

Edgware Supplementary Planning Document: Member Workshop

Summary of discussions

Date: Thursday 14th May 2020

Time: 3pm to 5pm

Location: Via Zoom video conferencing

Objectives

- Background to, and purpose of, a SPD for Edgware.
- The process for developing a SPD.
- The **issues** a SPD will consider and address.
- The potential **objectives or vision** for Edgware in the future that stakeholders may wish to consider.
- The potential key **development principles**.
- The next steps and timescales in developing a SPD.

Participants

Cllr Marilyn Ashton (Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group, Planning & Regeneration Shadow Portfolio Holder, Stanmore Park Councillor)

Cllr Linda Freedman (Edgware ward and substitute on Hendon Planning Committee, Barnet Council)

Cllr Ameet Jogia (Canons ward, Harrow Council)

Cllr Stephen Greek (Performance & Customer Services Shadow Portfolio Holder, Harrow Weald Councillor)

Cllr Angella Murphy-Strachan (Edgware ward, Harrow Council)

Cllr Nitin Parekh (Edgware ward, Harrow Council)

Cllr Sarah Wardle (Edgware ward and vice chair Housing and Growth Committee, Barnet Council)

Introductory points

- Councillors expressed **support for a SPD** to provide a considered and coherent approach, improving a major town centre that is of significant importance to the local area and local people, which had seen “marked deterioration” over time. As one member said, “The SPD is a once in a generational opportunity to right the wrongs in the town centre.”
- Councillors are supportive of a **SPD that promotes joint working** between the two Local Authorities that cover Edgware Town Centre.
- There appeared to be general acceptance of the emerging direction of the SPD and there was **commonality of thought and themes identified by councillors**. These included the importance of creating a destination town centre that enhances quality of life with high quality public realm, green spaces, buildings and mixed housing, supports social connections and community, promotes movement

for pedestrians and cyclists and sustainable living, while retaining and enhancing existing heritage, history and local amenities and retail that are of value to existing local residents.

- Councillors suggested the need to **create a masterplan for Edgware**, which seeks to integrate the existing positives in the area including history, heritage and local community and speciality retail with new, vibrant and modern elements.
- Councillors **stressed the importance of engaging local residents and stakeholders** to inform the SPD and future of Edgware to ensure there is local ownership and pride in the future town centre. This will help mitigate against some elements of the SPD that may not be as popular such as building height and parking changes, which can be considered within the wider benefits of an improved town centre and its positive impact on quality of life.

Issues for the SPD to consider and address

The **emerging issues presented were generally accepted** by councillors. In discussion, the following issues were highlighted by councillors (these are presented thematically and do not represent a hierarchy of importance):

- **High quality/value destination ‘for all’:** Create a high-quality destination of choice and address the deterioration in the town centre, both in terms of the building fabric, public realm, retail offer and including the growth in anti-social behaviour (ASB). The town centre should be relevant, accessible and of value for all types of residents (“something for everyone”), including existing residents as well as attracting new residents and visitors.
- **Reimagine/re-invent the town centre:** The town centre needs to become relevant and reflect the change in use of town centres.
- **Reinvigorate retail offer:** Whilst accepting that town centres need to now be more than a retail destination, there were some calls to improve the existing retail offer, including attracting anchor stores and big brands back to the town centre. This should seek to build on the existing positive retail elements in Edgware, which are valued by local communities, including local community and speciality retail.
- **Local identity, community, pride, history and heritage:** The town centre should not lose sight of its history and heritage or the existing aspects of the town centre that are of value to local residents. It should continue to be a location of value and maximise the existing positive elements of the town centre, instigating a sense of pride in its history and heritage. This also includes ensuring that historical and heritage buildings and sites, such as the Railway Hotel, are renovated and provide community benefit.
- **Social connections, public realm and night-time economy:** There should be high quality open space, green space and public realm, integrated alongside housing, retail and other buildings and amenities, to facilitate social connections, community, leisure, recreation and entertainment, including a night-time economy, which will all have a positive impact on quality of life. The night-time economy was considered as something that is currently lacking in the area, with a high quality, safe and family minded offer required to act as a pull into the area.
- **Housing:** It is important to have a good mix of housing type and tenure to help meet housing need, while creating a sustainable and vibrant town centre.
- **Building fabric:** Housing and development quality, including architectural quality, is important to improve the aesthetics of the area. This principle would also extend to high quality design and materials used in the public realm.
- **Travel, transport and movement:** Promote active and sustainable travel, including pedestrian movement and cycling (within Edgware and also to neighbouring areas), which could help address concerns around traffic, while improving the public realm and quality of life. This includes improving connections/movement between the different parts of Edgware divided by the A5, and to and from and around the train and bus stations. As part of this, public realm and accessibility improvements around the train and bus stations will help create a sense of an arrival point/gateway to Edgware. This also includes improving public transport connections, especially bus connections to neighbouring areas.

- **Parking:** Parking requires further consideration, including commuter parking especially in light of reductions in size to car parks at Stanmore and Canons Park neighbouring stations. There was a general agreement that the SPD should promote active and sustainable travel, with less space allocated to cars and parking, but that parking remains important for some residents. This is due to limited local public transport, walking and cycling options in the local area, while car use/parking currently helps local retail and use of the town centre. The future town centre needs to balance active and sustainable travel imperatives with parking need. Any future parking provision should be limited, but sufficient to meet need, targeted and intelligently applied.

Vision for Edgware in the future

Councillors summarised their vision and the key elements they want embodied within a future Edgware, many of which **reflect the key issues discussed previously** (these are presented in no particular order):

- Robust food/beverage and night-time economy.
- Good mixture of housing types.
- Fantastic pedestrian/cycling connections to and from the town centre.
- High quality usable public realm.
- High quality architecture.

“Edgware: North London’s new destination”

- Keep Edgware relevant for the future (mean it still matters as a town centre).
- Identity – revitalise Edgware’s strong proud, past identity.
- Exclusive – in the past Edgware was one of the high-end town centres of the suburbs, not anymore.
- Local - a large number of residents still live around the town centre and walk there. We need to ensure it still meets local needs.
- Pride – instil pride in our community, keeping Edgware clean, safe and green.

- A place where there is mixed housing – flats and small townhouses.
- Some leisure facilities for all ages and possibly a local primary school – we already have Edgware primary school near this location, so it could be expanded.
- Places of worship that serve the community and reflect the area’s diversity.
- More cycling facilities and maybe include some bikes to rent.
- Discourage too many buy to lets and overseas buyers.
- There are too many licenced premises in the area. We need higher calibre licenced premises and include Railway Hotel in design of new housing and retail.

- Strong retail offer.
- Mix of traditional and modern uses.
- Good use of space.
- Great destination for the family and all ages.
- Accessible to all users.

“A friendly destination, where people want to live and visit.”

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- Vibrant, safe, community.
 - Easily accessible.
 - Improved bus services in local area to local destinations such as Stanmore and Canons Park.
 - Cafes, restaurants, both day and night-time economy.
 - Environmentally friendly and pleasing to the eye, green space and positive public realm to spend more time there.

In summary, there was a broad **consensus about creating a high quality/value destination**, addressing the deterioration in the town centre, and bringing it back to its former glory and maximising its position as a major town centre in North West London. At the same time, there were calls for a **balance between creating a high quality/value destination, with something that has value and relevance to local people**. Somewhere local people can have **pride in by blending the old with the new, keeping the local, community elements and history and heritage that local residents value, alongside modernising and improving the quality of the area**.

Development principles

There was **general acceptance or support for the headline development principles presented**. In discussion, the following points were highlighted by councillors, **often reiterating points previously made about issues and vision, given the inter-related nature of all these aspects**. (these are presented thematically and do not represent a hierarchy of importance):

- Councillors re-affirmed the **need for a ‘Gateway development and sense of arrival’**.
- As part of the above, councillors re-asserted the **importance of addressing issues around the A5, station road and station area**, especially opportunities to ‘bridge’ (metaphorically at least) the Barnet and Harrow parts of Edgware, including making it **pedestrian friendly with high quality buildings and frontages**.
- Councillors stressed the **importance of high-quality design and materials** relating to housing, buildings and the public realm (including open and green space), in keeping with local existing positive architecture, and blending with modern, high quality design and materials.
- Councillors also re-asserted the importance of a **good mix of housing** type and tenure, **social and community infrastructure** to promote social and community connections, and **environmental sustainability** to be enshrined in all aspects including housing, buildings and travel.

Next steps

Councillors will be kept involved throughout the development, consultation and finalisation of the SPD. The current timescale is as follows:

- Member and initial stakeholder pre-consultation (May/June 2020)
- Draft SPD developed and finalised (June to September 2020)
- Barnet Council P&R Committee (24th Sept 2020), Harrow Council Cabinet (September 2020)
- Public consultation (October to November 2020)
- SPD finalised for adoption (December 2020)