

Vaughan Road Car Park Redevelopment

Statement of Community Involvement

**Prepared by Daisy Froud
for Adam Khan Architecture and Harrow Council**

May 2017

Contents

	Page
01 Introduction and Priorities	5
Why we involved the local community to a significant degree	5
Who we involved in design development	6
How we have involved people in design development	9
02 Detailed Summary of Process	11
03 Main Impacts of Community Upon Designs	17
Community Feedback on our Engagement Process	22
04 Examples of engagement materials	23
Examples of publicity materials	23
Examples of display materials	24

01

Introduction and Overview

This is a Statement of Community Involvement in support of a formal planning application **for new housing, community-focused space and associated public realm** on the Harrow Council owned Vaughan Road Car Park site at the junction of Vaughan Road and Bessborough Road, HA1.

In response to the identification of pre-application community engagement as 'best practice' by government, the following pages describe **nine months of community involvement** in the design development of the above site. They set out:

- **The design team's approach to identifying and communicating with local stakeholders**
- **the responses given by local community members to the design team's design proposals**
- **the way in which the design team responded to their feedback in turn**

This Statement demonstrates the commitment of the design team and client to delivering active community involvement as part of the development process. The design of this scheme has been significantly informed by (i) an extensive programme of consultation with local residents and voluntary and community sector groups with regard to overall site strategy and design approach, and (ii) an additional element of a more intensely participative nature to shape a brief for the nature and occupancy of the ground floor community spaces.

We have produced this Statement of Community Involvement with reference to the Harrow Council Statement of Community Involvement (2013). In keeping with the spirit of this document, the local community have been engaged to a far greater degree, and earlier in the design and development process, than is required by government policy.

Why we involved the local community to a significant degree

The site under discussion is a highly-visible council-owned piece of land on the junction of Vaughan Road (a relatively quiet residential road in west Harrow) and Bessborough Road, a major north-south route connecting the south of the borough with the town centre. It is currently a car park, but has been identified through surveys as under-used, and has therefore been included in a borough-wide programme of Council housing development on similar sites. Through this initiative, the Council aims to help tackle a shortage of homes in the borough, while also building private rental properties to generate an ongoing revenue stream, helping address central government funding shortfalls.

Harrow Council, aware that their proposal to redevelop the site might cause concerns for local residents and community groups, particularly around the impacts of the reduction of parking spaces - with availability of parking an increasing 'hot topic' across the borough - was keen to ensure that they were involved in the design conversation right from the start. This would not only allow the best possible approach to be found for the site, but also allow any issues relating to loss of parking to be mitigated through the identification and provision of other potential benefits, such as improvements to the unsafe and rundown underpass at the end of Bessborough Road.

Most significantly, the Council felt it important that any new development actively give something back to the existing local community. They have intended from the project's conception to use ground floor spaces to provide some kind of non-residential use that would be deemed desirable by local people. To this end, prior to appointing the design team to the project, they had already written to local residents to inform that they were considering redeveloping the car park, and to ask for people's ideas about what that space might be used for. The design team was asked to build on this work through its own design engagement, talking to local people

not just about the look, feel and layout of new buildings and spaces, but also about the possible programme for the ground floor and the immediately adjacent external space.

Furthermore, they were aware, as is the case with most areas of London at the moment, that there was likely to be concern regarding (i) the impact of development full stop, with new residents moving into the area and placing demand on local infrastructure (including parking space) and (ii) the look and feel of any new development. Harrow is traditionally a low rise, suburban borough, but in recent years – again in common with many areas of outer London – development has looked to go taller and to be achieved at higher densities. People naturally have strong feelings about possible visual impact, and the look and feel of their neighbourhood overall. At the operational level, it is also normal for local residents and businesses to fear disruption to everyday life from changed patterns of use, transport movement, or from the construction process itself.

The design team – working closely with the client – therefore worked to involve local residents from as early as possible in the process, as soon as they had been appointed, in order to bring community views, and knowledge of the local area, into detailed design brief and early concept development. Although the design team could not involve local people prior to design starting – due to the tender process for the work requiring the preparation of a concept scheme – they used their competition scheme as a ‘conversation starter’ at initial events, asking people to respond to it while also taking the opportunity to document local aspirations, concern and priorities.

Placing emphasis on intensive early stage consultation allowed those first conversations to actively inform the detailed project brief, with subsequent consultation events treated as a form of ‘community design review’ against that brief, helped the architects design knowing that they were responding to clearly-articulated needs and aspirations.

The level of engagement undertaken also enabled the design team and client to evaluate issues as early as possible, to adapt the design where practical, or, when change was not possible, to explain the reasons why it was not.

Who we involved in the design development, and how we have done that

One of the first things we did upon appointment was to prepare an extensive database of local contacts. This has been added to over the course of the process. The following stakeholders have been invited to participate in the design development process over the past 9 months:

- **Local residents and businesses:**
 - 2330 properties around the site were individually posted flyers approximately 10 days in advance of events by Harrow Council
 - between 12 and 20 A3 colour posters were put up around the neighbourhood in advance of each event
 - all flyers and posters provided an email contact for the Regeneration Team at the Council, encouraging those unable to attend events to get in touch
 - an email database of 91 individuals who have attended events, or enquired about the project, is maintained, with members receiving invitations to events and other updates;
 - copies of consultation materials are placed on a dedicated blog after each event to encourage further comment: www.vaughanroad.wordpress.com
 - posts were made on the Facebook pages West Harrow Neighbours and Harrow-on-the-Hill in advance of events
- **Local facilities potentially directly affected by removal of the car park**
 - Both **Harrow Spiritualist Church**, directly opposite the site on Vaughan Road, and **Mosaic Synagogue**, on the other side of Bessborough Road, fear the impact of any redevelopment on the smooth-running of their activities.
 - The congregations of both often travel quite long distances to attend services and when particular festivals or special events are on, demand for parking space can be extremely high. Elderly and disabled visitors rely on being able to drive, particularly given the lack of easily accessible local bus stops, as do

large families coming for events at the synagogue.

- Both groups had contacted the Council prior to our appointment upon first hearing of the plans, keen to ensure that their perspectives were taken into account and that strategies could be developed to mitigate any impact.
- The design team has met individually with both facilities, and representatives from both have also attended public drop-in events and meetings, a number of which have been hosted at the Church.

- **Local community and civic interest groups**

- Harrow Cyclists – we met with them early in the project as they were very keen to see the underpass access and safety improved for cyclists, and then remained in touch through emails and attendance at meetings and drop-ins throughout the process.
- Friends of West Harrow Park – supportive of the idea of the ground floor space and what it might offer, and regularly sent participants to meetings and events, as well as helping us publicise activity through social media.
- Campaign for a Better Harrow Environment – members and associates of this group frequently attended meetings and drop-in events.
- Harrow Town Centre Business Improvement District – we met with the BID's Operations Manager at the start of the project, with a particular focus on understanding the kind of local commercial or community activity that they felt might be appropriate for the ground floor, and continued to keep them informed via email.

All of the above groups were sent regular emails updating them on where we were in the process and inviting them to events.

- **Local tenants and residents groups**

- Honeybun Estate TRA – the Chair of the TRA attended some of our events, including a community workshop to explore possible ground floor uses, and we continued to keep them informed via email.
- Roxborough Residents Association – a number of member attended events throughout the process.
- West Harrow Residents Group
- Headstone Residents Association
- Harrow Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations

All of the above groups were sent regular emails updating them on where we were in the process and inviting them to events.

- **Community facilities and places of worship**

- St Peter's Harrow, Sumner Rd, HA1 – regular emails and a meeting with the vicar Rod Green. St Peter's is one of the main existing facilities offering community space for hire in the area, but has to turn some activity, such as evening parties and yoga, away.
- Harrow College – we worked closely with the Art and Design department at the College, with architecture, interior and product-design BTEC and A-Level students not only attending our events, and helping with some aspects of running them, but also taking the ground floor brief to create a community space as one of their projects for the term.
- Harrow Women's Centre – we popped in and had a conversation with them early in the process, and kept them informed throughout, but despite some initial interest representatives did not continue to attend.

The following facilities were sent regular emails with information about events and opportunities to learn more about their scheme and for their communities to input views, but as far as we know there was no uptake.

- Vaughan Road Primary School
- St Anselm's Roman Catholics Primary School
- Whitmore High School
- Harrow High School

- Jubilee Academy
- St Peter's Medical Centre
- **Local council/ community:**
 - Ward councillors for West Harrow and Greenhill wards. Councillors regularly attended meetings and events.
 - Harrow Residents Regeneration Panel: we presented the emerging scheme to this group in November 2016.

How we have involved community stakeholders in design development

Date	Stakeholder	Activity	Purpose of activity
16 June 2016	Harrow Cyclists	Site meeting	Understand the way in which cyclists use and experience the underpass now and the ways in which the project might be able to improve this.
29 June 2016	Harrow Town Centre BID	Meeting	Discuss possible appropriate and viable community-focused uses for the ground floor spaces.
29 June 2016	Mosaic Synagogue	Meeting	Understand the Synagogue's concerns and ideas about the project, and the way in which they currently use the car park, in order to inform initial design development.
30 June 2016	Local councillors	Meeting	Introduce councillors to initial design approach and get their input into community engagement strategy.
5 July 2016	Harrow Spiritualist Church	Meeting	Understand the Church's concerns about the project, and the way in which they currently use the car park, in order to inform initial design development.
12 July 2016	Local residents, businesses and community/resident groups.	Public meeting at local community space The Arc House, Lowlands Rec.	Introduce the project and the design team; show aspects of competition scheme for comment; show initial thoughts about design principles; build knowledge of local priorities and concerns.
16 July 2016	Local residents, businesses and community/resident groups.	Design Drop In 1 (Brief Development) on the car park site	Introduce the project and the design team; show aspects of competition scheme for comment; show initial thoughts about design principles; build knowledge of local priorities and concerns.
28 July 2016	Local residents, businesses and community/resident groups.	Community Workshop at Harrow Spiritualist Church	Establish design principles/priorities and appropriate possible uses for the ground floor.
10 Sept 2016	Local residents, businesses and community/resident groups.	Design Drop In 2 (Initial Concept Design) on the car park site. Inc. Cycle Ride of local area to look at architectural character.	Show initial concept design proposals for buildings and spaces; initiate deeper conversation about character. Gain feedback to inform next stage.

Date	Stakeholder	Activity	Purpose of activity
cont.	Harrow College		Introduce Harrow College students to the project and give them experience of a design consultation event.
21 Sept 2016	Local residents, businesses and community/resident groups.	Parking and Transport Meeting at The Arc House, Lowlands Rec.	Discuss concerns and possible approaches to parking strategy and public transport and walking and cycling improvements in a more focused and collective way.
8 Nov 2016	Residents Regeneration Panel	Presentation /discussion	Present concept designs for their input and feedback.
22 Nov 2016	Harrow College	Careers Talk/Workshop	Allow our project architect to engage with the work that the students are doing on the same brief, and enable discussion about what it is to be an architect in practice.
23 Nov 2016	St Peter's Church	Meeting	Discuss the ways in which potential ground floor uses could meet local need and sit well alongside existing local provision.
1 Dec 2016	Local residents, businesses and community/resident groups. Harrow College	Design Drop-in 3 (Developed Concept Design) at Harrow Spiritualist Church.	Show how designs and parking strategy have involved in response to community feedback; show initial proposals re character of the architecture i.e. detailed look and feel of the site and gather feedback to inform development of detailed designs. Bring students up-to-date on the project and give them more experience of staffing a design a consultation event.
18 Feb 2017	Local residents, businesses and community/resident groups.	Design Drop-in 4 (Final Design) at Arc House, Lowlands Rec.	Show final design proposals (display and models) prior to preparing planning application; show designs and architectural character proposals in detail, as well as samples of materials.

02

Detailed summary of process

The summary below charts the progress taken through the principal engagement sessions and meetings and summarises issues and aspirations raised by participants at each stage.

STAGE 1: INCEPTION/BRIEF DEVELOPMENT

INITIAL PUBLIC MEETING

Date:	12 July 2016
Format:	evening meeting at Arc House, Lowlands Rec, HA1
Participants:	Approximately 30 people attended, including a number of Vaughan Road residents, and representatives of Harrow Spiritualist Church, Roxborough Residents Association, and Friends of West Harrow Park.
Information presented:	introduction to design team and project; clarification that the consultation due to take place is not re. whether the project will happen or not, but about the nature of the design approach; presentation of initial design ideas (as submitted to win design competition) for feedback.

Key points of feedback

1. **Concern re parking implications:** where will existing cars go, and where will the cars of new residents go – as they will have cars, even if the development is officially car-free – and what will be the knock-on effects for existing Vaughan Rd residents, especially with the CPZ not being properly policed? **Current proposals to manage/accommodate parking inadequate.** Requests that we explore other approaches and conduct more rigorous research and surveys.
2. **Interest in the principles of the Council's development model** i.e. retain land ownership, offer secure private rented housing and affordable housing sustainably over time. But cynicism re ability to achieve this and ongoing management, and re the reality of how and what the ground floor spaces might be.
3. **Impact of scale and type of development on local people and environment:** concerns about increased local population, pressure on infrastructure, possible anti-social behaviour and misuse of ground floor spaces and external space. Cynicism that an appropriate quality of development will be provided and fears re impact on local house prices.
4. **Fears re creation of a new isolated and un-integrated community** – 'plonked' at the end of the road.
5. **Proposed scale and character of development** - not in keeping with local area.

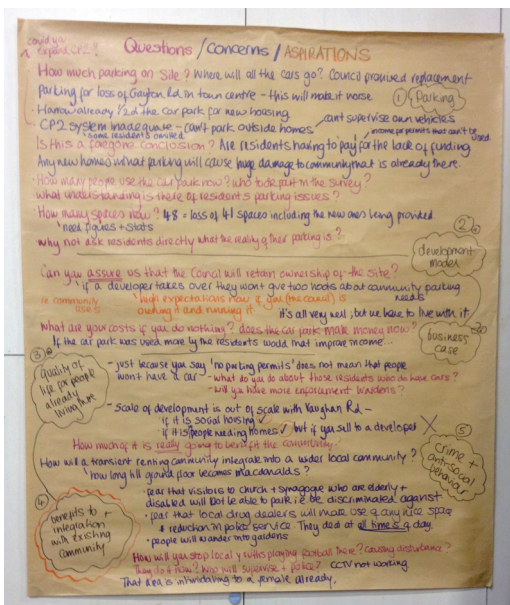
COMMUNITY DESIGN DROP-IN 1

Date:	16 July 2016
Format:	drop-in event on Vaughan Rd car park site
Participants:	approx. 70 people
Information presented:	background to project; initial analysis of the neighbourhood and site; presentation of feedback so far; initial thoughts re. site layout, height, shape and character of buildings; strategy re parking; initial thoughts on potential of ground floor.
Specific questions asked:	what do we need to think about particularly carefully in terms of developing the site? What is special/unique about the character of the neighbourhood and its architecture?

Key points of feedback

1. **Concern re parking and traffic congestion:** where will existing residents and their visitors, church and synagogue users, and new residents, park? Tremendous challenge for the scheme. Proper solutions required. Praise for declared intention to address this properly.
2. **Design must be sympathetic to the character of the area:** e.g. the residential Edwardian architecture of west Harrow, and not the blocks of central Harrow. Praise for declared intention to respond well to this.

3. **Height** should feel appropriate to the area.
4. **Need for community facilities/space in the area:** can the development provide this? Praise for proposed provision of this via the ground floor.
5. **Greenery:** can as much as possible be provided? For biodiversity as well as visual amenity. Initial plans look promising in this regard.
6. **Overcrowding/density:** concern. re. how many people are moving into the area. Can local infrastructure cope?
7. **Security/safety:** needs to be carefully considered. Site and underpass are already locations for crime and anti-social behaviour. Praise for the plan to include underpass improvements in the project.
8. **Concern re potential impact upon property values locally.**
9. **The proposed courtyards look like nice spaces** as long as anti-social behaviour is designed out.
10. **Praise/interest in the idea of restricting vehicle access to the Bessborough Rd/ Vaughan Rd junction** – to be one direction only once car park closed.
11. **Tenure/occupancy:** a lot of interest in this and potential implications, though no particular consensus re whom the homes should be for.



12 July 2016



16 July 2016

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP: GROUND FLOOR USES

Date: 28 July 2016

Format: evening workshop at Harrow Spiritualist Church

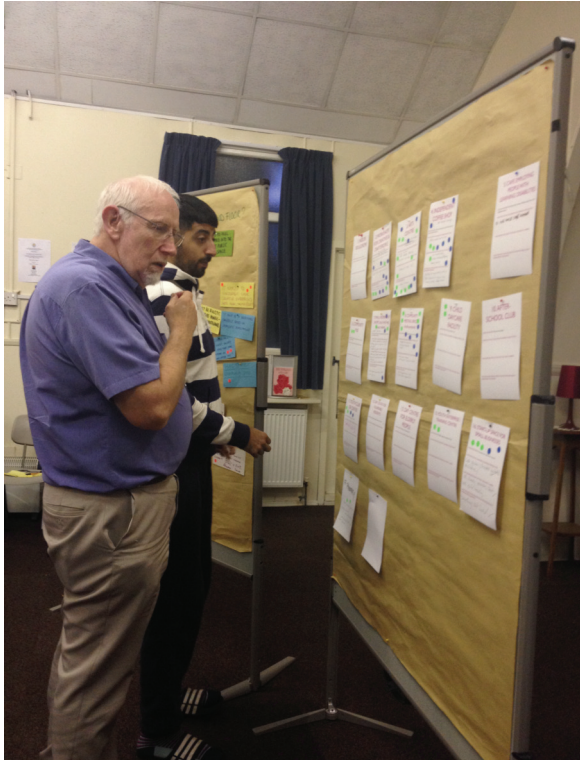
Participants: 16 people, including members of the Spiritualist Church, Honeybun Estate TRA, and Friends of West Harrow Park.

Information presented: we undertook a series of participative exercises to understand what is (a) possible (spatially and economically) and (b) desirable, from a community perspective, in the ground floor spaces – informed by previous consultation and by research; we identified community priorities and preferred uses, and started to consider the 'design implications' of these.

Key points of feedback

1. **Attractive and 'in keeping':** whatever happens on the ground floor needs to have a clear character and to feel specific to west Harrow.
2. **Consider parking / public transport issues:** ground floor uses should not make these worse or be unrealistic about user car use, and be targeted at audiences who can travel easily to the space (or improvements should be made to local infrastructure to make travel easier.)
3. **Local expertise/resources:** any ground floor activity should make good use of these, including all the creative talent locally.

4. **Provide useful facilities:** not just an empty shell: dance floor, PA, lights etc. make a space genuinely useful.
5. **Management:** needs to be thought about carefully.
6. **Local creative enterprise:** should be supported and encouraged.
7. **Most popular, potentially viable uses:** a local arts centre, workshops for creative and craftspeople, an independent coffee shop, a multi-purpose community meeting space, small independent shops, start-up space for small businesses.



STAGE 2: CONCEPT DESIGN

COMMUNITY DESIGN DROP-IN 2

Date: 10 September 2016

Format: Daytime drop-in event on Vaughan Road car park with cycling activity (including a bike surgery, a bike-powered smoothie-making machine, and an architectural character bike tour of the local area.

Participants: 50-60 people

Information presented: Presentation of early stage concept design, including brief and background than at previous stages; analysis of site and of local architectural heritage; community feedback so far; design 'journey' so far; current ideas for site strategy, landscaping and overall height and massing of buildings, including relatively detailed floor plans; presentation of ways in which challenges and issues were being explored; plans for improvement of underpass and public realm; feedback from July workshop and further consultation on ground floor possibilities; current tenure strategy.

Key points of feedback

1. **Praise for approach to tenure:** particularly provision of affordable housing.
2. **Praise for consideration being given to architectural style:** including for incorporation of arch features in concept design – although with caveats until material proposals are known.
3. **Praise for proposed improvements to underpass:** to make it safer and more pleasant.
4. **Height:** praise for strategy to locate height towards the back of the site yet still concern that the building is too tall.

5. **Praise for making use of an unattractive, underused site.**
6. **Ground floor space:** praise for provision of this, especially potential for creative or start-up commercial activity, or community meeting space, but concern that in the end it will all be a nice idea but not viable or sustainable. Very careful thinking required.
7. **Concern at perceived failure to address parking issues:** the efforts made to mitigate loss of the car park were not felt to be capable of really addressing the issues.
8. **Fear re anti-social behaviour/ safety and security:** concern that flats and empty ground floor spaces will attract this, particularly in the open areas around the underpass.
9. **Fears re population increase:/ too many flats** and lack of local infrastructure to cope with it.
10. **Important to think beyond the red line:** and ensure, for example, that underpass is really part of the scheme.



COMMUNITY MEETING: PARKING & TRANSPORT

Date:	21 September 2016
Format:	evening meeting at the Arc House, Lowlands Rec, HA1
Participants:	meeting was very well attended – approx..30 people
Information presented:	wider Harrow context - approach to regeneration and implications for parking and transport; project background – why the project is happening and why the Council is redeveloping car parks like this one; how the design approach has changed and is changing to address parking issues; what else the Council is doing and could do to address transport and parking issues.

Key points of feedback

1. **Concern re quality and rate of local development:** are the Council able to ensure that what is being built in the borough is appropriate i.e. not too big, of good construction standards, and sensitive to the architecture of the existing area.
2. **Building heights:** concern re incremental addition of taller and taller buildings in the borough and loss of Harrow skyline.
3. **Business case/ economic strategy/ community gain re planning:** concerns that the Council is not fully in control of these issues with regard to its own development, and that of others, and desire for more information and reassurance.
4. **Ground floor uses:** important that these can operate within the restricted parking situation, and that this realistically planned for.
5. **Parking space shortfall:** while the efforts of the design team to increase the number of spaces provided on and around the site, there is still a massive shortfall. The question continued to be raised as to whether the development should be going ahead at all.
6. **Parking 'big picture':** people want to see the strategy for parking space provision, including identification of alternative parking spaces for those car parks that are being redeveloped, across the borough.
7. **CPZ extension:** can consultation on this be progressed ASAP.
8. **Bus stop location:** could the Council talk to TfL about moving this closer to the site.
9. **Alternatives:** interest in better promotion of car clubs, improvement of cycle lanes etc.
10. **Section 106/planning gain:** what could this offer in the way of mitigation?

STAGE 3: DEVELOPED DESIGN

COMMUNITY DESIGN DROP-IN 3: DEVELOPED CONCEPT

Date:	1 December 2016
Format:	afternoon into evening drop-in event at Harrow Spiritualist Church, HA1
Participants:	22 people attended
Information presented:	project brief and background,; analysis of sit and neighbourhood; summary of response to feedback; (iv) design development from the start of the project, (v) EVOLVING DESIGN PROPOSALS with a particular focus on character, floor plans, height and strategy for transport and parking, (vi) update on plans for the ground floor – design and occupier.

Key points of feedback

- 1. Ongoing praise for aspects of the scheme:** in common with feedback at previous stages, the opportunity to improve the look and feel of the site, and of the underpass, the provision of both community space and much-needed new homes, were praised.
- 2. Balconies:** the way in which these were integrated into the building form was praised.
- 3. Relationship to architecture of local area:** some participants praised this, but more felt that the development was not fitting in well with the residential architecture of Vaughan Road.
- 4. Height:** the building was still seen as being too tall in comparison with Vaughan Road.
- 5. Parking:** scepticism remained that the changes made and measures proposed would be successful in tackling issues provoked by the removal of the car park.
- 6. Unattractive, office-like architecture:** this was an issue for a number of participants. The overall style of the building, with its simple 'bland' forms and flat roofs, was seen to be too much like an office block. People urged us to use materials, finish and detailing to bring in more of a residential feel.
- 7. Materials/brick:** on the whole the choice of materials was felt to be appropriate.
- 8. Colour/detail/variety:** people encouraged us to bring in more of this, again taking inspiration from the existing local architecture.
- 9. Roof shape:** the flat roof was not popular; we were urged to bring in angles and pitches, even if these were just 'faux' ornamental additions. A number of local examples of contemporary architecture were cited as inspiration.
- 10. Arches:** the inclusion of this feature was praised, and we were encouraged to take its application further.
- 11. Greenery/green space:** people wanted to see more of this, and for it to be included in imaginative ways e.g. on walls and roofs, not just at ground level.



COMMUNITY DESIGN DROP-IN 4: FINAL DESIGN

Date: 18 February 2017

Format: Day-time drop in event at The Arc House, Lowlands Rec, HA1

Participants: 32 people attended.

Information presented: (i) brief and background to project, (ii) analysis of site and neighbourhood, (iii) community feedback received so far and how it has influenced design development, (iv) design development from the start of the project, (v) FINAL DESIGN PROPOSALS with a particular focus on character, materials, approach to building height and strategy for managing parking.

Key points of feedback

- 1. Ongoing praise for the provision of much needed housing and community space.** Emphasis was placed though on the need for *affordable* housing.
- 2. Provision of new trees:** the need for greenery had been stressed throughout. However there was some disappointment that the species proposed appeared not to be those that would best support local biodiversity.
- 3. Design quality:** views differed on this. While some praised the design of the building, a greater proportion was disappointed by it, saying that it was too plain or utilitarian, or even ugly.
- 4. Praise for aims to improve safety and security,** through changes to the underpass and the immediately adjacent public space, and by increasing footfall. However, disappointment was expressed that more had not been able to be done i.e. the character of the underpass is still fundamentally the same and the proposals do not cover the whole underpass.
- 5. Ongoing concerns re parking and transport congestion:** all the same concerns that have been there from the start of the project remained for people. Although some appreciate the time and effort that the design team have put in to tackling this as much as they can within the scope of the project, through finding ways to provide additional spaces on and off site, these tactics can in no way replace the number of spaces being removed, or the possible additional pressure on parking from the cars of new residents.
- 6. Ongoing concern re. height:** for many the building is still too tall.
- 7. Failure to 'fit in' with local architecture:** this too remains a concern for people. Many feel that while the development may respond well to central Harrow, it does not sit pleasingly alongside the low-rise Edwardian architecture of Vaughan Road and west Harrow.
- 8. Ongoing concern re pressure on local infrastructure from increasing population.**
- 9. Praise for the consultation process.**



Next steps?

At the time of writing, no other events have been held. However there is a plan to hold a second participatory design workshop to look at details of the design and use of ground floor spaces once there is more clarity re. how this space will be occupied and managed.

03

Main impacts of local community upon designs

The main areas or issues raised by the engagement process, and how the design and client teams responded, is given below.

THEME 1: SHOULD THE DEVELOPMENT GO AHEAD?

An issue raised throughout the process, particularly by people living on Vaughan Road or in immediately adjacent streets, is whether this development should take place at all. This is by no means a universal opinion – a recurring theme has also been praise for the car park site being made more attractive and put to better use, and for the provision of housing and community space – but it is one that has been felt and articulated strongly. Reasons for this are:

1. **concern re the loss of the car park**, which – whatever the Council’s surveys and statistics may say – is felt to be an important community facility, not just serving the town centre but meeting needs of residents and their visitors
2. **concern re the cumulative effects of high-levels of house-building on Harrow and the neighbourhood**: worries that population increase is unsustainable and will place too much pressure on local infrastructure.

The fact that the design team has continued to progress the designs has led to concerns from individuals that the consultation is sham or token, as they feel that the architects would not be going ahead with the project if they were actually listening to local people.

The design team has consistently explained in response:

- that the consultation has never been about whether the development should go ahead or not; we have stressed from the start that the Council, in line with strategy and policy, *wants* the development to go ahead if it can be made to work, so they have asked Adam Khan Architects to develop a design in consultation with local people with that aim in mind
- that the design team’s task is to work in conversation with the local community to design the best possible scheme for the area, in terms of how it works and in terms of how it looks
- that is also the design team’s task, along with the Council’s project team, to look for ways in which the project can bring benefit to the local area, partly in compensation for any temporary disruption caused through the construction process or loss of the car park, e.g. through improvements to the wider public realm, such as the underpass, and through provision of a useful community-focused facility on the ground floor
- that the decision as to whether the development should go ahead or not will be taken through the democratic process at the point at which the architects submit a planning application
- that the consultation we have been undertaking is *in addition to* the statutory consultation process that will take place once a planning application has been submitted, at which point local people can submit their objections to, or support for, the scheme. The design team has gone above-and-beyond on the pre-application consultation because they really want to make sure that they do the very best they can to design something that is felt to work well for the local area.

The design team has also continued to directly provide, where possible, and to encourage client Harrow Council to provide:

1. information on the research that the Council has done across the borough to identify underused car parks and to develop strategies for their redevelopment
2. information on the Council’s wider regeneration strategy, and associated provision of infrastructure.

THEME 2: PARKING AND TRANSPORT

Related to Theme 1, throughout the process there has been tremendous concern regarding the impact of this scheme going ahead on the ability of those who live locally – and those visiting them – to easily. The stated issues are:

- 1. loss of the car park/existing car parking space putting pressure on already limited parking space:** this affects not only local residents themselves, some of whom use the car park when they cannot get a space in the street itself, and who make use of the car park for visitors and deliveries, but also the congregations of local places of worship: Harrow Spiritualist Church and Mosaic Synagogue
- 2. loss of the car parking making it hard or even impossible for some congregation members to attend services:** many of those attending both church and synagogue travel long distances to get there, with no easy reliable public transport alternative. Many who attend church services are elderly or have mobility issues, and many who attend the synagogue have large families, making car use essential. In addition there is no bus stop within easy walking distance of the site.
- 3. likely additional pressure on parking from residents moving into a 'car-free' development but still having cars and needing to park them somewhere.**
- 4. associated traffic congestion from extra vehicles on local roads** and impacts on ease of travel and pedestrian safety.

What has the design team done?

During the process:

- **kept this issue as a central theme of the engagement**, at each event updating people on ways in which they had modified the design or carried out further research or investigations to try to find the best possible solution
- **met separately with the Church and synagogue** in order to fully understand their particular issues and to find ways in which any problems can be mitigated
- **called a special parking and transport meeting (21 September 2016)**, as opposed to a drop-in, to allow a proper collective discussion about the best way to proceed
- **carried out additional surveys, as the request of local people** to better understand patterns of use of the existing car park and local residents' habits
- **explored (in contravention of planning policy) the possibility of an underground car park.** This was not progressed because not only would it have been unlikely to be acceptable to the planners, but it would not have been viable within the scheme budget i.e. the scheme would no longer stack up financially. (Each parking space provided underground would cost approximately £100,000.)

Design outcomes

The design team has done everything it can, within the constraints of the brief and the site, and of planning policy, which says that – due to its location close to a public transport hub (bus station and tube station) – there should not be parking provided on site, to fit in as much additional parking as possible to replace that lost with the car park. Over the course of the design process, the design team has:

- **moved disabled parking spaces from the street onto the site**, reducing parking stress on Vaughan Rd. This is compliant with planning policy but has however reduced some of the green space on site.
- **reduced the footprint of the building in order to include some residents' parking on site**, despite this being in contravention of planning policy.
- **designed additional on-street parking (7 spaces) on Vaughan Road** - residents of the new development would not be eligible for these, so they help meet demand from Vaughan Rd residents
- **designed a space that would be suitable for a car-club car** – car clubs are increasingly popular and residents of the new development would be encouraged to join the appropriate scheme; existing Vaughan Road residents would of course be free to join it as well.
- **liaised with Harrow Spiritualist Church to ensure that proposed changes to street layout (with provision of new parking spaces) do not limit their ability to use their own on-site parking:** the Church intends to maximise the amount of parking they can offer on site and, among other things, is currently fundraising to move their toilets indoors, freeing up external space. Further coordination between the Council/ the Vaughan Road Design team and Harrow spiritualist church is planned for the coming months in order to coordinate the proposed changes to the public highway with the church's architect's extension designs.

- **Proposed moving the pedestrian island further towards Bessborough Road**, freeing up space for parking and preventing cars turning into the road, thus making the whole of Vaughan Rd one-way. (This final portion of the road was not one-way as cars needed to be able to enter and leave the car park from the main road.) This should make the junction safer for pedestrians and cyclists and reduce congestion at that end of the road.

Other outcomes/ ongoing activity

The Council has:

- **supported local residents in carrying out a petition to review and extend the current CPZ.** As a result, a CPZ review for Vaughan road and adjacent streets is planned to commence within the coming months.
- **explored with Transport for London the possibility of locating a bus stop closer to the site:** TfL said that this would not be possible. A bus stop requires a quite long, straight and unobstructed stretch of road. **On the north side of the road** there is no suitable bus stop location due to (i) the presence of a number of dropped kerbs and (ii) not enough length of straight kerb to accommodate more than one bus at a time. **On the south side of the road** there is no suitable location due to there only being one lane of traffic, as well as entrances/exits to properties and a central reservation. To try to introduce bus stops here would, in TfL's views, cause safety issues for passengers, pedestrians and other road users. TfL had no record of there ever having been a bus stop in this location, in contrast to the recollection of some longer term residents, and said that there could not have been a permanent stop in that location (at least in recent history) for the above reasons. All they could suggest is that there might once have been a temporary one there
- **researched and promoted car club use**, and is looking to promote these further in the borough, in response to interest from local residents, some of whom had not been fully aware of the possibilities of this option
- **researched car-ownership statistics for residents of PRS (Private Rented Sector) 'Build To Rent' properties** and has found relatively low car ownership among the type of person who chooses this housing, and among Harrow's existing flat occupiers (while 75% of all households in Harrow have a car, only 49% of those living in rented flats of up to three bedrooms have one.)

THEME 3: HEIGHT AND MASSING

A persistent theme throughout has been the likely scale of the building. Local people have expressed concern at the possibility of the development (i) looming over, and feeling out of scale with, the buildings on Vaughan Road most of which are 2-storey high and (ii) blocking views of Harrow-on-The Hill, and creating a wall/eyesore feel at the end of Vaughan Road.

During the process the design team has carried out studies of how the scheme might impact upon three local protected views: Harrow Recreation Ground, Old Redding and the Proposed Country Farm at Wood Park. They have then shaped the building so as not to impact upon these views.

Design outcomes

In the end, the design team has NOT been able to respond to this concern as much as many local people would have liked. The fact is that for the development to be viable, they have to fit a certain quantity of housing on the site. It would simply not work to build a 2 or 3 storey development. If the block at the front was reduced to this height, the block at the back would have to become significantly higher. Instead, the architects have worked to:

- **concentrate as much height as possible toward the back NW corner of the site**, the furthest from the low rise residential neighbourhood, and the closest to Harrow town centre, with its taller residential and office buildings, where it also forms a buffer to road and rail noise
- **while retaining a sense of the development as one cohesive entity**, aesthetically and spatially i.e. they have not taken the strategy in the previous point to an extreme: the front building is 5 storeys and the back is 7.
- **however, they have, in the course of the process, pulled the scheme back from the pavement line, so that it has a less projecting and imposing visual presence** at the end of Vaughan Road, and leaves more space for pedestrian pavement and landscaping.

THEME 4: ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER, INCLUDING ROOFLINE

Local people have stressed throughout that it is important that the development responds to, and fits in well with, the area's existing architecture. They have stressed that they do not want it to feel too 'blocky', and that it should pick up on the character, details and materials of the Edwardian domestic architecture of west Harrow in particular. Roofline, and requests for pitched roofs, have been a particular focus during the final pair of consultation drop-in events.

During the process the architects have:

- **made character a key focus from the start**, asking people from the first drop-in consultation to identify the best architectural features of west Harrow, and to help the architects define its character
- **carried out their own in-depth character analysis study of the local area's architecture**, through photographic analysis and historical mapping, which we have shared with the community
- **organised an 'architectural character' bike ride to look at the best of the area's architecture on 10 September 2016** – unfortunately this coincided with a day of pouring rain, resulting in only one community participant: a member of Harrow Cyclists.

Design outcomes

It is important to be clear that Adam Khan Architects is a contemporary architect, albeit one with a great interest in historical precedent and in the existing qualities of place. They were never going to design a neo-vernacular building, or a development that referenced in any token or 'clip-on' way, the historical architecture of the area. They were always going to design a contemporary response to local character, and to add a new generation of 'local' architecture to the streetscape. For reasons discussed in Theme 3, the height of the building was never going to match that of existing west Harrow residential architecture either. That notwithstanding, the architects have worked to carefully reference and to draw inspiration from, other buildings in the area, by:

- **designing façade details (windows, brickwork etc) that evoke aspects of the neighbourhood's existing architecture**, while at the same time looking clearly contemporary. For example, in common with other local architecture, the windows are taller than they are wide, have light-coloured frames, and sit on a thick sill.
- **taking inspiration from the interesting, varied rooflines of some of the grander C19 domestic buildings in Harrow** – these are often located on corners, or other prominent sites, and therefore provide a useful precedent. In common with this typology, they have given each part of our building its own parapet style related to the façade beneath.
- **Using a variety of red bricks**: most of the older buildings in the local area are made of red brick, but the nature of this varies. We have evoked this in the building's materiality by combining a characterful red brick (itself containing some variation in texture and colour) with a glazed red brick (evocative of Victorian and Edwardian civic buildings) on the public ground floor plinth level, and a speckled red polished concrete for the trims such as windowsills and roofs.
- **Incorporating arches as a key design feature**: the arched entrances all along Vaughan Rd are locally specific and a striking feature. The architects have mirrored these by giving all ground floor windows and entrances arched tops. Encouraged by local people, they experimented with making these arches striped, as they are on Vaughan Road. However, this had the effect of making the building as a whole feel too busy, so they have reverted to a simple brick arch.

Focus on roofline

As noted above, this was a particularly popular strand of the character conversation, with a number of people asking why the architects had not used a pitched roof. The reasons are:

- Desire to respect, but not to imitate, or to offer a pastiche of, existing local architecture, making a pitched roof one option to consider among others, but not a default or clip-on element. (There has been a tendency to add clip-on pitches to other new buildings locally.)
- Desire to keep the height of the building as low as possible in terms of visual impact. As the architects still need to provide the same quantity of homes, and could not reduce those to incorporate a pitch, they would either need to make a taller building, or compromise space within the top level of flats.
- Desire to accommodate biodiverse sedum/'green' roofs in the scheme that will also absorb rainfall and reduce pressure on existing local drainage systems, addressing another community concern (see Theme 1) re pressure on local infrastructure
- Desire to accommodate photovoltaic (PV) cells to generate energy.

- Desire to accommodate roof terraces, giving good amenity space.

THEME 5: SAFETY AND SECURITY

There is a great deal of concern locally about the criminal and anti-social behaviour, including drug-dealing, street drinking and loitering, on the site itself and in the immediate area, particularly the underpass. People would like to see the new development improve the situation, but they also have concerns that they make it worse by increasing the amount of space that people can easily loiter in, especially in ground floor courtyards.

During the process the design team has:

- **Consulted with the local Secure By Design police officer** to ensure that proposals are well-considered with regard to this particular concern

Design outcomes

The designs:

- **Widen and make more visible and open the underpass pedestrian and cycle route** as it emerges by Vaughan Rd, making it feel safer and read a less desirable place to loiter.
- **Include new street lighting, mostly attached to the new building**, to keep ground floor areas well lit.
- **Placed the main entrance to both community space and flats on the courtyard, on the east side of the development**, facing the underpass, so that this side of the development has as much footfall as possible.
- **Changed the ground floor plan so that the community space now overlooks the pavement along Vaughan Rd, rather than just the east-facing courtyard space** - initially we had the sub-station and bins opening onto that south side – so that the whole of the public realm has passive surveillance.

THEME 6: GREENERY & PLANTING

People expressed the desire for the scheme to have as much greenery as possible to reflect the leafy character, and beautifully planted front gardens, of west Harrow, as well as to help make the development feel attractive and like a positive addition to the local area.

Design outcomes

As designs have developed, the architects *have* had to slightly reduce the amount of green space/planting provided slightly in order to help address community concerns raised in Theme 1, to bring more parking space onto the site. However the scheme provides:

- **Planting all around the public threshold, and as many new trees as possible**, with a London plane tree in the main courtyard, visible as you come out of the underpass, birch trees along the underpass exit route and – in a cluster – on Vaughan Rd, and a tulip tree as a feature on the corner of Vaughan Road and Bessborough Road.
- **An enlarged hedge and scented climbing plants** to the rear of the property. This will grow with time into a thicket of native species along that boundary.
- **Sedum roofs** encouraging biodiversity.

THEME 7: COMMUNITY-FOCUSED GROUND FLOOR

It has been a declared focus from the start of the project that the use and design of the ground floor spaces should offer something to the local community. Even before the design team's appointment, the Council had canvassed local households for their initial views on what would work well in that space. Ground floor flats would not work well in that location due to the site aspect and adjacency to busy roads and railtracks, so there is a real opportunity to deliver something useful to a wider community in that space.

During the process we have:

- **developed a set of principles and priorities to guide programming of the ground floor spaces** through ongoing consultation
- **held a specific community workshop in July 2016** focused only on identifying viable + desirable uses for the ground floor, as well as identifying principles to which *any* ground floor use should ideally adhere.

Design outcomes

Although tenants/users for the ground floor spaces have yet to be identified, the design has the following qualities that meet community priorities and that will support a range of viable and desirable uses:

- **flexible interior spaces that can be subdivided if required** to accommodate different scales and types of uses
- **a spatial plan that would allow management of a more community centre/ meeting room type space by a more commercial occupier** supporting economic viability and sustainability
- **an open and welcoming aspect** with windows along public routes, to create an active frontage and encourage passive surveillance of public space, working against anti-social behaviour.

Other outcomes/ ongoing activity

The Council has **been researching and talking to possible tenants, including a number of local organisations**, guided by the priorities established for the space by the local community.

Subject to gaining planning permission, the design team plans to hold a second community workshop in 2017, once there is more definite information likely tenants/occupiers, to look at the details of the design and use of the ground floor.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON OUR ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Throughout the public consultation events, we have asked participants, via feedback forms, how good a job they think the architects are doing at listening and responding to their feedback.

1. At the September 2016 event, 79% of respondents gave a neutral to positive score, with 47% feeling we had done well or extremely well.
2. At the December 2016 event, 92% of respondents gave a neutral to positive score, with 54% feeling we had done well or extremely well.
3. At the February 2017 event, 72% of respondents gave a neutral to positive score, with 55% feeling we had done well or extremely well.

Reasons for low scores, and for the drop in approval at the end, were ongoing dissatisfaction with the parking situation, and with the character of the building – topics discussed in some detail under Themes 2 and 4 in this section. However, a number of those who gave high scores acknowledged that as much effort as possible within the constraints of the project had been made by the design team, particularly with regard to parking. There were also those who praised the architecture of the building – character always being one of the more debated aspects of a design proposal, and one where even within a local community people have different ideas about what is appropriate.

04


Examples of engagement materials

Examples of publicity materials

Regenerating Vaughan Rd Car Park: Community Workshop

28 July 2016 **Venue:**
7pm to 9pm Harrow Spiritualist Church
 Doors open at 6.30 pm 1 Vaughan Road
 to allow a prompt start (opposite the car park)

There is disabled access to the hall but the church is currently fundraising for an accessible toilet. If this is a problem for anyone please let us know and we will find a comparable way for them to feed into this process.



Harrow Council is looking at regenerating the Vaughan Rd car park to provide new homes alongside other uses, such as a community facility at ground floor level. We also hope to take the opportunity to improve some of the public realm around the site, such as the entrances to the underpass and the Beasborough Road junction, to make them safer and more pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists.

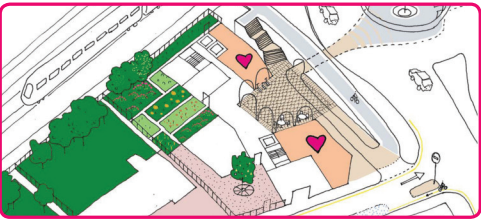
We therefore invite you to join us at a workshop focused specifically on these questions:

- What types of community-focused activity would work best on the ground floor of any new building?
- How could we improve public space around the site to benefit local people?

Over the course of 2 hours we will undertake a series of exercises - based on suggestions already made by community members - to first reflect on what is possible and desirable, and then to start to draft a Community Vision and set of Priorities for what happens at street level in and around any possible new building.

Can't attend? If you would still like to contribute to this conversation, or to join the mailing list for the wider project, please contact:
regeneration@harrow.gov.uk

Please RSVP if at all possible - knowing how many people are coming will allow us to prepare enough materials:
daisy@daisyfroud.com



Adam Khan Architects Adams & Sutherland Daisy Froud BUILDING A BETTER HARROW Harrow Council

Regenerating Vaughan Rd. Car Park: Transport & Parking

Sept 21st **Community Meeting**
Start: 7pm
 At The Arc House, Lowlands Road, next to Harrow-on-the-Hill Station. Refreshments will be served.

We are looking to regenerate Vaughan Road car park to provide new homes alongside other uses, such as a community facility on the ground floor, and to improve the area around the site for pedestrians and cyclists.


At previous consultation events, residents have asked us a lot of questions and voiced numerous concerns around transport and parking.

We therefore now invite you to join us at a meeting attended by local Councillors and officers from relevant Council departments, as well as those working on the Vaughan Road project in order to:

- share existing research and policy that is informing decision-making about transport and parking
- discuss specific strategies and solutions for parking and transport on and around the proposed Vaughan Rd development

Can't attend? Send us your views or sign up to our mailing list to stay updated:
regeneration@harrow.gov.uk

For more information please visit:
www.vaughanroad.wordpress.com



Adam Khan Architects Adams & Sutherland Daisy Froud BUILDING A BETTER HARROW Harrow Council

Regenerating Vaughan Rd. Car Park: Design Drop-In 3

Thursday **Venue:**
1 Dec 2016 Harrow Spiritualist Church
3pm to 8pm 1 Vaughan Road
 (opposite the car park)

There is disabled access to the hall but the church is currently fundraising for an accessible toilet. If this is a problem for anyone please let us know and we will find a comparable way for them to feed into this process.



Harrow Council are looking to regenerate Vaughan Road car park to provide new homes alongside other uses, such as a community facility on the ground floor, and to improve the area around the site for pedestrians and cyclists.

Please join us to view and discuss:

- Revised 'concept design' proposals for the site.
- How we have responded to feedback from the last events in September.
- Ideas on the look, feel and materials of any development, and how this responds to the character of west Harrow.
- Progress on plans for the design and use of ground floor spaces.

Can't attend?
 We want to make sure that everybody who is interested in this project has the opportunity to comment.

- The display and feedback form will go up on Friday 2 December on www.vaughanroad.wordpress.com.
- Contact regeneration@harrow.gov.uk with any questions, to join the mailing list or to email your feedback.

For detailed information about the project, and copies of all material shown so far, please visit:
www.vaughanroad.wordpress.com

Artist's impression of how the scheme might look (design concept)



Adam Khan Architects Adams & Sutherland Daisy Froud BUILDING A BETTER HARROW Harrow Council

Regenerating Vaughan Rd. Car Park: Design Drop-In 4

Saturday **Venue:**
18 Feb 2017 Arc House, Lowlands Rd
12pm to 4pm HA1 3GR
 (opposite Harrow-on-the-Hill Station)
 Refreshments served

We are looking to regenerate Vaughan Road car park to provide new homes alongside other uses, such as a community facility on the ground floor, and to improve the area around the site for pedestrians and cyclists.

Please join us to view and discuss:

- Final design proposals for the site.
- How we have responded to feedback from the last event in December.
- The look, feel and materials of the development, and how this responds to the character of west Harrow.
- The landscaping and its relationship to the immediate public realm.

Can't attend?
 We want to make sure that everybody who is interested in this project has the opportunity to comment.

- The display and feedback form will go up on Monday 20 February on www.vaughanroad.wordpress.com.
- Contact regeneration@harrow.gov.uk with any questions, to join the mailing list or to email your feedback.

For detailed information about the project, and copies of all material shown so far, please visit:
www.vaughanroad.wordpress.com

For more information on the Harrow regeneration programme, please visit:
www.buildingabetterharrow.co.uk



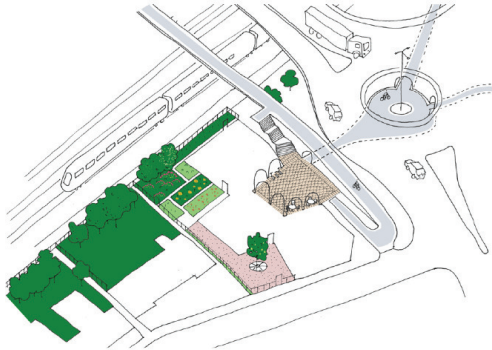

Adam Khan Architects Adams & Sutherland Daisy Froud BUILDING A BETTER HARROW Harrow Council

Examples of display materials

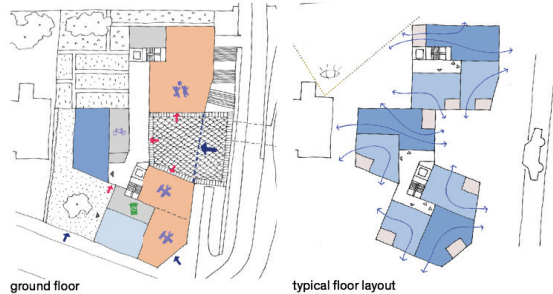
Design journey

5

Sketch design - 16th July



This drawing dates from before the consultation. It aimed to start conversation between client, project team and residents about how this scheme might be developed successfully.



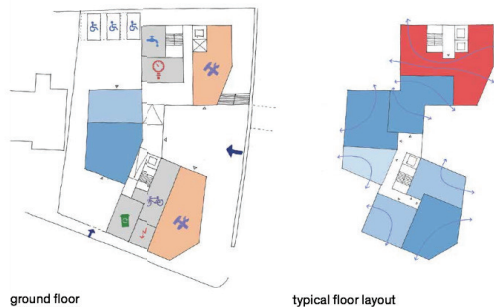
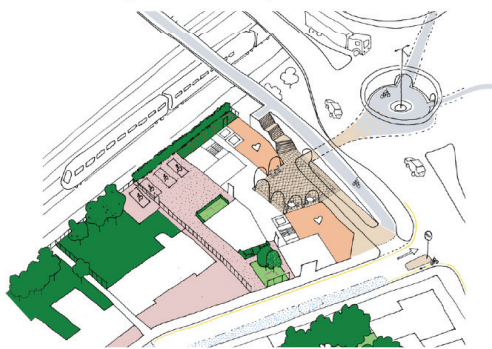
ground floor

typical floor layout

Key facts:

- Ground floor plan creates 3 courtyards each with its own distinct character
- Courtyard faces underpass offering opportunities to improve the underpass' look and feel and the connection to and from the town centre
- Main entrance to the residential lobby and ground floor workspaces faces the underpass.

Outline design - 10th September



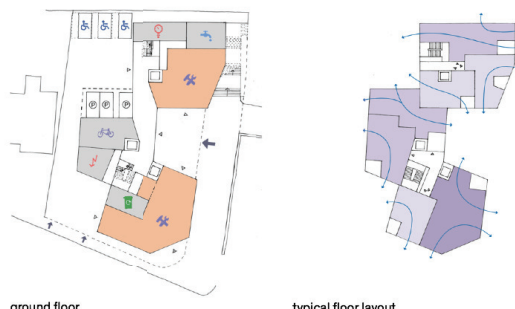
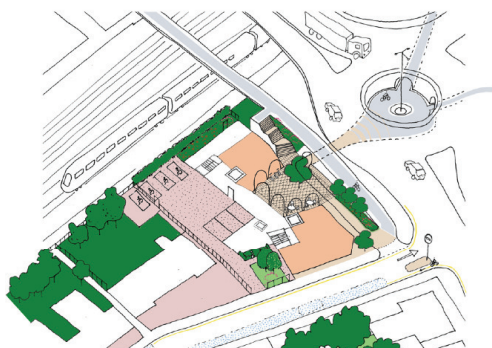
ground floor

typical floor layout

Key changes in response to feedback:

- Disabled parking spaces moved onto the site to reduce parking stress on Vaughan Road
- Additional landscaping along Vaughan Road - (i) compensates for replacing landscaping on site with parking and (ii) responds to local residents' request for additional landscaping

Developed design - today



ground floor

typical floor layout

Key changes in response to feedback:

- Additional 3 on site parking spaces provided in response to concerns from local residents
- Larger workspace/community area with more frontage on Vaughan Road in response to desire for an open and welcoming ground floor
- Landscaping further intensified

Public Consultation - February 18th, 2017

Adam Khan Architects

Adams & Sutherland
architecture landscape urban design

Daisy Froud
Participation | Politics | Process



BUILDING A BETTER
HARROW





Coloured polished concrete



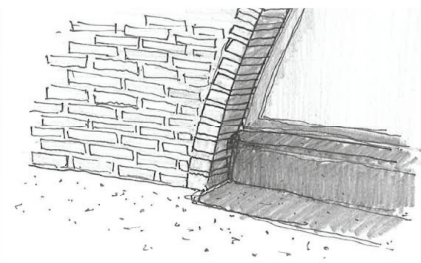
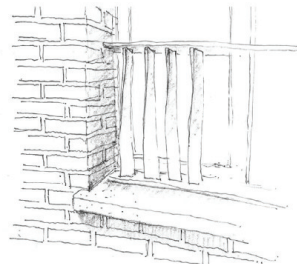
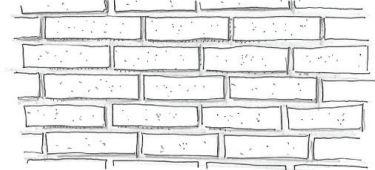
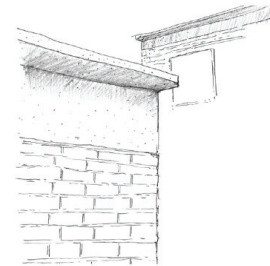
Red characterful brick



Light coloured windows



Glazed red brick



Local precedents which inform the character

Expressive roofline

Many of Harrow's older, larger buildings have interesting, varied rooflines. Our proposal combines building elements of different heights. Some have angled facades and one has a curved facade onto Bessborough Road. Each has its own parapet specific to its position, giving the proposed building a similar expressive roofline.

Brick colour

Many of the buildings on Vaughan Road, Butler Avenue and Bessborough Road are of similar colours and materials. Most are built of red brick, but the way in which the bricks are laid varies. We opted for a red brick with some variation in tone to its surroundings.

Detail of windows

Windows in the local area are predominantly taller than they are wide, have light-coloured frames and sit on a thick sill. We propose using a light coloured anodised aluminium window, set back into the facade of the building, on a polished concrete sill.

Arches

We enjoy the arched entrances along Vaughan Road and propose using arched windows and entrances for the workspace/community space and entrance to the residential lobby. The wall of the ground floor is built of glazed red bricks, giving that level a more public character.



Adam Khan Architects



Adams & Sutherland
architecture landscape urban design



Daisy Froud
Participation | Politics | Process



BUILDING A BETTER
HARROW



Harrow COUNCIL
LONDON

Public Consultation - February 18th, 2017