

## STRA Forum Application – Consultation Responses Received.

In summary 30 responses were received. 7 in support, 16 objecting and 7 with no opinion (generally from statutory consultees)

Respondent	Support Application	Summary of representation
Transport For London Spatial Planning	N/A	No comment.
Canal and River Trust	N/A	No comment.
Coal Authority	N/A	No comment.
National Highways	N/A	No relevant comments.
Historic England	N/A	No relevant comments.
Transport Trading Limited Properties (part of TfL)	N/A	TTLP own Sudbury Town Station Car Park which is a Brent Local Plan (BSWSA14) site allocation. We look forward to working with the Forum and Council to bring forward development on this site.
Natural England	N/A	No relevant comments.
Resident 1 – survey	Yes	Support designation. STRA are the only resident organisation protecting local interests and against over development.
Resident 2 – survey	Yes	Support designation. STRA has always supported the wishes and views of the community
Resident 3 – survey	Yes	Support designation and have a role in managing their website.
Resident 4 – survey	Yes	Support designation. No additional comments.
Resident 5 – survey	Yes	Support designation. No additional comments.
Resident 13 – survey	Yes	Support designation. As a contributor to the Sudbury Neighbourhood Plan, I am keen to see through and progress on the policies in the Plan, which are now being used on the first significant development.  There is no other viable and suitable alternative residents' group. A number of local decisions have been

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		made, fought for and instigated and it is important to keep these policies as Brent policies are not fully in touch with local requirements.
Resident 15 – survey	Yes	Support designation. It is good for the community.
Barham Village Residents Association – survey	No	<p>Oppose designation. This is due to their:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of transparency.</li> <li>2. Not reaching out to the wider community of Sudbury with clear unbiased information.</li> <li>3. Denying access to AGM minutes with response they will be issued two weeks before the next meeting.</li> <li>4. Information withholding, limiting any sort of informed public intercourse.</li> <li>5. In effect running a 'private committee' rather than forum.</li> <li>6. Lack of progress - the proposal looks the same as before - weak:</li> </ol> <p>There is no plan of action. They need to do a lot better to include the community. They need to do more on how we protect/ use our green open space.</p>
Resident 6 – survey	No	<p>Oppose designation. STRA were good, but are now secretive and ineffective. They need to be more active, transparent, and better managed to support the Neighbourhood Plan. The webpage for instance is poorly managed and not regularly updated.</p> <p>Most recent updates have principally been since submission of the forum application.</p> <p>Transparency and openness is reduced by website password protection for members and executive.</p> <p>Not clear if any AGM was held between 2019 and 2022. This may partly be due to Covid, but other organisations learnt to use Zoom or similar when faced with the same challenges.</p> <p>High street planters are now neglected and full of weeds/ dead plants and open space adjacent to the railway bridge is massively overgrown.</p>

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Resident 7 – survey	No	<p>Oppose designation. The responses STRA set in the application material appendix in relation to the points raised by the Council are poor. The time taken to respond indicates a lack of interest in addressing those issues.</p> <p>A Neighbourhood Forum requires the constitution to be followed. STRA seems to ignore this.</p>
Resident 8 – survey	No	<p>Oppose designation. STRA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Although a forum for 10 years, no positive performance as this or a residents' association.</li> <li>2. Has continued to circulate petitions, ignoring the Council's advice that individual objections are likely to be given more weight. This and raffles are a mechanism to capture residents names for their purposes including unsolicited messaging.</li> <li>3. Lacks diversity, in not appreciating the area's large Asian population, e.g STRA celebrate with residents Christmas but not Diwali or Eid. They have no voice for renters, but seems only worried about property owners.</li> <li>4. Claim to maintain Sudbury Town's high street despite the overgrown and broken planters which were provided free of charge to STRA and having subsequently been poorly maintained. The high street looks tatty.</li> <li>5. Don't hold the required 3 open public meetings per year with residents who pay their annual membership fees and are not transparent in their election process of the same chair for at least 5 years.</li> </ol>
Resident 9	No	<p>Oppose designation. STRA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has failed to follow their own constitution rules. Appears only held one meeting in the last few years: the 2022 AGM.</li> <li>2. Has failed to regularly update its website and done a poor job of keeping residents informed about Sudbury issues such as overdevelopment or crime</li> <li>3. Engage in unethical fund raising, trying to scare residents into donating funds. For example <a href="https://www.gofundme.com/f/Sudbury-Town-Residence-Association">https://www.gofundme.com/f/Sudbury-Town-Residence-Association</a> includes the following allegation: "Brent</li> </ol>

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		<p>council plans to build within and around our green spaces, force the sale of homes and turn our wonderful neighbourhood into rows of high rises." This is factually incorrect, is partisan, and breeds resentment towards local government which should not be allowed.</p> <p>4. Are a partisan organisation republishing Liberal Democrats tweets but not other political parties.</p> <p>5. Are not transparent, for instance not disclosing which legal firms they were using.</p> <p>6. Should not require membership payments or give greater favour those that do.</p>
Resident 10	No	<p>Object to designation. Many residents are omitted from email/ postal notifications of meetings or informed of meeting at very short notice, e.g. 2 days before - this discourages participation.</p> <p>Meeting minutes are inaccurate and not made available to all or posted on the website. Because of the above, I don't feel the Forum is inclusive.</p>
Resident 11	No	<p>Object to designation. They do not engage with the community. It seems secretive and not democratic. There is a lack of recent minutes on the website, it is not kept up to date.</p>
Resident 12	No	<p>Object to designation. STRA is no longer playing a positive role in the neighbourhood. I was involved with the Forum in the Sudbury in Bloom project, but channelled my efforts elsewhere when the committee dispensed with the services of the treasurer.</p> <p>The high street planters are now looking sad very indeed derelict.</p>
Resident 14 - survey	No	<p>Object to designation. No additional comment.</p>
Resident 16 – survey	No	<p>Object to designation. Most things on the STRA website are out of date.</p>
Resident 17 – survey	No	<p>Object to designation. Having fulfilled the conditions to join a STRA meeting, I had previously provided in written form to the organisers the speech which I was then refused the opportunity to make. I was shouted at and had no option but to leave and let my views be known to the membership at large.</p> <p>I have attended and had experience of many civic meetings, and therefore understand the protocol/ courtesies of such meetings. I regret to say that I have no confidence in the integrity of the STRA committee members encountered.</p>

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Resident 18 – survey	No	Object to designation. STRA do not allow open discussion at meetings and do not act upon emails received.
Resident 19 – survey	No	Object to designation. STRA in their early years was an effective residents' association. However, it seems from the letter of appreciation and support that businesses now have the greater input.
Resident 20 - letter	No	<p>Object to designation. Neighbourhood Forums have a statutory status and powers in relation to planning, and particular influence with planning authorities. If not properly exercised, residents could be greatly disadvantaged. In recent years STRA did not seem to have the membership diversity or skill set to deliver the neighbourhood plan, work with partners or manage the forum's business. Much work will be needed, for it to continue as a forum, to bring it into compliance.</p> <p>As Sudbury Ward member from 2010 to 2022, as anticipated in regulations, I was an active forum member. Whilst there was an ambiguity about my voting rights, due to the cordial, mutually supportive and welcoming Forum with common objectives in relation to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan, this was not a concern. Initially the forum was diverse. From 2018 onwards, it became secretive and hostile. Many active members were excluded and forced to resign. I received a large number of complaints which I raised with the Council. The below is an account of their operation since 2018:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exclusivity - The 2019 Annual General Meeting (AGM) only permitted invitees issued with membership cards to enter, with other residents being excluded, including councillors. Eventually entry was permitted, but participation was not. Their lawyer advised that the meeting was for the residents' association, not the forum.</li> <li>2. Ineffective operation - I do not believe those who organised the 2022 AGM understand what it is. Participants eligible to vote were not identified. I received complaints from eligible residents who did not vote because they didn't think they could. There was no clarity about or opportunity to nominate candidates for office other than those proposed by the existing committee.</li> <li>3. Late notice - Prior to the pandemic I was invited to a small number of ordinary meetings as an afterthought, days in advance of the meeting, and on one occasion, 24 hours in advance.</li> <li>4. Not addressing concerns - I cannot recall the last time the neighbourhood plan was discussed, or any effort was made to deliver it.</li> </ol>

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		<p>5. Continued residents' complaints - unable to renew STRA membership, unable to contact STRA, unable to obtain meeting minutes, unnecessary personal information requests, Go Fund Me requests without clarity and accountability on expenditure of donations received. Where appropriate, I addressed those to the council.</p> <p>6. Hostility and misinformation - Last year STRA became particularly hostile to elected councillors, making one demonstrably false allegation. This resulted in mistrust between residents and councillors including one alarming encounter fuelled by false information circulated by STRA where I feared for a colleague's safety.</p>
Sudbury Matters - letter	No	<p>Object to designation. Whilst the application references many worthwhile activities conducted by STRA over the last 5 years, it is unclear whether or not any of the operations arise from their status as a forum. The purpose of a Forum is summarised in legislation as 'promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of an area.' STRA's purpose is summarised as 'Cleaner, Greener, Safer'. These related but distinct purposes are not properly reflected in the application.</p> <p>Forum and Neighbourhood Planning Issues concerns: The essential foundation for the role was the production and on-going stewardship of a Neighbourhood Plan (which was 2015). One key role is to provide a residents' and businesses' voice when major developments are planned. No reference is made to such activities.</p> <p>STRA's constitution concerns: Constitution is from 2017. There is no recognition of a forum's distinct role, including acting as the community voice on planning issues. It seeks payment of a fee, even though council officers have identified this as an issue. Membership subscriptions are identified as being payable in November, it is unclear if this limits new membership outside this time. STRA's resident membership is drawn from wider than the neighbourhood area, this is not dealt with in how neighbourhood forum matters voting/ decision making is made. Specific details can be provided on residents refused membership with their subscriptions returned. Concerned that in 2018 the treasurer was dismissed inconsistent with processes set out in the constitution.</p> <p>STRA website concerns: The website is complicated with very limited updates since 2018. There is a lack of detail on meeting dates, frequency and where to find additional information. For the last few years there are no minutes of general member/ AGM or executive meetings. No future meeting dates are identified. Most worryingly, this opens up the possibility that STRA is breaching its constitution by no longer holding</p>

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		<p>regular face-to-face meetings. The password protected 'Members' and 'Executive' areas are not transparent and lack public accountability. A new complaints procedure page has recently been added, this process has not been agreed with local councillors who are identified as potential arbiters.</p> <p>Lack of a Work Plan concerns: No work programme is set out to address neighbourhood plan policies/priorities, e.g. given the four significant neighbourhood plan local green spaces, work with partner agencies to prepare enhancement plans may open up funding opportunities. Similarly this is the case for the high street.</p>
Resident 21 – letter	No	<p>Object to designation. STRA have ignored the ethos of a forum and their own constitution. Examples show how STRA is not representative of the community, and operates in a most unprofessional way:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dedicated committee members were dismissed without following due process.</li> <li>2. Open discussion is not encouraged. Any issues raised are met with a response of “send us an email” and either ignored or a totally inadequate response is received.</li> <li>3. False statements in meeting minutes. Requests for amendment prior to following meeting were refused. This was despite other meeting members present stating at the next meeting that minutes were not accurate.</li> <li>4. Statements in their application of the sample list of resident members are incorrect as they are not from the forum area.</li> <li>5. Some of the businesses no longer support STRA as a forum.</li> </ol>