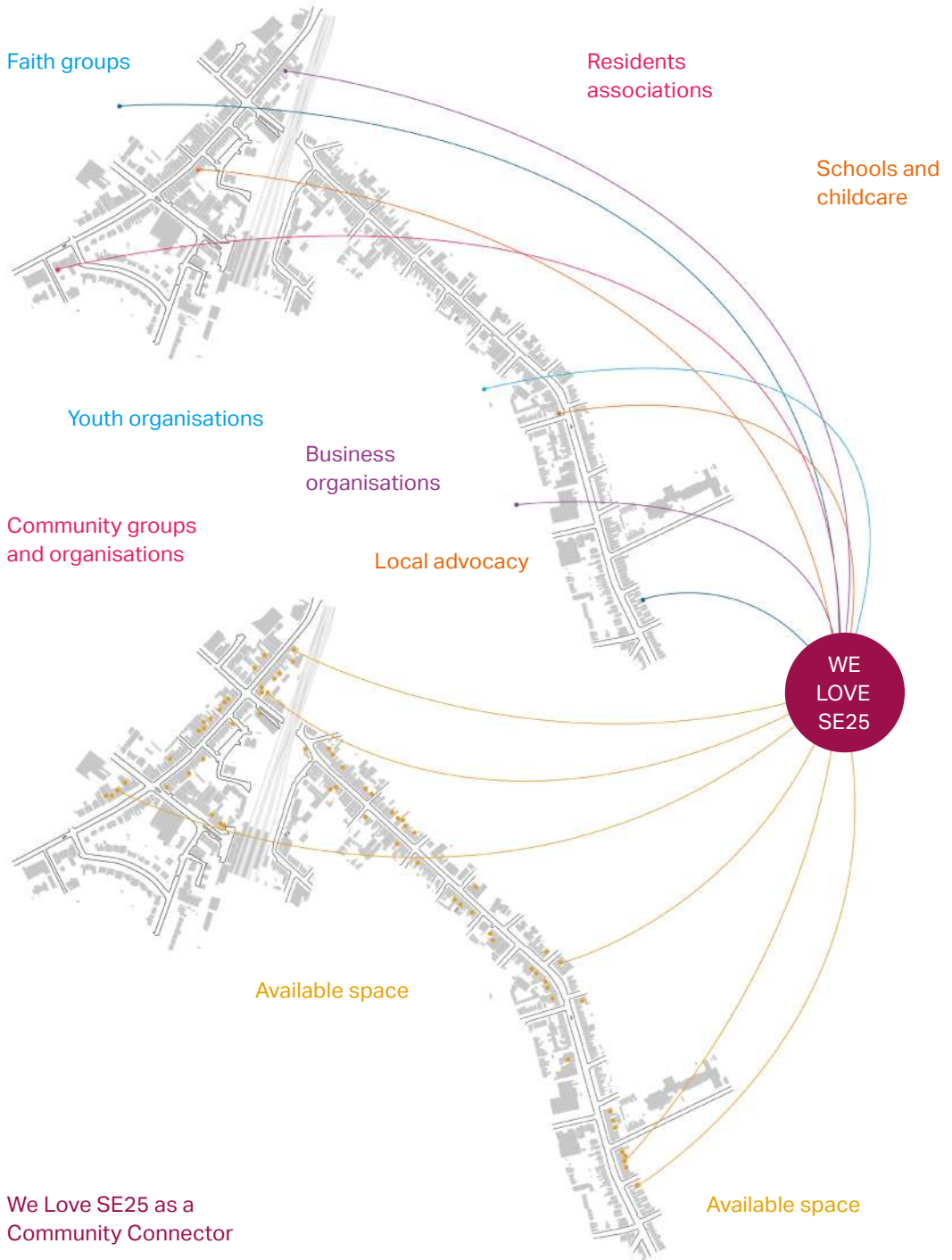community property management model.

Participation as a long-term strategy

A community-led approach to property management will build
on local connections and existing knowledge to become the
trusted property agency when community groups, businesses and
individuals are looking for space. Fostering community connections
will help to embed participation and a local approach into a long
term strategy for the high street.

The high street is an important place for informal help between
neighbours. Building on this local knowledge by mapping existing
and new businesses to available space will contribute to improving
social integration and a feeling of belonging.

Delivering the community property management model

Faith groups

Residents associations

Schools and childcare

Youth organisations

Business organisations

Community groups and organisations

Local advocacy

WE LOVE SE25

Available space

We Love SE25 as a Community Connector

Available space

Community property management agency

Long term community participation requires a revenue stream to maintain momentum beyond project-specific funding time frames. This is supported by the Community Connector group becoming a self-sustaining property management agent.

For the Community Connector to self-organise and take on the role of a community property management agency, a series of steps need to be taken to develop their capacity.

Funding is key to building capacity and developing this self-sustaining model with a revenue stream. The public sector can play an important supporting role in a community-based approach. This can be done by providing support through funding and auditing at key moments in the process. In this example, the public sector could oversee key moments of the process to ensure that community representation and benefits are clear and fair. This could involve facilitating the creation of a new job role, offering advice on the selection of the Community Connector and offering requirements to attract candidates with the appropriate skill set.

The outcomes on the following page give suggestions for how public sector spending could be justified.

The value of a community-led approach is to build on the place based understanding that is already established to make sure that the high street is a fair representation of the local area and belongs to its local community and businesses. This will in turn create an integrated and resilient approach to high street development.

Development of self-sustaining model

- Charging fee for agency service
- Flow of business and community interest
- Receiving income from assets

SELF SUSTAINING MODEL

REVENUE STREAM

IDENTIFY COMMUNITY CONNECTOR

2025

2019

COMMUNITY PROPERTY AGENCY

NEW ROLE

CAPACITY BUILDING

2021

PUBLIC SECTOR SUPPORT

e.g.
- Central Government revenue
- Bright Ideas Fund

GOVERNANCE UPDATE

PUBLIC SECTOR SUPPORT

e.g.
- Good Growth Fund

e.g.
- Community Interest Company
- Charity
- Co-operative

Job post for enabling role

Following the diagram on the previous page, a process of building capacity could gradually lead to the possibility of funding a specific job post within the agency.

Rather than relying on voluntary help, which is common in community-led approaches, funding a specific job post will recognise the importance of the management of matching vacant properties to interested community groups. This will help the community-led property model to gain traction.

It is important that this role is identified by the Community Connector group as somebody who has established local knowledge and connections, similar to a Town Centre Manager.

As part of funding this role, the local authority should give an oversight of the appropriate skills required for this enabling role and help to select a candidate who represents the local community, linking to internal departments when appropriate.

In the future the role could expand so that there are multiple roles to represent different sectors, for example faith groups. This will feed back in to an ongoing vision for widening community networks, encouraging neighbourhood cohesion and supporting a sense of belonging.

COMMUNITY PROPERTY AGENCY: MANAGER

Job description for enabling role:
- develop a brief for minor works
- apply for funding / managing grants
- deliver small scale capital projects
- co-ordinate between partners
- run events and facilitate meetings
- understand ownership and the area (with the empty properties manager)
- advertise workspace offer
- develop workspace interest database – incorporate change

Personal skills:
- fluency in project management
- local knowledge
- interest in participatory processes

OUTCOMES

PHYSICAL

- Higher unit occupancy
- Visual improvements
- Create workspace

SOCIAL

- Encouraging participation
- Strengthen community networks to improve social integration
- Community led regeneration and ownership

ECONOMIC

- Support for local businesses
- Increased footfall drives future investment
- Economic inclusion

PRECEDENTS

Participatory Budgeting, Scotland
Scottish government scheme 'Equally Well' ran a pilot participatory budget scheme in Govanhill to secure government funding for the Govanhill Community Action (GoCA) to spend on the renovation of the Govanhill Baths by the Community Trust who campaigned for the Baths to be re-opened.
Image credit: Wikimedia Commons

Frome Town Centre, Somerset
Frome have adopted an alternative form of governance, with IfF holding the majority group in Frome Town Council. They have partnered up with a range of local CICs and member owned social enterprises to provide support for a series of projects in the town centre such as a SHARE shop.
Image credit: Wikimedia Commons

Queen's Park Community Council, London
Pioneering Parish Council set up in Queen's Park. Funds are raised for community projects through a separate Parish Council tax. Projects have included support for The Harrow Road Retailers Association, championing improvements to the high street as well as community grants.
Image credit: Wikimedia Commons

Camden Collective, London
Run by Camden Town Unlimited (BID), Camden Collective offer free hot desking and subsidised office space to support start-ups. By occupying and renovating vacant buildings on the high street for short periods, the hysical appearance of vacant units is also improved.
Image credit: Wiki

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

Key takeaways

- Build capacity towards selecting a community connector to become a community property management agent in the long term.
- Identify assets that may offer a potential revenue stream.
- Define overarching vision in order to work towards a common goal.
- Continue engagement as part of assessing the process.
- Monitor if further funding is needed to maintain momentum of engaged community participation.
- Foster community connections to embed participation, which in turn supports social integration.
- The public sector can play an important supporting role in a community based approach to high street property management.

Approaches to evaluation and measurement

- Undertake ongoing local ethnographic research to track sense of inclusion and civic pride.
- Track local spending to monitor impacts on leakage outside local economy.
- Revisit in five years to track persistence of benefits.
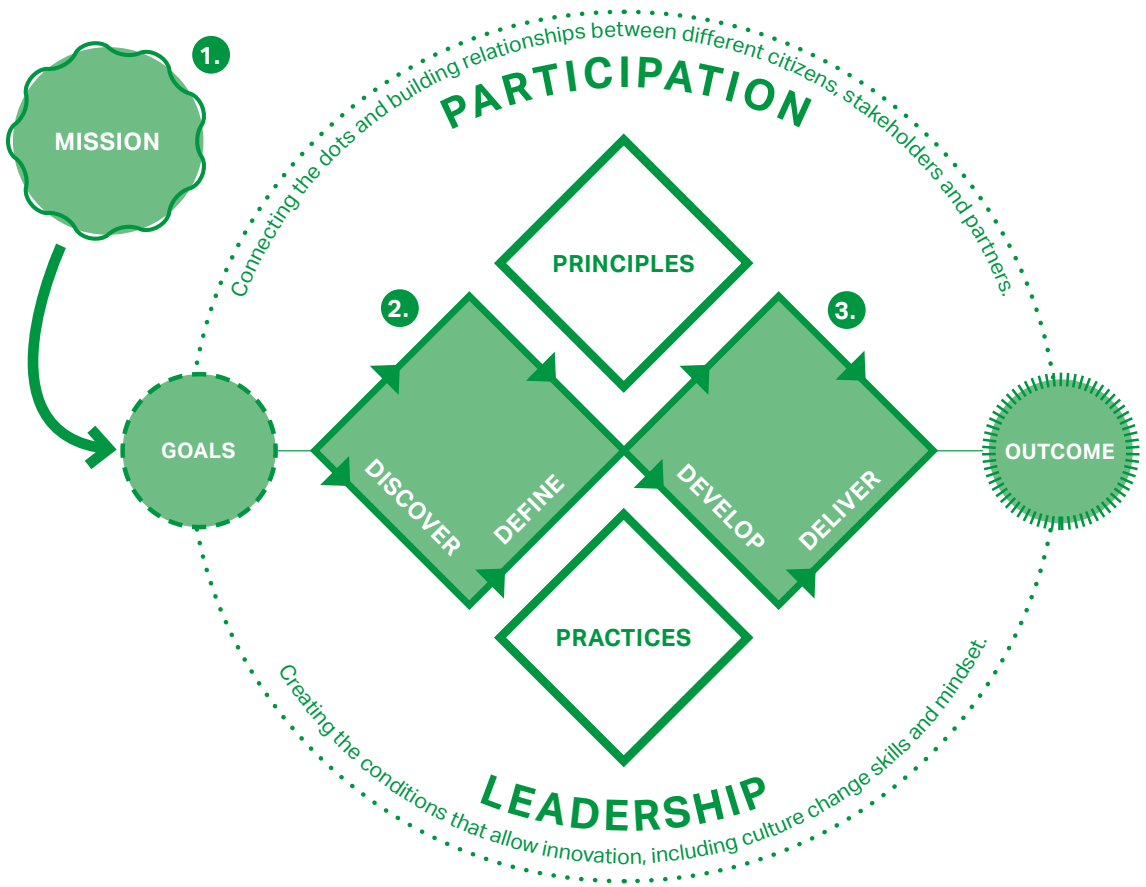
Useful references

- Neighbourhood Planning Support, Locality
- The State of Neighbourhood Planning in London, Publica, 2019
- Investing in Localism, Power to Change, 2018
- Innovation in Democracy Programme, MHCLG, 2019
- South Norwood Community Plan, We Love SE25, Croydon Council, 2018
- Take Back the High Street; putting communities in charge of their own town centres, Power to Change, 2019

4.

DEVELOPING

ADAPTIVE

STRATEGIES

1. MISSION

PARTICIPATION

Connecting the dots and building relationships between different citizens, stakeholders and partners.

PRINCIPLES

2.

GOALS

DISCOVER DEFINE

DEVELOP DELIVER

3.

OUTCOME

PRACTICES

LEADERSHIP

Creating the conditions that allow innovation, including culture change skills and mindset.

ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES

An adaptive strategy is composed of the actions taken by purposefully formed partnerships in response to a specific challenge. It is an iterative, interactive process, characterised by adaptable planning, early adoption, continuous improvement and flexible responses. The development and delivery of adaptive strategies are not separate sequential phases but go hand in hand. The strategy should be alive and dynamic.

Such strategy-making goes beyond everyday operational concerns, to promote a 'Mission Orientated' approach. One that develops measurable and adaptable goals – focusing on the desired outcomes for a given high street and its community – rather than a pre-ordained solution.

The principles and practices, described over the following pages, have been developed to guide innovative strategy development to adapt and diversify London's high streets.

The diagram on the left is based on the Design Council's 'evolved double diamond'[1], to guide and describe the proposed process of innovation and 'adaptive' strategy formation.

1. The process begins with the definition of a "Mission" that describes the change that needs to happen, agreed collectively.
2. The first diamond deals with the issues or challenges, with a divergent process to "Discover" (expand and explore), followed by the convergent process to "Define" (hone and refine) the ideas.
3. The second sequence of divergent and convergent activities builds on the initial ideas to address solutions, and "Develop", then "Deliver" an outcome.

The process is set against the background culture of participation and leadership, needed for success, developing innovative strategies that generate public value on high streets. On the following pages we first address the Mission, then the principles and practices.

1   What is the framework for innovation? Design Council's evolved Double Diamond.
     Design Council, 2019

PRINCIPLES

Be mission-oriented and define change

Create long-term participatory structures

Develop organisational resource and skills over time

Support inclusive economies

Design and plan for intense, mixed uses

Manage assets innovatively

Experiment and prototype

Evaluate in a dynamic way and digitally transform

BE MISSION-ORIENTATED AND DEFINE CHANGE

The mission

The high street mission, described in terms that are as specific and actionable as possible, provides a direction in which investment-led growth can be steered. The public sector can create and shape the markets that will help achieve these missions, in which both public and private sector can participate.

There must be broad-based agreement or 'buy-in' to the direction of travel, the principles of growth, the type of place we want a high street or town centre to be, and therefore the participatory structures critical to achieving this.

The high street and town centre mission must include cross-departmental goals that align with each other and may require cross-departmental teams to deliver.

Critically, the change defined, and how success will be measured, should be relevant to the function and status of a high street or town centre. Whereas the HM Treasury Green Book guidance leads to project and development case-making that is based on financial return and commercial value, measures of high street success may better relate to social, environmental or economic (the local economy) values.

Items to consider or include when developing a mission:
- Consider bold new scenarios for the future of the high street, based around the creation of maximum public value.
- Describe the ambition and mission, agreed in collaboration with project stakeholders.
- Describe achievable and measurable targets from a baseline position.
- Create cross-departmental teams.
- Closely involve community and other stakeholders through strong participatory structures.

Example mission:

What, How and Why: A mission describes what the place seeks to achieve for its community, businesses and the local area, how it will be achieved and why. It should be specific and actionable. For example:

"We will create the workspace, connectivity and cultural buzz to attract businesses to the high street, to generate employment and support the local economy."

"We will create and sustain community and business networks to make the high street a creative, adaptable place for learning new skills and growing businesses, increasing civic participation and improving relationships between people of all ages."

"We will evolve the high street to create a healthy environment where people want to spend time by supporting modal shift in transport movement and encouraging activity at street level."

Example goals:

Goals are understandable and achievable and have time-limits. For example, by 2025:
- Increase visits by local people by X%
- Increase average dwell time throughout the day and evening by X%
- X% of businesses to register as London Living Wage employers
- Increase the number of people attending events or activities at key institutions by X%
- Reduce vacancy to X% or less
- Reduce particulate and NOX pollution levels by X%

PRINCIPLE

Create long-term participatory structures

Design and manage a framework for long-term participatory structures in order to build consensus and capacity.

A high degree of participation is needed to achieve a collective agreement on the trajectory of growth. A shared understanding and broad consensus are needed in order to cut across the many competing demands. The design of participatory structures is therefore, an important part of achieving the high street mission.

Digital chat groups and document-sharing platforms increasingly play a role in reaching people (especially people under 45 years old), but there is no comparable substitute for regular meetings and face-to-face discussions. These are also valuable for sharing information and co- creating strategic ambition.

Stakeholder mapping should include council officers, councilors, landowners, businesses, civil society, community and the voluntary sector but the emphasis may be different in any given place. A "town team" may include or represent a significant majority of stakeholders, and where such a purposeful group as such doesn't exist, it is valuable to support its creation.

Collaboration will also be important for boroughs to support in-house capacity. The South Norwood case study demonstrates the power of a dedicated group working towards a common purpose. In that example, there is an ambition for the SE25 forum to be supported longer term to become a self-sustaining organisation involved more formally in high street governance.

The benefits of creating resilient participatory structures can also be reflected in the strength of social and business networks.

PRACTICE

Information management
- Make a coordinated, accessible stakeholder directory with a single local authority or community 'owner.'
- Map capacity, resources and willingness of different stakeholders to participate.
- Create and maintain up-to-date directory of land and property owners, record other useful information such as lease lengths.

Governance
- Support the creation of a collaborative local coalition (a 'town team' for example).
- Support co-commissioning, community stewardship and place champions.
- Consider opportunities for community asset transfer and long-term capacity building in community organisations.
- Support the use of Crowdfunding platforms (for example Spacehive and Kickstarter) to fund community initiatives that grow or maintain participatory structures.
- Support the formation of Trade Associations or BIDs, where appropriate.

Communication
- Create online and physical platforms to facilitate communication between high street stakeholders.
- Programme a series of community events, with specific goals to grow resources and willingness to participate.
- Involve all stakeholders in decisions around data gathering.
- Take an anthropological and ethnographic approach to understanding the existing community and motivation to participate.

Useful references

- See Case Study pages: South Norwood, Harlesden, Tottenham High Road, Church Street
- London Office of Technology & Innovation (LOTI), London councils
- A Vision for Harlesden, Harlesden Town Charter, 2010
- Every One Every Day platform, Participatory City Foundation
- About Business Improvement Districts, Mayor of London
- Setting up a Town Team, LB Barnet
- Our Impact Our Story so far, Town Team Movement, 2019

PRINCIPLE

Develop organisational resource and skills

Design a strategy for enhancing skills and resources (within and beyond the council) to be directed towards the high street mission.

Different boroughs have varied scales and structures of regeneration and development teams, translating into different capacities for delivering complex projects. Since high street and town centre strategies cross different disciplines, departments and skill sets, and involve participation with organisations outside the local authority, successful implementation will require a coordinated approach. A long-term view should be taken, to incorporate plans for building council and community capacity to deliver on ambitious goals, rather than limiting ambitions in order to fit current organisational structures.

Cuts in Council budgets are a significant challenge, and where more funding is not available for additional resources, the priority should be on providing appropriate training and orhiring people with the right skills. Team resource and skills can also be enhanced by incorporating budget costs to fund specific posts, within funding bids.

Outside the local authority, community organisations have an important role to play in adaptive strategies for high streets. Capacity-building within the council can help to support community capacity-building as part of longer-term objectives, for example, working towards community asset transfer, community management or co-commissioning.

PRACTICE

Training and education
- Participate in the GLA high street network and other knowledge-sharing events such as those organised by Urban Design London and the New London Architecture.
- Initiate knowledge sharing workshops with other boroughs around specific topics.
- Participate in "Public Practice," the social entreprise established to build place-making capacity across public authorities.

Information management
- Map or record the capacity, resources and willingness of different stakeholders to participate.

Capacity building
- Where appropriate, include requests for staff resource costs in funding bids in order to build capacity.
- Create the roles and job descriptions necessary to deliver the goals, which may cut across different departments and disciplines.
- Build skills and capacity to manage the data required for baseline and ongoing evaluation and monitoring.

Governance
- Build capacity for local coalitions, comprised of community and business representatives), to be active in curation and management of assets.
- Train community members towards co-commissioning. Support community stewardship and place champions.
- Consider opportunities for community asset transfer and take a structured approach to growing capacity within a community organisation.

Useful references

- See Case Study pages: Tottenham High Road, South Norwood
- Public Practice: public service social enterprise, London
- High Street Network, Mayor of London

PRINCIPLE

Support inclusive economies

Treat the high street as a business incubator. Plan for adequate workspace to support diversity within the future vision, and carefully consider retention of existing buildings to support viability and continuity of local businesses.

High streets have great potential to support socio-economic stability and improvement by providing the spaces, infrastructure and connectivity for diverse, value-creating businesses to thrive.

Strategies should seek to retain value within the local economy and support businesses and initiatives that do so. They should also seek to understand and support, through participatory engagement, economic activity which supports different groups in an inclusive manner, while recognising the high street as a place for inclusive business incubation.

It is possible for the public sector to create or stimulate markets, rather than taking a short-term, market-led approach to the nature of the high street economy. This approach is illustrated in the Sutton case study, which builds on Sutton's mission to create a more diverse town centre ecosystem and proposes the relocation of council offices and services to the high street.

The investment case has shown that high streets across London are disproportionately places where 'resilient' businesses are located. Strategies to support businesses on the high street should plan for the right kind of space and property needed, accounting for business diversity in the area. Strategies should include high quality internet connectivity and support for businesses to achieve strategic objectives, transport connectivity and servicing logistics. In addition, the positive atmosphere, culture and experience of associated public realm will also help to support business activity.

PRACTICE

Observation and research
- Understand which existing businesses and facilities provide community value.
- Maintain a list of potential tenants or operators who generate social value (such as, provide training and skills or help activate the street).
- Commission a study to better understand local growth sectors, business networks and supply chains.
- Map different scales and types of workspace available to identify gaps in scale and type in relation to high street targets.
- Establish the presence of council officers in temporary offices on the high street to build local knowledge.

Support business
- Set up a forum for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing.
- Consider microfinance initiatives for high street businesses.
- Support skills workshops including digital and web skills.
- Consider the potential for a high street "innovation district."

Asset management
- Consider 'social value' leases with identified strategic objectives around value creation.
- Consider strategic and more permanent relocation of council offices and services to accessible high street places to boost activity and footfall.

New institutions
- Invest in libraries as multifunctional learning and culture hubs and evaluate their contribution to the local economy.
- Work with local institutions such as higher education, art, cultural and medical institutions, to build relationships with local businesses, new specialisms and development opportunities.

Digital integration
- Enable wifi on the high street and provide infrastructure for access to high speed internet for businesses.

Useful references

- See Case Study pages: Church Street, Sutton High Street, Tottenham High Road, Dalston, Walthamstow, Harlesden
- What's in store?, Centre For Cities, 2019

PRINCIPLE

Design and plan for intense, mixed uses

Recognise the potential of residential intensification to improve footfall, especially to support night-time activity. Proactively plan for mixed use.

The draft London Plan emphasises the intensification of high streets and town centres to support good growth. In many cases, significant structural change is necessary to enable intensification, and in some areas it is already underway. Examples include the Old Kent Road and Church Street case study areas. The relationship between large numbers of new residents, and the activity of a high street or town centre, needs careful design consideration and management. Mitigating negative impacts in the short-term, and ensuring that this scale of change achieves successful mixed-use high streets in the long term requires specific policy attention and stakeholder participation.

Critically, the intensification of residential provision should not compromise the ability of a high street or town centre, with its varied mix of uses, to function. Moreover, there is potential for residential intensification to benefit high streets through increased users and visitors, if planned appropriately.

The design of mixed urban blocks should equally prioritise all uses. Design of residential uses should not be prioritised over non-residential uses or compromise their functon in terms of servicing, waste and deliveries.

Given the right support, the public sector can enable enhanced civic and community provision and help shape the high street institutions for the future. This includes mixed-use centres for learning, making and working with convenient access to public services. Other new and relevant uses include places that help people live healthy lives such as gyms, exercise studios, community kitchens and libraries as well as facilities for co-creation, co-working, recycling and repair and training and skill development.

PRACTICE

Plan mixed uses
- Develop Ground Floor Strategy to establish a vision and flexible implementation plan for an appropriate mix of uses and a healthy high street environment in high streets subject to substantial change and intensification.
- Within Ground Floor Strategies, incorporate practical design codes to ensure ground floor units, within new mixed-use schemes, are suitable for a variety of non-residential uses.
- Recognise the impact of new development in policies on existing town centre uses in policy. Seek to recommand complementary uses, supported by an understanding of local demand.
- Consider council offices and services on the high street.
- Champion cooperative models of housing delivery. Consider mixed-uses models with non-residential uses, devised in collaboration with the community and stakeholders alongside housing.

Transport and logistics
- Plan and make policies to minimise deliveries by motorised vehicles. Consider high street consolidation centres, supported by digital platforms for deliveries.
- Accommodate eCargo bikes for business deliveries.

Public realm
- Help to reduce the impact of the urban heat island effect, with radical greening.
- Consider the impact of dense new developments, including wind, daylight and heat.

'Think night'
- Test a range of evening activities and work together with local organisations such as higher education, art, cultural and medical institutions, to encourage activities and access for the public at different times of the day and night.

Useful references

- See Case Study pages: Old Kent Road, Sutton High Street, Church Street, West End and Stratford high street.
- Toronto Tomorrow: A new approach for inclusive growth, Sidewalk Labs, 2019
- Objectif 100 hectares, The Parisculteurs, Ville de Paris
- Cultural Infrastructure map, London City Hall

PRINCIPLE

Manage assets innovatively

Coordinate a property strategy that enables publicly-owned assets to support strategic goals. Define and agree with stakeholders Key Performance Indicators to be incorporated within leases and other agreements to promote and deliver social value.

Significant public land and property holdings on and around high streets can be an important resource. Management involves control over who the occupants are, what they do and the standards by which the tenant organisations operate – all of which can either create or extract public value from the high street. The coordination and alignment of asset / property management, short- and long-term, with spatial regeneration goals is critical to unlocking this potential. Such a strategy must be nested in high-level budget and income planning.

The term 'curation' has been used in this document to describe taking an organised attitude to the overall experience that the high street offers. It involves defining a framework which enables the benefits of each occupancy to be balanced relative to commercial, social, environmental or economic goals. Innovation, such as social value leases, can be co-created with high street stakeholders in order to deliver public value in line with agreed Key Performance Indicators.

Curation is more complex when there is multiple ownership, although there are challenges in all circumstances. There are opportunities for curation without full or single ownership (see Practice, right). Private commercial developments are often carefully curated with quality of visitor experience the key consideration over commercial rents in specific instances. The public sector can learn from this, whilst considering a broader remit, beyond commercial value, in order to align with high level goals and missions targeting the creation of public value.

PRACTICE

Information management
- Review the property portfolio and set in place a comprehensive property and lease tracking record, if one is not already available.
- Review and document community value creation by existing tenants and use this reference to inform a property strategy.

Reuse and retrofit
- Consider the long-term return on investments of extending or upgrading council assets to better deliver strategic goals, such as upgrading or extending buildings in council ownership.
- Dynamically respond to evaluation in order to improve the performance of existing properties against strategic goals.
- Identify underused buildings or spaces which may offer potential to support strategic goals. Consider the ability to influence.

Curation approaches
- **Existing single ownership:** Coordinate property, economic development and regeneration policies to identify assets that can support the delivery of high street strategic goals. Set in place a process for procuring tenants to further support gaols.
- **Site acquisition:** Purchase strategic freeholds and sites as a borough, or in partnership with funders and developers.
- **Ground floor acquisition**: Boroughs could consider directly acquiring freeholds or leases of ground floor units in existing or new build properties, for direct control and curation.
- **Negotiation:** Dedicate resource or a business or property support role, within a borough or shared across boroughs, to negotiate with landlords and match potential tenants with appropriate properties.
- **3rd party organisation:** Identify not-for-profits or charities, which have the potential to be a workspace company or community managed organisation. Offer them support to build capacity in order to take the head lease of a new or vacant high street property.

Useful references

- See Case Study pages: Tottenham High Road, Church Street, Stratford High Street and South Norwood
- Vital'Quartier, La Semaest, Paris
- Creative Land Trust, securing affordable workspace, London

PRINCIPLE

Experiment and Prototype

Prototyping and the measurement of its impact against a baseline is a vital tool to overcome the significant political challenges and preconceptions faced when proposing major urban change.

The streets and public spaces that comprise London's high streets and town centres are heavily contested spaces, with many coinciding or conflicting uses. To respond to the high street-specific challenges described in this guidance, and the global challenges of climate change, inequality and wellbeing, radical changes are needed in the way that buildings and spaces are used.

Key to an adaptive strategy is the process of experimentation and prototyping. This involves making relatively low-cost, ambitious temporary interventions that address the strategic goals, in order to test a hypothesis and build consensus amongst the wide range of stakeholders involved in high streets and town centres. The key is to demonstrate, demystify and de-risk through prototype and testing because "how we make the future visible might be as significant as the ways in which we make the future possible".[1] The approach, which is participatory by nature, was pioneered at MIT's Urban Living Labs unit which aimed to, "bring together interdisciplinary experts to develop, deploy, and test – in actual living environments – new technologies and strategies for design that respond to this changing world."

The Living Lab approach is inherently truly adaptive, since the definitive outcome is not known at the start of the process, and instead it is a phased process, with each step responding to new changes in behaviour, technology or policy. To be effective, the process involves baseline evaluation, against which changes (such as dwell time, traffic flow or satisfaction) are measured in order to build consensus and the investment case for more permanent or longer-term interventions which may ensue.

1   Keith and Calzada. European urban living labs as experimental city-to-city learning platforms. Urban Transformations, 2017

PRACTICE

Evaluation
- Work with stakeholders to define values and desired change.
- Measure baseline qualitative and quantitative data.
- Measure, evaluate and record the outcomes of prototypes to build an evidence base and communicate them widely.

Prototype and pilot
Examples of proposals to prototype or pilot:
- Reduce traffic congestion and improve the pedestrian experience by using road and lane closures or re-calibration, implemented with modest means (with temporary delineation, paint, planters or street furniture).
- Create of new public or open spaces in underused locations, implemented with modest means (such as paint, plant pots or temporary delineation).
- Engage with the public in new ways to deliver council services (for example, in a cafe, shop or library).
- Digital transformation initiatives and Smart City processes
- Ways of managing servicing, delivery or other logistics within the streetscape, using technology where relevant.
- Initiatives for re-use, recycling and the circular economy on the high street.
- Ownership and investment models for new projects, such as cooperative investment funds or community shares (for example community-backed businesses or energy generation).
- Social Value Leases.
- Community asset management initiatives.
- Delivery of new cultural or social spaces in existing places (meanwhile or pop-up).
- Public realm that is accessible to all.
- Access to licensing and other bureaucratic processes.

Useful references

- See Case Study pages: Stratford High Street, Tottenham High Road, West End, Dalston, Walthamstow.
- 20 Tools for Innovating in Government, Nesta, 2019
- Brixton Energy, co-operatively owned renewable energy, London
- Budget Participatif – Paris (refer to the Tous Recup project)
- Social Integration Design Lab

PRINCIPLE

Evaluate in a dynamic way

Establish a baseline and employ high and low-tech data collection to measure against defined aims.

Evidence and reflection are invaluable in the process of managing change, and it takes time to support this. Recording baseline and tracking impact over longer periods of time will help to establish what works. Critically, this will guide more effective use of public funds and allow preconceptions to be challenged to help achieve buy-in. Monitoring and evaluation should not be overly bureaucratic, but rather built into existing processes, making more effective use of good evidence and, where it adds value, new forms of data. Evidence collection in the case of adaptation and transformation is always aided by an appreciation of context. Using Theory of Change (see Appendix 1) methodologies to design programmes of activity and measurement, will help define and refine the evidence which can be collected and the story that can be told.

Boroughs should recognise the potential cross-cutting benefits of data insight to evaluate the high street and create a robust feedback loop of action and evidence. Social science methods and direct engagement processes are currently the main tools of gathering data on the high street and can be used in combination with Internet of Things (IoT) technology, and to provide additional layers of insight. This can also create efficiency and increase the scale and scope of usable data for the public good. Boroughs will need to increase capacity and collaborate (such as via the London Office of Technology & Innovation) to manage and extract value from data.

Digital innovation should be used as a way to empower high street traders and businesses to adapt to change. BIDs and Business and Traders Associations can collectively benefit from data insight for better decision making. To do this, digital connectivity and access to services must be free and inclusive. Boroughs must use their assets to drive market competition and encourage network and wifi suppliers to provide fast, consistent internet access, and extend those benefits to those most disconnected.

PRACTICE

Evaluation
- Co-creation of baseline values to reflect what matters to the community and aligns with local area plans or Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Use existing Good Growth Fund indicators to measure social, economic, environmental and commercial outcomes.
- Use Theory of Change to establish what evidence is required to support strategic goals.
- Co-creation of sensible and achievable targets expressed in an accessible way. Don't be put off by targets which seem difficult to measure (such as how people feel on the high street). Refer to the GLA's Social Integration guidance.
- Use existing and emerging centralised assets to set baselines and the contextual position (including Town Centre Health Check, Night Time Data Observatory, Met Crime Statistics).
- Collation of standardised high street data (with GLA support).
- Tie evaluation methods into conditions for social value leases.

Digital integration
- Install public wifi, collect and analyse data.
- Install Internet of Things (IoT) sensors on interoperable systems to enable data to be gathered, shared and accessed from multiple sources across target areas.
- Build skills and capacity to collate, interpret, visualise and manage data in-house or through an arms-length data management lab, or with software such as PowerBI, Commonplace, DataPA, Ezytreev (greenspaces) and Idox.
- Promote website platforms for 'high streets' to help with branding or marketing (#myhighstreet).
- Employ low–tech data collection and solutions (for instance, a research café which offers free coffee in exchange for feedback).
- Share primary research with others.

Useful references

- See Case Study pages: Dalston, Church Street
- Digital City Tools, Bloomberg Associates, 2018
- Array of Things, collection of real-time data, Chicago
- Making Sense: the Toolkit, Making Sense (see Smart Citizen Kit)
- Social Integration Headline Measures, London Datastore, GLA

STRUCTURE OF A STRATEGY

This guidance document does not set out to be a step-by-step guide to making an adaptive high street strategy. Rather it provides inspiration, references, precedents and principles as well as a number of practical tactics to employ to help high streets adapt to challenges and leverage opportunities.

Here we outline an indicative structure and list of components for a strategy. We also suggest which areas of this guidance document may be useful to help you develop an adaptive high street strategy.

Research Refer to: • Chapter 1 • Appendix 1	• Carry out existing site and context analysis (Identify gaps in analysis and carry out new site-specific research) • Establish baseline position for ongoing evaluation (check data available from centralised resources)
Goals Refer to: • Chapter 4	• What are we trying to achieve? • Set straightforward and measurable goals • Ensure goals are aligned across departments or create cross-departmental teams to deliver mission • Involve the community and stakeholders' in defining goals
Principles Refer to: • Chapter 4	• Identify the underlying values and behaviours that guide the project and mission
Strategies Refer to: • Chapter 4	• Approaches to achieving objectives • Strategies should be nested within a High Street Strategy or existing separately and referred to (Examples: property and leasing, ground floors, digital transformation, meanwhile use, public realm, enterprise, social prescribing)
Proposals Refer to: • Chapter 3 • Chapter 4	• Identify areas for intervention / adaptation and spatially define • Proposals should be coordinated and aspirational
Projects Refer to: • Chapter 3 • Chapter 4	• Identify discrete projects • Identify owners / stakeholders • Identify actions required to realise project • Organise projects in order of priority • Cost projects
Implementation Refer to: • Chapter 3	• Establish governance structures • Define resources needed to deliver the project • Identify funding streams • Set time scales for delivery and phasing
Measurement Refer to: • Appendix 1	• Evaluate against baseline • Practice ongoing evaluation • Agree an approach to measuring the success of a project • Reflect on evaluation and redesign where required

THANKS TO

CONTRIBUTORS AND THANKS

Consultant team
Gort Scott: Fiona Scott, Pamela Snow, Susie Hyden
We Made That: Holly Lewis, Shamiso Oneka, Emily Temperton
Hatch Regeneris: Chris Paddock, Barney Cringle
Urban Shape: Caroline Marginson, Adam Bunn

GLA project team
Jamie Dean, programme director of Good Growth by Design,
Mathilde Lebreton, high streets strategy lead
Stephen Lorimer, City Intelligence Unit
Rob McNicol, Planning, London Plan Team
Paul Broadhurst, Night Time Economy and Music
Melissa Meyer, Social Integration

Expert Advisors
Simon Babes, Movement Strategies
Mariana Mazzucato, UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose
Adam Scott, FreeState
Camilla Siggaard Andersen, Arup
Iain Macbeth, Head of Foresight, Transport Innovation Directorate, TfL

High Streets Adaptive Strategies Sounding Board
Dan Hill, Mayor's Design Advocate
Wayne Hemingway, Mayor's Design Advocate
Indy Johar, Mayor's Design Advocate
Helen Clark Bell, BID, Love Wimbledon
Matthew Hill, London First
Richard Parish, Historic England
Alex Warnock-Smith, Urban projects Bureau
Steve Yewman, Westfield, London First
Paul Lavelle, TfL
Matthew Jaffa, Federation of Small Businesses

GLA

Regeneration and Economic Development
Planning
City Intelligence Unit
Culture & Creative Industries
Community and Social Policy
Environment
Infrastructure & Growth
Housing and Land
Group finance
Transport
Skills & Employment
The European Programmes Management Unit

Case study boroughs

London Borough of Brent
London Borough of Croydon
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Haringey
London Borough of Newham
London Borough of Southwark
London Borough of Sutton
London Borough of Waltham Forest
London Borough of Westminster
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Paul Barnes, advisor to New West End Company
Lorna Blake, Developer and Business Engagement Manager,
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Lydia Clarkson, Head of Public Realm, Shaftesbury
Martha McPherson, UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose
Euan Mills, Head of Digital Planning, Connected Places Catapult
Dan Johnson, New West End Company
Jamie Robinson, Head of Business, Employment and Skills Regional
Enterprise LB Barnet
William Rowe, Protein Agency
Patricia Park, Successful Sutton

GOOD GROWTH BY DESIGN

The Mayor's Good Growth by Design programme seeks to enhance the design of the built environment to create a city that works for all Londoners. This means development and growth should benefit everyone who lives here. As such, it should be sensitive to the local context, environmentally sustainable, and physically accessible. The programme calls on all involved in London's architectural, design and built environment professions to help realise the Mayor's vision.

Good Growth by Design uses the skills of both the Mayor's Design Advocates and the wider sector. This includes teams at City Hall, the London boroughs and other public bodies. The programme has six pillars:

SETTING STANDARDS
Using design inquiries to investigate key issues for architecture, urban design and place-shaping, to set clear policies and standards.

APPLYING THE STANDARDS
Ensuring effective design review across London, including a London Design Review Panel.

BUILDING CAPACITY
Enhancing the GLA Group's and boroughs' ability to shape new development to deliver good growth.

SUPPORTING DIVERSITY
Working towards a more representative sector and striving for best practice while designing for diversity.

COMMISSIONING QUALITY
Ensuring excellence in how the Mayor and other public sector clients appoint and manage architects and other built environment professionals.

CHAMPIONING GOOD GROWTH BY DESIGN
Advocating best practice to support success across the sector.

The Mayor's Design Advocates

The Mayor's Design Advocates are 50 built environment professionals. They were chosen for their skills and experience to help the Mayor support London's growth through the Good Growth by Design programme. They are independent and impartial, and provide support, advice, critique and expertise on London's built environment. The group includes practitioners, academics, policy makers and those from community-led schemes. Fifty per cent of the advocates are women, and one in four are from a BAME background.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Regeneration Team
Greater London Authority,
City Hall, The Queen's Walk,
London SE1 2AA**

www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/advice-and-guidance/about-good-growth-design

goodgrowthbydesign@london.gov.uk

For a large print, Braille, disc, sign language video or audio-tape version of this document, please contact us at the address below:

Public Liaison Unit
Greater London Authority
City Hall, London SE1 2AA

Telephone 020 7983 4000
Minicom 020 7983 4458
www.london.gov.uk

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