

Neasden Town Centre

Placemaking and Sustainability Action Plan

April
2024



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Report Summary**
- 1.2. Civic Partnership Programme**
- 1.3. Strategic Context**

3. ACTIONS

- 3.1. Proposals**
- 3.2. Short Term Proposals**
- 3.3. Medium Term Proposals**
- 3.4 Long Term Proposals**
- 3.5. Deliverability**
- 3.6 Outputs and Outcomes**

2. VISION

- 2.1. A Vision for Neasden**
- 2.2. Challenges & Opportunities**
- 2.3 Community Charter**
- 2.4. Social Infastructure**

4. EVIDENCE

- 4.1. Engagement**
- 4.2. Place Identity**
- 4.3. Context & History**
- 4.4. Site Analysis**
- 4.5. Planning Policy Context**
- 4.6. Other Studies**

5. ABOUT THIS ACTION PLAN

1

INTRODUCTION



1.1

REPORT SUMMARY



NEASDEN
TOWN
CENTRE

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

As part of their application to the Mayor of London's Civic Partnership Programme, Brent Council has commissioned Sanchez Benton architects with Rumi Bose, Where Pathways Meet and Concept Culture consultants to develop, through meaningful engagement with the local community, a strategic vision and action plan to set out a road map to transform Neasden Town Centre into a thriving neighbourhood.

The Neasden Town Centre Placemaking and Sustainability Action Plan will:

- Identify a key set of actions, initiatives and projects that can be co-authored, co-designed and co-delivered throughout 2024-27 to support the overarching vision to achieve a fairer, safer, greener, healthier, connected and more diverse Neasden
- Be informed and led by local stakeholders and communities
- Build on past studies and complementary work currently being developed by Brent Council and the work they are carrying out to improve placemaking, connectivity and movement in the area
- Form the basis of the Council's upcoming Civic Partnership Programme bid, a funding submission to the Greater London Authority in May 2024. If successful, this bid could potentially secure up to £4m and along with Council match funding, could mean a substantial level of improvement for Neasden Town Centre

This Action Plan is the culmination of this work and sets out a deliverable set of projects that can be implemented over time to help reposition Neasden as a thriving town centre.

The report introduces the aims and objectives of the Civic Partnership Programme and outlines a brief history of the evolution of the Neasden neighbourhood over the last couple of centuries. It then analyses the socio-economic and environmental challenges that Neasden Town Centre faces today, that programmes like the Civic Partnership Programme can help address.

The closing section of the Action Plan sets out a suite of ambitious, creative and exemplar short, medium and long-term proposals, which can be delivered in phases over time, as different pots of funding become available.

To inform the Action Plan, Brent Council also commissioned the team to prepare the Neasden Action Plan Engagement & Co-design Report. This is a separate document which will:

- Support the Action Plan and parallel work being carried out by the Council's Transport and Placemaking teams
- Set out an approach for this 'testing phase'/early engagement carried out during February 2024
- Set out key messages and feedback gathered from the early testing phase/engagement
- Demonstrate methods used with key audiences
- Establish the basis of a strong, galvanised co-design framework with local stakeholders and communities in order to develop a pipeline of projects that can improve the appearance, performance, connectivity, sustainability and resilience of the high street
- Inform The Neasden Town Centre Placemaking and Sustainability Action Plan.



1.2

THE CIVIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME



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1. INTRODUCTION

Civic Partnership Programme (CPP)

The Civic Partnership Programme (CPP) is the Mayor of London's new regeneration funding programme. It targets areas of need, in order to combat long-standing inequalities and support areas undergoing change.

The London Borough of Brent has been identified as one of 12 locations eligible for CPP funding, based on factors relating to deprivation, climate risk, reduced access to public space, and the scale of future development in the pipeline.

CPP funding is designed to be used as seed funding to catalyse and support exemplary, transformative area-based strategies and projects, promoting capacity building, collaboration and exchange.

The CPP programme has two elements:

- CPP Strategy funding allocated to 12 London boroughs and their partners to develop a place-based regeneration strategy, involving local stakeholders (this commission).
- CPP Exemplar funding available to deliver three to six exemplar projects, for which the CPP regeneration strategy above can provide the business case. The Neasden Action Plan will form the basis of Brent Council's business case.

The key aims of the CPP programme are to:

- **Strengthen representation and authorship in physical regeneration**
Delivering projects for and with the communities they serve, with a focus on local network capacity building and agency.
- **Expand the public realm**
Creating open, high quality, connected and inclusive public spaces with good social and cultural infrastructure managed by cross-sector partners.
- **Address the climate and ecological emergencies**
Strengthening London's climate resilience and tackling environmental inequalities.



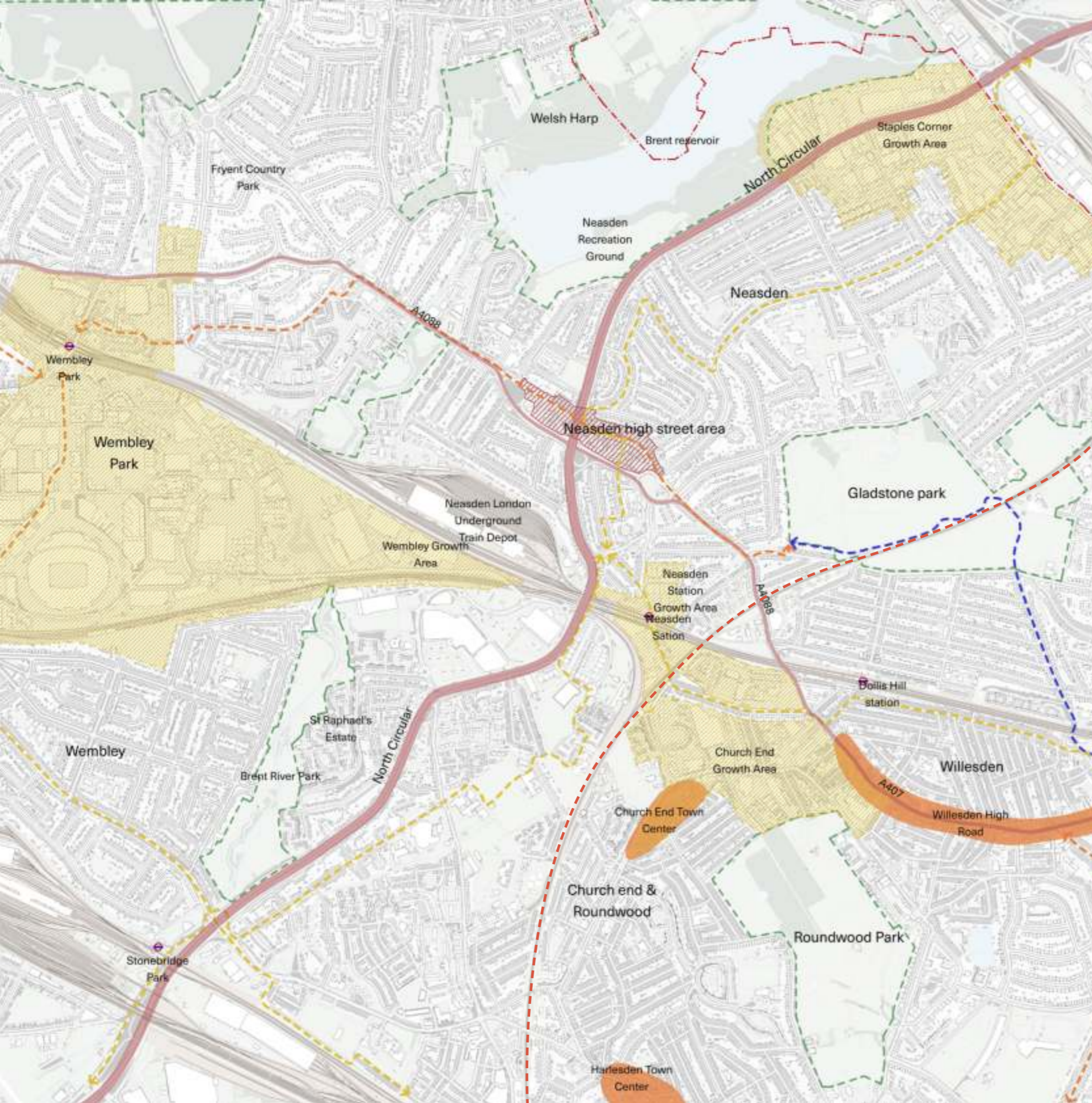
1.3

STRATEGIC CONTEXT



NEASDEN
TOWN
CENTRE

1. INTRODUCTION



Strategic Context

Neasden is a district town centre located at the heart of the London Borough of Brent and strategically situated in the centre of Brent, close to several major growth areas. Neasden Town Centre is conveniently located in close proximity to Church End (12 minutes on foot), Wembley (9 minutes by car), and Staples Corner (8 minutes by car). Neasden's role is to service the local residential areas with its goods and service offer. Brent Cross and Wembley act as major retail and services centres serving the wider area.

Notably, Neasden is the sole town centre in Brent that coincides with a significant strategic road in the borough, the North Circular Road. The location's close proximity to prominent transport hubs (Neasden Station and future West London Orbital (WLO)) provides an optimal location for people to access services and other recreational pursuits.

- - - - - London Cycle Network+
- - - - - Future Short Medium term links (yet to be implemented)
- - - - - Quietway (regents Park to Gladstone Park)
- Local parks
- Growth Areas
- - - - - West London Orbital

Brent Cycle Strategy 2018 - 2021
<https://democracy.brent.gov.uk/documents/s26362/>

Neasden Stations Growth Area (NSGA)

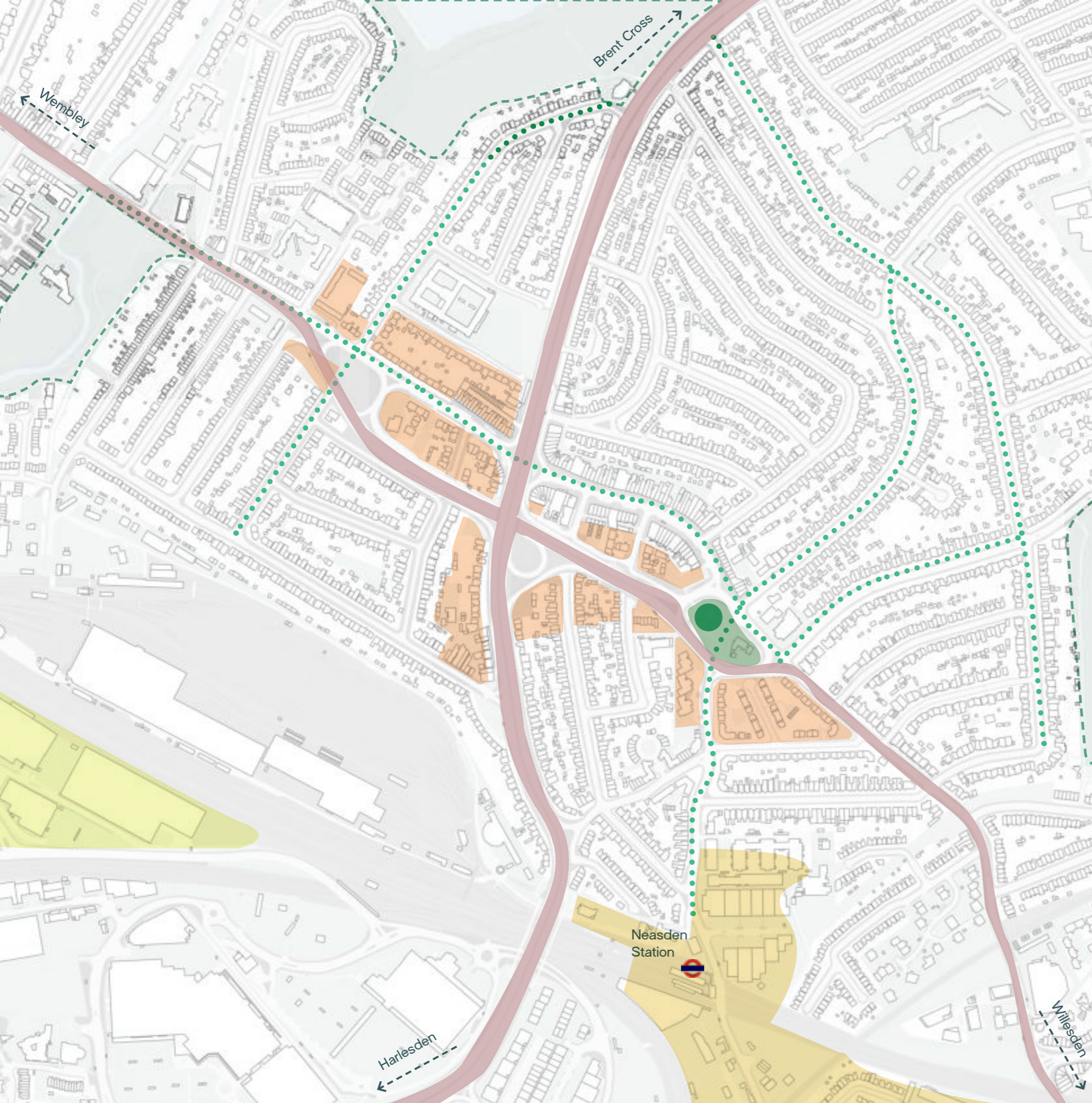
Neasden Stations Growth Area (NSGA), just south of the Town Centre, is currently undergoing intensification and aims to deliver a minimum of 2,000 new homes and 26,160m² industrial workspace in a dynamic and varied mixed-use neighbourhood. Neasden Stations Growth Area (NSGA) is planned to accommodate future housing and employment growth demands through industrial intensification and co-location with new residential uses. It is estimated that 3,000 new people will be moving into the area. The adopted SPD reinforces the need for having new developments supporting existing infrastructure such as the town centre:

- DP2 supports the creation of a neighbourhood parade along Neasden Lane that is linked to Neasden Town Centre and
- DP7 reinforces the need for improving pedestrian and cycle connectivity to and across NSGA to support access to the West London Orbital (WLO) and Neasden Town Centre. The new north-west route will substantially increase accessibility to active travel and unlock density across the area.

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Future Development

Brent Council is currently identifying avenues for housing development, both infill sites and more extensive revitalisation within Neasden Town Centre. Local Plan Policy BH2 specifies town centres and fringes areas with greater PTAL (poor-to-area ratio) as suitable places for housing delivery. Recent evaluation, suggests that there is a potential for at least an extra 300 new dwellings to be built as part of infill developments, taking advantage of PTAL 3-4. This will also take into account variables such as the capacity of infrastructure and the availability of community amenities in order to promote sustainable growth. The Neasden Town centre Regeneration Options by Jan Kattein Architects, 2020 sets out a number of high-level development options for sites within the town centre and its fringes.

-  The Grange Nature Reserve
-  Local parks
-  Jan Kattein Study Development Sites
-  Neasden Growth Area (NSGA) 3,000-7,500 people
-  Wembley Growth Area
-  Major roads causing severance
-  Brent safe, green and accesible pedestrian and cycle routes linking green spaces and the town centre

Draft Neasden Town Centre Connectivity and Placemaking Strategy

The Council has recently prepared a draft Neasden Town Centre Connectivity and Placemaking Strategy which highlights that Neasden:

- Is a strategically important node at the convergence of radial and orbital routes through Brent;
- Has the potential to connect major growth areas and both parts of the borough together; connecting Park Royal to Brent Cross via Harlesden, Church End, Neasden, Dollis Hill and Staples Corner;
- Has suffered the effects of changing shopping patterns and is constrained by its limited retail offer;
- Has the potential to densify and accommodate growth through new development
- Is an unhealthy place due its proximity to the strategic road network and poor accessibility to both green open space and active travel modes.
- Could support a green-led recovery of some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in Brent.

Neasden Town Centre Connectivity and Place Study (Transport Study)

Brent Council have recently commissioned infrastructure and transport consultancy Steer, to carry out a Connectivity and Place Study. The study will be carried out over two years, and will consist of a review of previous work carried out in Neasden Town Centre and the surrounding transport network, as well as looking at modelling options and constraints, before setting out the next steps and proposals.

The Local Plan (see Planning Policy Context) as well as the studies and guidance outlined above, all align with the goal of creating safer, more sustainable, and more inclusive places, where people can easily access more active and environmentally friendly modes of transport, such as walking and cycling.

Air Quality and Climate Risk

The North Circular was constructed at the start of the 20th century, dividing the Town Centre in half, with the purpose of enhancing and supporting London's transport infrastructure. The thoroughfare across Neasden Town Centre, comprising six lanes for vehicular traffic, serves a daily influx of more than 30,000 cars traversing the eastern and western regions of London. Although automotive travel has been the main focus for more than a century, pedestrians and local residents who need to move around Neasden Town Centre often encounter substantial accessibility challenges. These concerns have long hindered the effectiveness and prosperity of this community.

The overwhelming physical severance and fragmentation creates physical disconnect, hampers economic growth and access to green space and creates climate risk. Neasden town centre is one these Air Quality Focus Areas (AQFA) or hotspots as identified in Brent Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2017-2022. The study undertook local air quality testing and modelling and identified four areas as the worst affected sites within Brent. Unsurprisingly, as Neasden town centre incorporates part of the North Circular Road and Dudden Hill Lane (A4088), these major roads contribute significantly to the poor air quality in the area. Neasden Goods Yard has also been identified as a significant source of PM10.

As Neasden is a growth area, it is important to implement active and mitigating measures as future development is delivered in the area.

Reduced Access to Public Space

Whilst the Welsh Harp Reservoir and Gladstone Park offer good quality open spaces for recreation, biodiversity and improving well-being, Neasden lacks access to good green infrastructure, in both quality and quantity. This adversely impacts the liveability of the place. In the 1980s, the London Wildlife Trust converted part of The Grange roundabout into a nature area. This unique yet underutilised asset for the town centre, is currently cut off and hidden due to the eastern gyratory. Whilst the bolder opportunity to reconnect this 'island' back to the high street exists, this is a complex and long-term aspiration due to its context of the road infrastructure surrounding it. Unless there is a step-change in the surrounding road infrastructure, the opportunities to introduce new and significant green spaces to impactfully improve the pedestrian environment are limited.



Deprivation

Brent is home to many communities and is one of the most diverse boroughs in London. Brent is the fourth most deprived borough in London. The most highly deprived areas in the borough are concentrated in Stonebridge and Harlesden. The diversity of the population however also gives rise to specific needs. These include the need to provide a wider range of community and cultural facilities.

Neasden falls across neighbourhoods classified as falling into the 10% and 20% of most deprived areas in London, according to the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) combines measures across seven distinct aspects of deprivation: income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing and services, and living environment. Whilst Neasden Town Centre falls within the Dollis Hill ward, the high street also serves the population from Welsh Harp ward. In both wards, the working age population is around 66%. Dollis Hill has a higher percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic communities (66%) when compared to Welsh Harp (60%), Brent (65%) and London (46%). In both wards, the majority of the population are 'White groups' followed by those of Asian ethnicity and 'Black groups'. Christianity is the predominant religion, followed by Islam.

Crime levels in the Neasden area are high and the town centre is a hotspot for anti-social behaviour, and remained the case over the last decade.

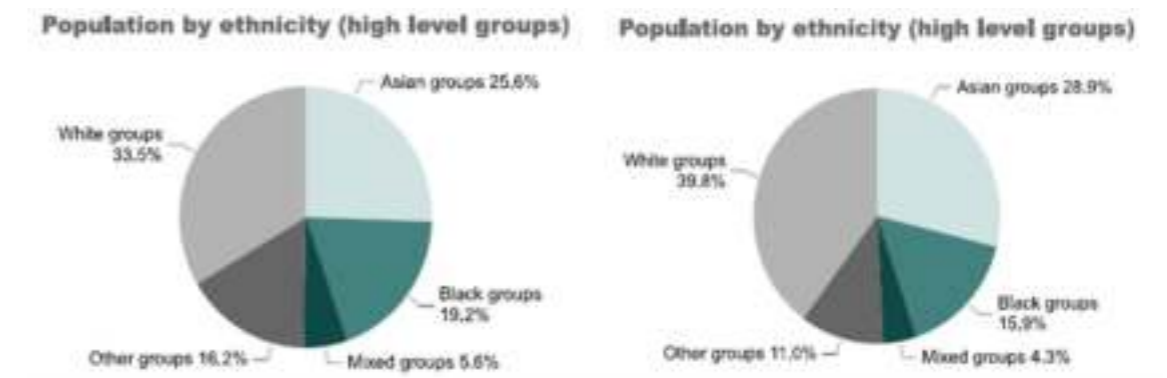


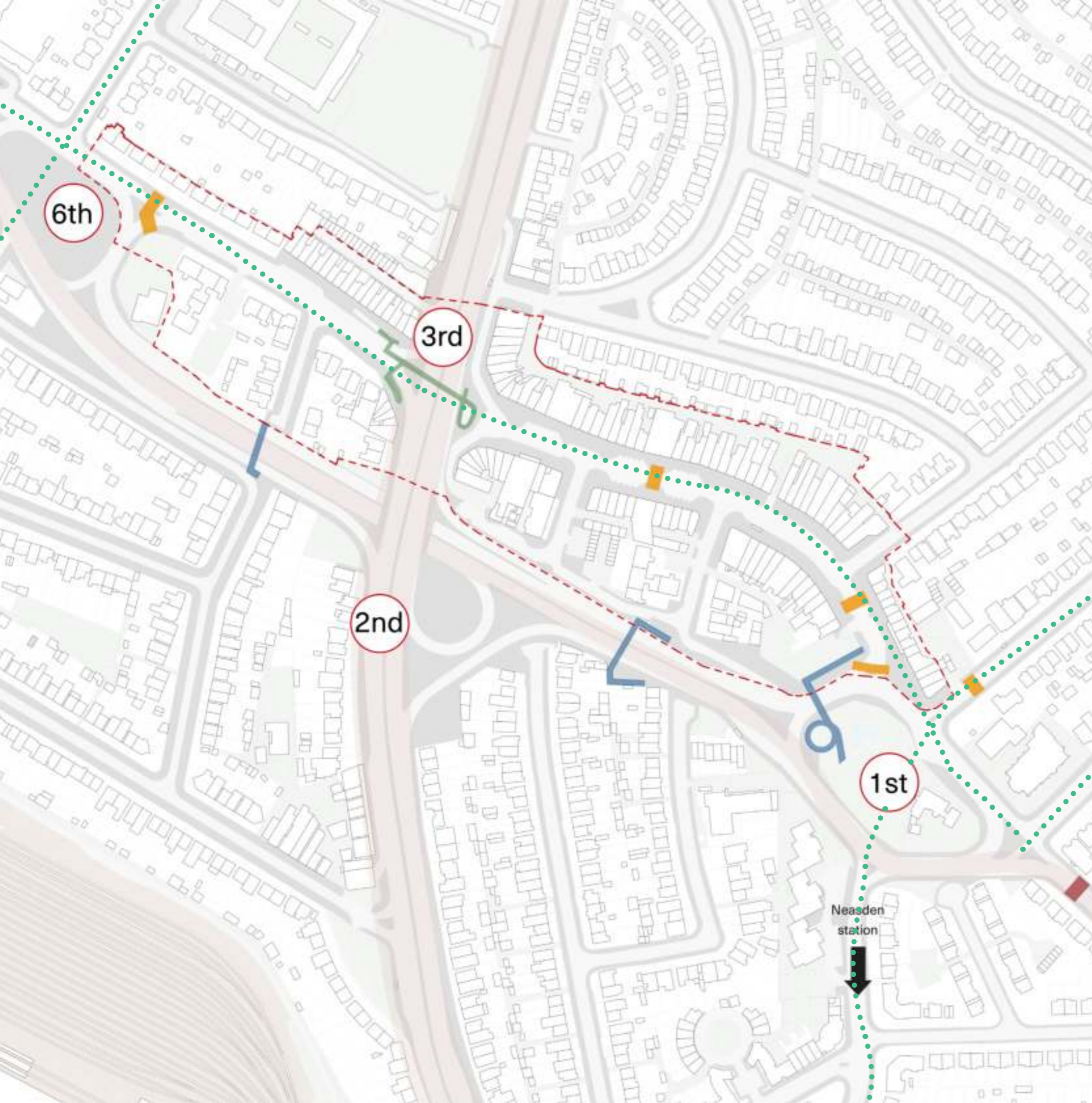
Figure - Welsh Harp

Figure - Welsh Harp

Road Safety

The A406 Cycle Crossing at Neasden – Initial Options Review by Urban Movement, 2016 revealed that the junctions in Neasden have the most unfavourable crash statistics throughout the entire borough. Collision data 3 years (up to 30th September 2015) was analysed and placed within a Borough-wide context as illustrated in the plan.


Pedestrian approaches into the Town Centre are poor, particularly the main route from the town centre to Neasden Underground station, which is negotiated by crossing a busy gyratory system with no surface-level crossings and a series of convoluted elevated footbridges. Cycle access into the town centre is unappealing due to the poor air quality, dominance of road traffic, busy A-roads and the difficult gyratory.



Traffic and accessibility

-  Neasden high street area
-  Pelican crossing
-  Zebra crossing

-  Pedestrian and bicycle bridge
-  Pedestrian and bicycle tunnel

-  Ranking of the worst collision junctions within the entire borough

2

VISION

This part of the document sets out a bold and ambitious long-term vision for Neasden, with necessary moves to address long-standing issues which have hindered Neasden physically, socially, economically and environmentally for many decades.

The early engagement which was carried out (and detailed in the accompanying document **Neasden Town Centre Engagement Report 2024**, is outlined here with the key feedback that has shaped the activations and proposals set out in Section 3 'Actions'. Through the early engagement, we were also able to check the pulse of what local people felt about Neasden, and its current and potential identity both locally and across the wider region.

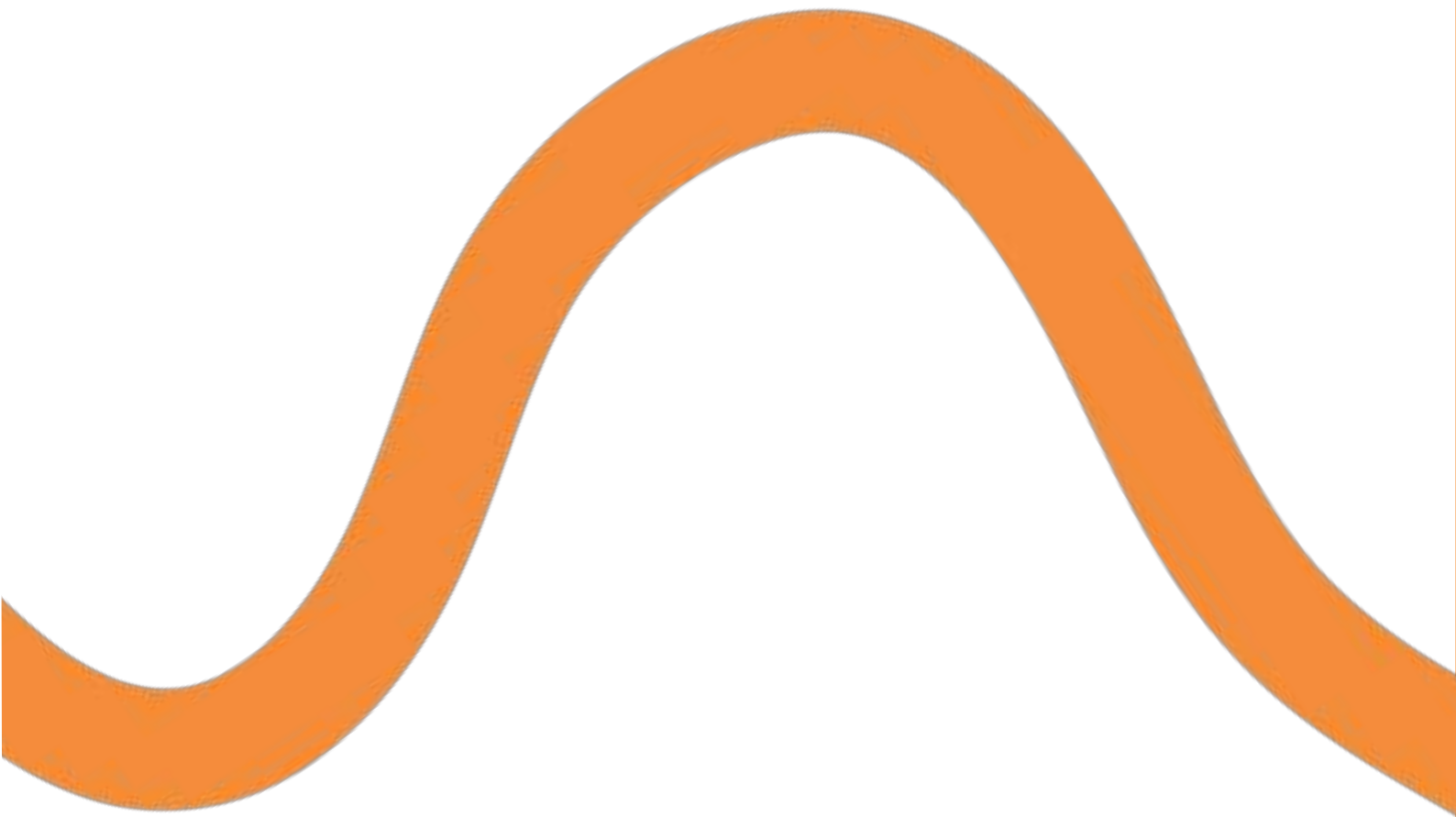


The long-term vision is informed by Neasden's strategic challenges identified through our own research as well as gathering knowledge from the engagement and prior studies. These challenges are then presented along with opportunities to mend, stitch, connect and activate.

Shorter-term activations will test, trial and pave the way for the implementation of the longer-term strategy with programme and partnership coming together to deliver the key aims of the CPP to:

- **Strengthen representation and authorship in physical regeneration**
delivering projects for and with the communities they serve, with a focus on local network capacity building and agency.
- **Expand the public realm**
creating open, high quality, connected and inclusive public spaces with good social and cultural infrastructure managed by cross-sector partners.
- **Address the climate and ecological emergencies**
strengthening London's climate resilience and tackling environmental inequalities.

The section includes an imagined Community Charter - a similar one could very well become reality - a community call to arms to gather, partner, and uplift Neasden to be and a place full of culture, healthy streetlife, community and enterprise.



2.1

A VISION FOR NEASDEN TOWN CENTRE

Three Overarching Themes

Following our on-site research, review of previous studies, and analysis of the engagement feedback received, we have distilled 3 key themes which encompass an informed set of phased actions, initiatives and proposals to improve place, connectivity and to achieve a fairer, safer, healthier and more prosperous Neasden.



1. Authorship & Representation



2. Enhancing Public Realm



3. Addressing Climate Change & Ecology

A Vision for Neasden

Bringing together Neasden's history, challenges, assets and opportunities, a long-term, sustainable and deliverable vision for Neasden is presented as:



Community-Driven Regeneration

Committing to a regeneration process that is co-authored and co-delivered with the community, building legacy and capacity, and ensuring that developments in Neasden are reflective of local needs, aspirations, and the unique character of the town.



Green and Connected

Delivering sustainable development and improved connectivity to transform Neasden into a greener, accessible town centre of the future, reinforcing environmental innovation and responsibility.



Safety and Vibrancy for All

Prioritising creating a safe, legible and vibrant public realm that encourages community engagement, supports local businesses, and attracts visitors, making Neasden a sought-after destination to live, work and play.



Creative and Cultural Hub

Leveraging Neasden's musical and cultural heritage as a foundation for a creative economy, positioning the town centre as a hub for arts, culture, and education that celebrates diversity and innovation.



Crossroads of Culture and Community

Celebrating Neasden's rich multicultural heritage and strong community spirit as its core identity, fostering a welcoming environment for all.



2.2

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges & Opportunities



Mending Town Centre Severance

Stitch the High Street back to the station and local context.



Enhancing Public Spaces

Creating attractive, safe, and accessible green and public spaces that encourage community interaction and pride.



Mitigating Climate Risk

Mitigating air pollution issues through active travel, green infrastructure and enhancing biodiversity.



Tackling Crime & Safety

Tackling the high levels of crime and improving perceptions of safety to encourage community engagement and investment.



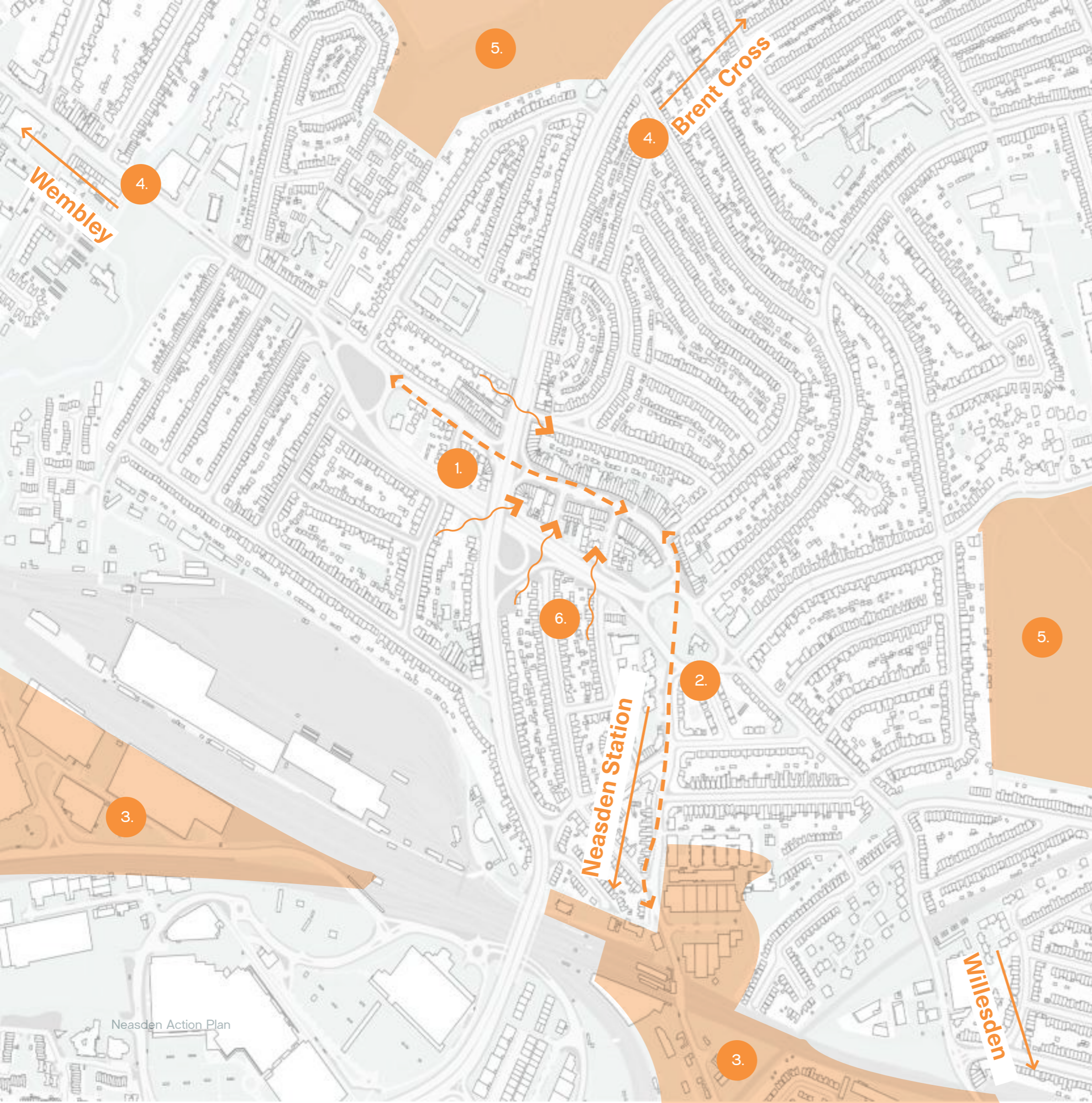
Building Community Cohesion

Overcoming physical and social fragmentation to foster a stronger, more unified community identity both locally and within Brent.



Diversifying the High Street

A broad, high quality offer that reflects the community's diversity and appeals to future populations from Local Growth Areas.

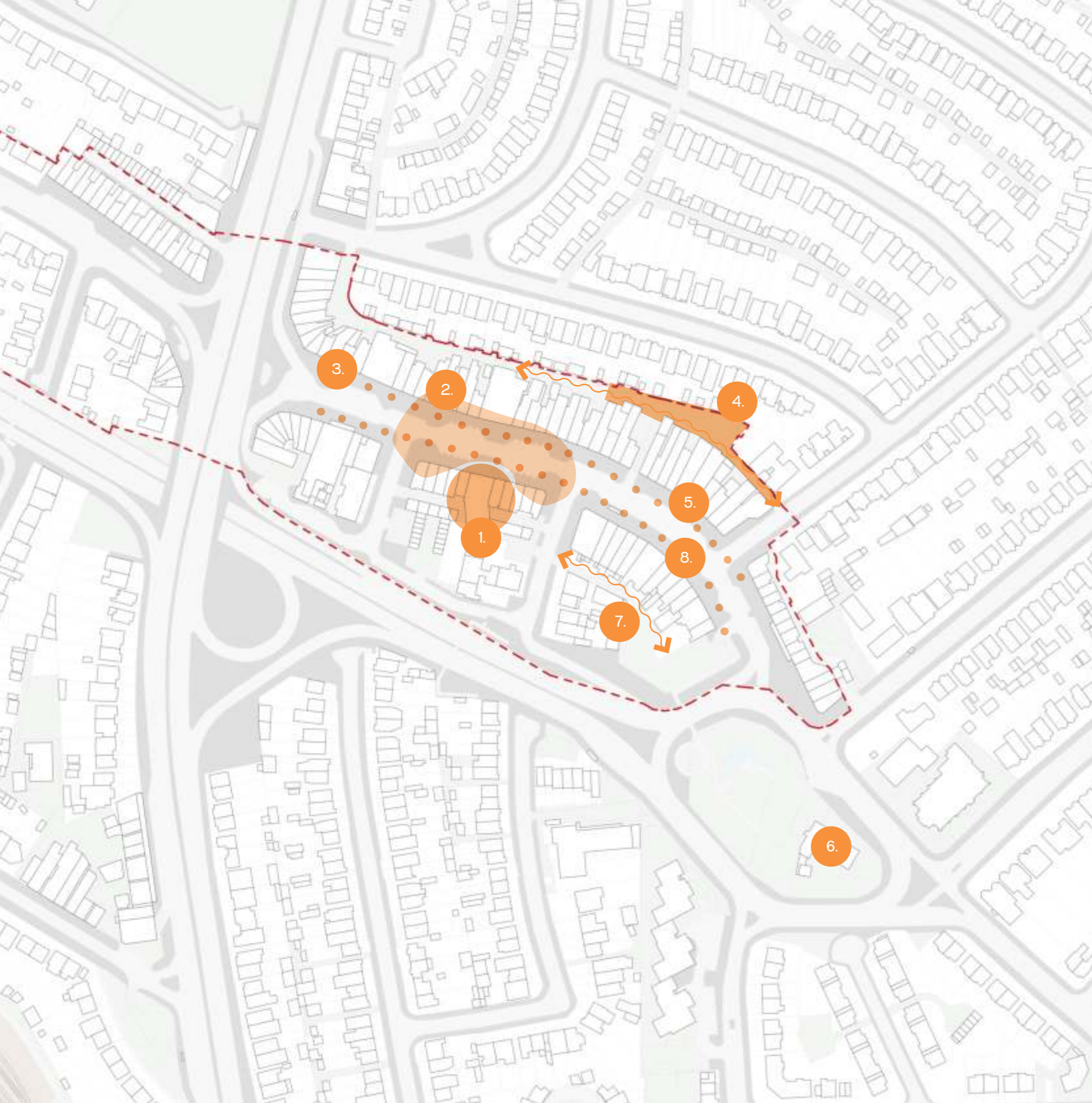


Challenges & Opportunities

- 1. Re-connect Neasden High Street, severed by the North Circular
- 2. Mend severance from the station created by transport infrastructure
- 3. Ensure the High Street provides an offer to the Local Growth Areas established by Brent
- 4. Strengthen Neasden's identity within the local and borough context
- 5. Maximise sustainability initiatives (greening, biodiversity, reuse)
- 6. Mitigate air pollution through active travel, green infrastructure and enhancing biodiversity



1. Authorship & Representation

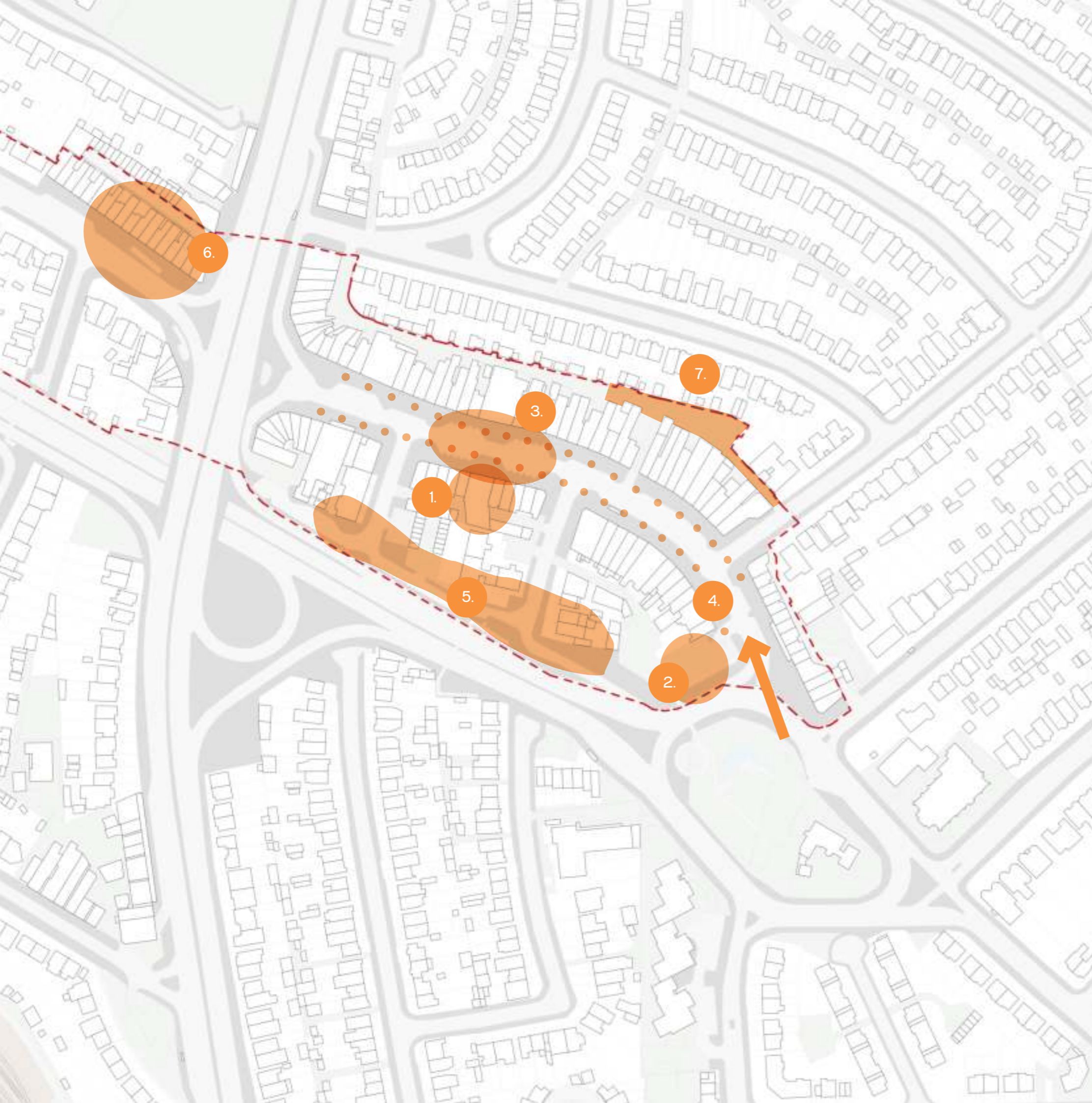


- 1. Create a new co-designed community space at the heart of the high street
- 2. Implement a regular weekly/monthly market to support local makers and producers
- 3. Build capacity, networks and community stewardship
- 4. Reduce anti-social behaviour in crime hot spots
- 5. Improve the perception and boost pride in the high street encouraging people to dwell
- 6. Connect to established community hubs in Neasden
- 7. Businesses to co-ordinate waste management and servicing
- 8. Encourage people to take ownership and participate in the growth and care of their high street



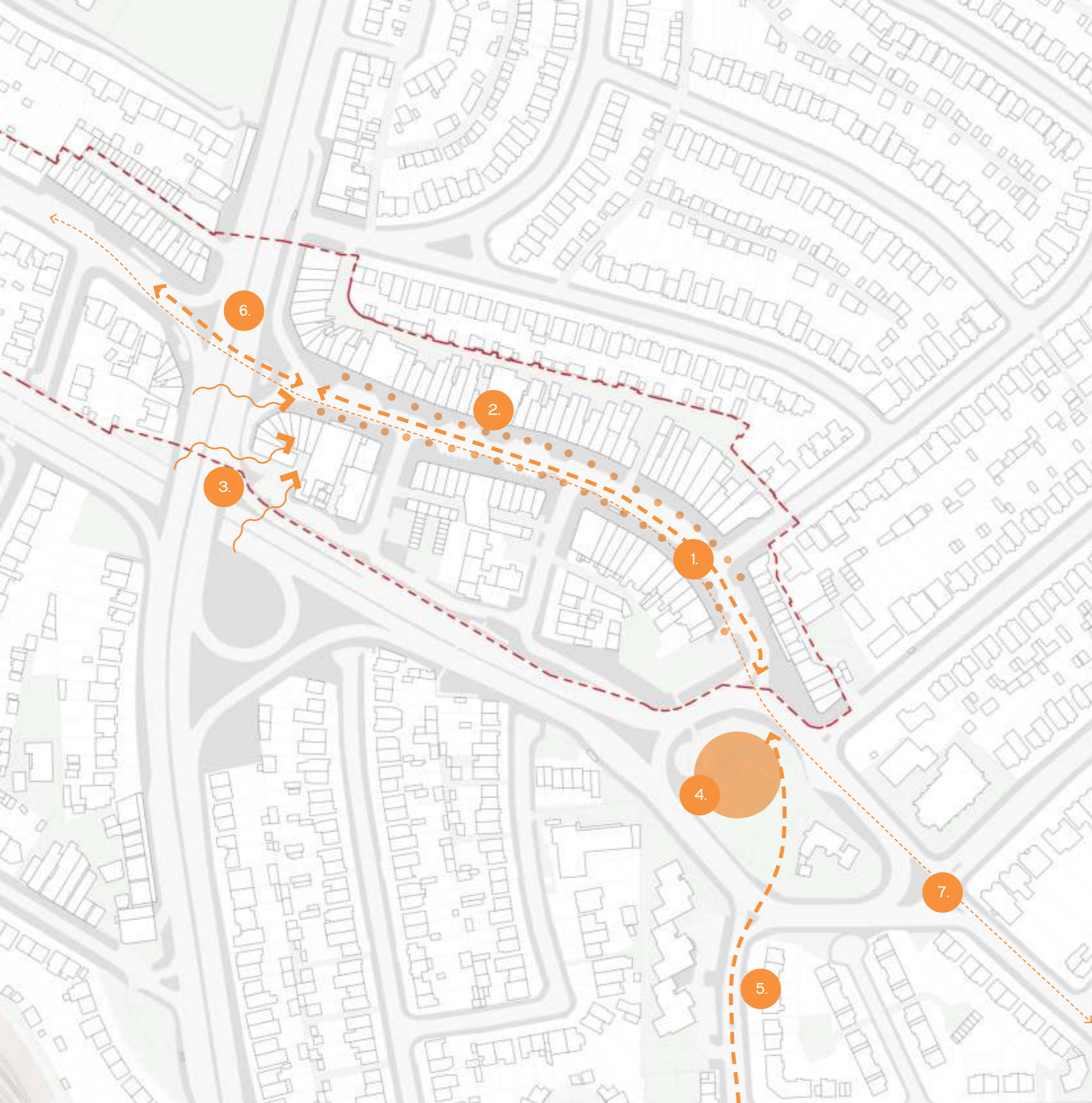
2. Public Realm

1. Capitalise on unit 277 as a key high street asset
2. Utilise underused council-owned land to boost the high street offering
3. Relocate high street car parking to make room for civic space
4. Create a bold new gateway to Neasden Lane, improve wayfinding
5. Improve the condition of the alleyways which currently feel like forgotten spaces
6. Boost/encourage footfall to this section of retail units on the section of high street cut off by the North Circular
7. Improve street cleanliness and reduce fly tipping





3. Climate & Ecology



- 1. Decrease traffic and encourage active travel
- 2. Maximise greenery with a series of rain gardens, dry gardens and pocket forests and mobile gardens
- 3. Combat air pollution levels with urban greening measures
- 4. Make the most of the The Grange nature reserve as an existing local asset
- 5. Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity to Neasden from the Station
- 6. Improve the existing underpass (visibility, connection, greening, safety and cycle access)
- 7. Facilitate cycling routes outlined by LB Brent

2.3

COMMUNITY CHARTER

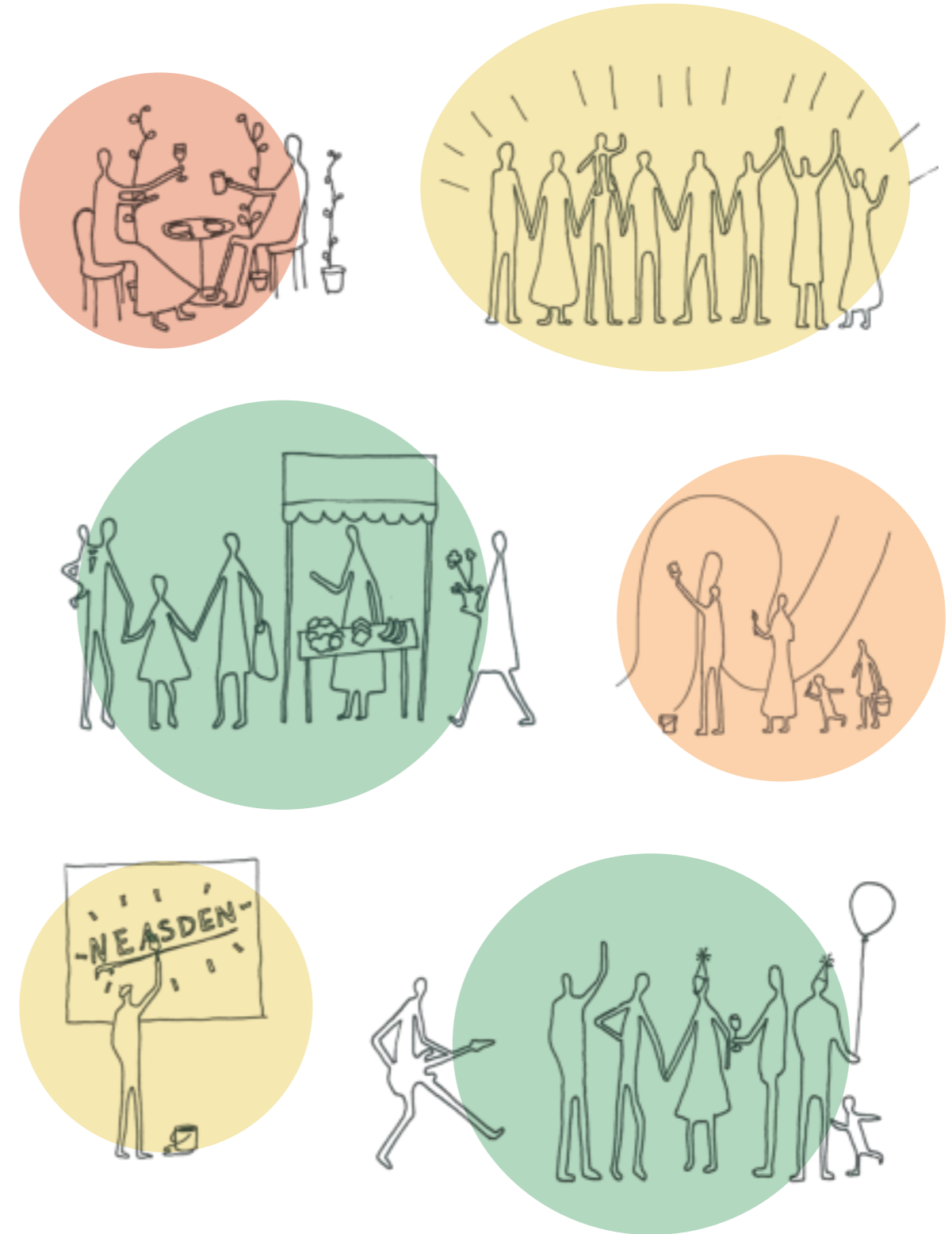
Community Charter

Our high street is our identity, our community stage, the face of our place. Now and in the future, our high street will be about more than just shopping. A place to gather, meet, socialise, work, shop and play. It is the route to our shops and parks, our station and bank, our schools and places of worship. All of Neasden will benefit from a thriving, cared-for, safe high street with pleasant places to sit, stop and enjoy. Shoppers, businesses, families, women and girls, the young and the old, LGBTQ+ communities and the newly-arrived – all make up a flourishing and fair economy and community.

Working together is key. We love and promote our diverse shops and eateries, which provide us with services, which are convenient, familiar and reflect our communities. We want our streets to be safe, accessible, attractive, clean and cared for. We don't litter or park inconsiderately, we come together as stewards of our place, caring for our high street as an extension of our home. We create a legacy for future generations. We ask our Council to provide businesses and communities with support, and enforce against those who don't act with care or respect.

With its historic architecture, broad pavements, engaged locals and businesses, Neasden has plenty of potential to thrive. We have a long history and look forward to a bright future. We are a community with a diverse identity, representing the best of London and we believe our high street should be at the heart of this.

We pledge to help our high street to thrive, make changes that foster pride, and to ensure that the diverse voices and spirits of local people come together. Let us innovate and evolve Neasden into the vibrant, fair, sustainable and joyful place it deserves to be.





2.4

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE



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2. VISION



Partnerships

Neasden has many town centre issues that need resolving. However, we have found that one of its greatest assets are some dynamic and engaged community groups, who have the power to convene others, and have the appetite to raise funds, negotiate with private landlords and deliver projects.

The Neasden Network is:

- A long-term network of civic partners: a diverse group of locally embedded people who live, work and play in and around Neasden
- Made up of business, community, amenity, creative and arts networks, the elderly, families, young people, new arrivals to Neasden, underrepresented groups, health, educational, faith and environmental organisations
- A multi-skilled and engaged network who will co-author a place vision and narrative delivered in partnership with the Council and associates
- A group that represents Neasden as a place within the context of Brent and its future to be a welcoming, sustainable and successful place for all



Neasden Collective

Neasden Collective is a newly formed business alliance, representing a number of high street businesses on the high street. The Directors of the alliance are all local traders, and between them have strong experience of running businesses and community enterprises. As an energetic, local and galvanized new organisation, their agenda is to create and maintain a thriving Neasden Town Centre. The group represents an ideal partnership opportunity for Brent Council to co-create authorship and legacy in the area.

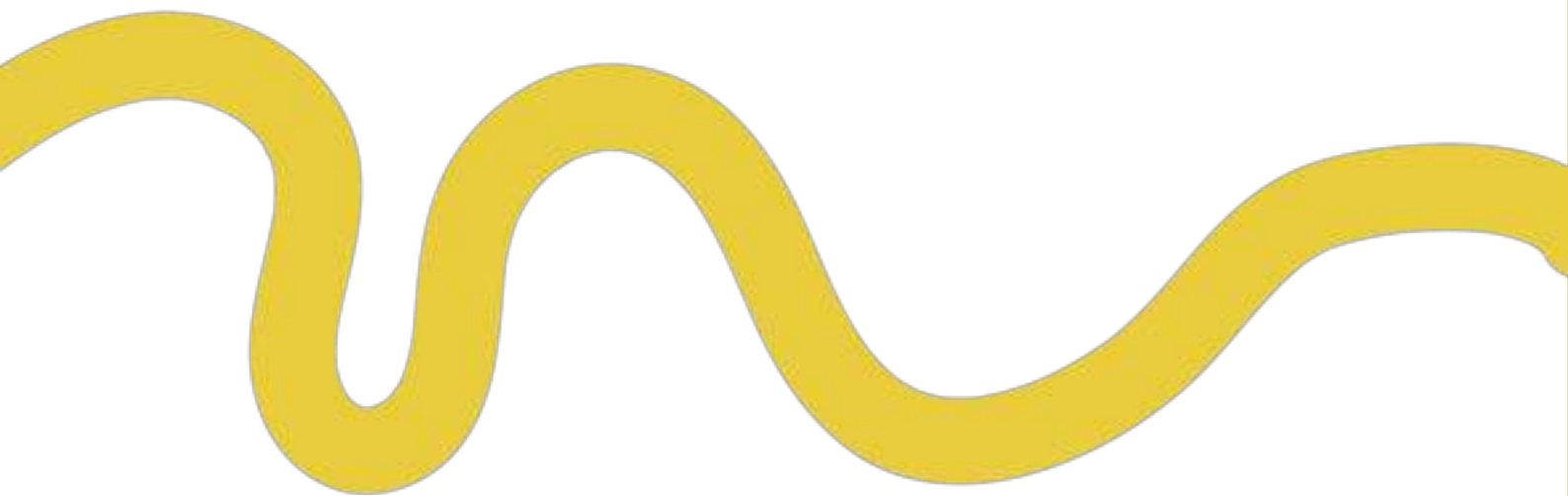


Neasden Network Action Group

This group is a burgeoning action group made up of local residents, volunteers and community organisations such as Friends of Gladstone Park, an active amenity groups who in the words of Dollis Hill Ward Councillor, Liz Dixon act as 'eyes and ears' of the street. At one of the February engagement events, whilst discussing themes of identity, connection and sustainability in Neasden, a key action was noted. This was that an 'action' or 'pressure' group was needed to try and address some of the ongoing issues in Neasden, and to bring together the existing networks of activity and guardianship that already exists. Councillor Dixon is keen to take a proactive role in scoping what this wider community network might look like, and the mechanisms for its operation. Early discussions will be underway in the coming weeks to establish this. With such a set-up, a strong engagement framework could set the tone for meaningful partnership working and collective impact in Neasden, driving change which is rooted in an empowered community with agency and cohesion.

3

ACTIONS



3.1

PROPOSALS



NEASDEN
TOWN
CENTRE

3. ACTIONS

The following proposals are set out in 3 phases, at different scales and suggest a mix of partnership models, to enable a delivery and management framework that is action-oriented and fundable. Smaller 'quick-win projects' gained along the way build community trust and support, showing that change is being delivered. These quick-wins also make a compelling case for investment for broader, cumulative and more complex changes to the town centre as further development comes forward as part of the Council's Local Plan. The ultimate ambition for Neasden is to deliver much-needed change to address some of the major barriers that sever the town centre and to transform Neasden into a much more healthy, sustainable and safer town centre. The initial phase sets out a collection of seed proposals that could be delivered in the initial period of 1-2 years, with additional, more complex projects, garnering support, building capacity and growing community partnership along the way.



1 : Authorship & Representation

The early engagement that we carried out in February 2024 highlighted the strong multicultural aspect of Neasden. This is a unique quality that should be celebrated both within the place identity and its public realm. Any proposals for the natural and built environment should be designed to be fairer and more inclusive, responsive, adaptable and comfortable for a wide range of people.

It is the intention of proposals set out in this action plan to be wherever possible, co-designed, co-authored and co-delivered with a legacy toolkit or management framework to provide ongoing maintenance and stewardship in the area. In this way, local people will be encouraged to take on a participatory role in shaping their town centre and be guardians of its ongoing success.

This spirit is captured in a draft Community Charter, set out in section 2.3 of this Action Plan.

Respondents to the engagement have also proposed that the diversity of Neasden could be celebrated through food, cultural events, and vibrant colours around the borough. We have brought this thinking into in our proposals below.

We propose:

- Creating opportunities wherever possible, for authorship, co-design, partnership and legacy
- Capacity building established grass-roots organisations, through true partnership working (financial or in-kind support), to achieve collective social impact
- Testing innovative ways in which to pivot the high street to create a more diverse offer
- Creating a welcoming civic space and high street anchor
- Creating a meanwhile multi-purpose event space and beacon to celebrate community and culture
- Trialling a specialised market, to complement the current retail offer, create a destination and draw a new pattern of footfall



2. Enhancing Public Realm

Movement and connectivity are the biggest issues blighting Neasden Town Centre. The severance created by the road infrastructure in the last century has had a severe knock-on effect on Neasden's traffic congestion, air quality, high street footfall and townscape quality. Much of the fragmentation that has happened (with the arrival of the North Circular) is not reversible. A strategic move to repair and stitch back, such as reconnecting The Grange gyratory to the high street will require substantial investment working in partnership with Transport for London and will require considerable modelling and testing of the impacts on the wider transport network. Brent Council has been exploring the gyratory proposition for some time internally, most recently with an outline 'Connectivity and Place Strategy for Neasden Town Centre'. As a next step the Council has commissioned infrastructure and transport consultancy Steer, to undertake an Options Design and Feasibility Study which will be developed and delivered over the next two years.

As such, the aspiration of peninsularising the eastern gyratory is beyond the scope of this Action Plan and the subsequent bid for CPP funding. Nevertheless, the reconfiguration of the gyratory is held as a long-term aspiration and is discussed in Phase 3 of our 'Proposals' section.

Our proposals intend to address some of the issues relating to movement and connectivity, like wayfinding. These do not preclude longer-term development, but test and pilot cumulative initiatives, provide opportunities for stewardship and build community capacity.

We propose:

- Improving the approaches to, from and through the town centre through wayfinding
- Supporting and encouraging businesses to improve their servicing strategy to reduce motorised vehicle trips in the town centre.
- Creating a town centre gateway and wayfinding beacon at 'The Lighthouse'
- Early intentions to realign the historic street pattern and desire lines across the gyratory



3: Climate & Ecology

Neasden is a town centre with its own nature reserve.

Our starting point for weaving in more green infrastructure is Neasden's very own small nature reserve at The Grange roundabout. This hidden (though difficult to access) gem of 0.24 hectares, provides an important stepping stone for nature across the wider green infrastructure network.

Designing for greater climate resilience in the future has informed our strategy for increasing the quality and quantity of green infrastructure through this project. Our strategy considers how to build capacity within the local residential and business communities to help foster ownership and custodianship of any green infrastructure delivered.

Whilst larger scale open spaces in the Town Centre are unlikely to materialise, even with redevelopment, there are opportunities to create and activate a garland of small parklets dotted along the high street.

We propose:

- Creating and improving pockets of green infrastructure along the high street through a series of temporary greening measures

Engaging with the local community to

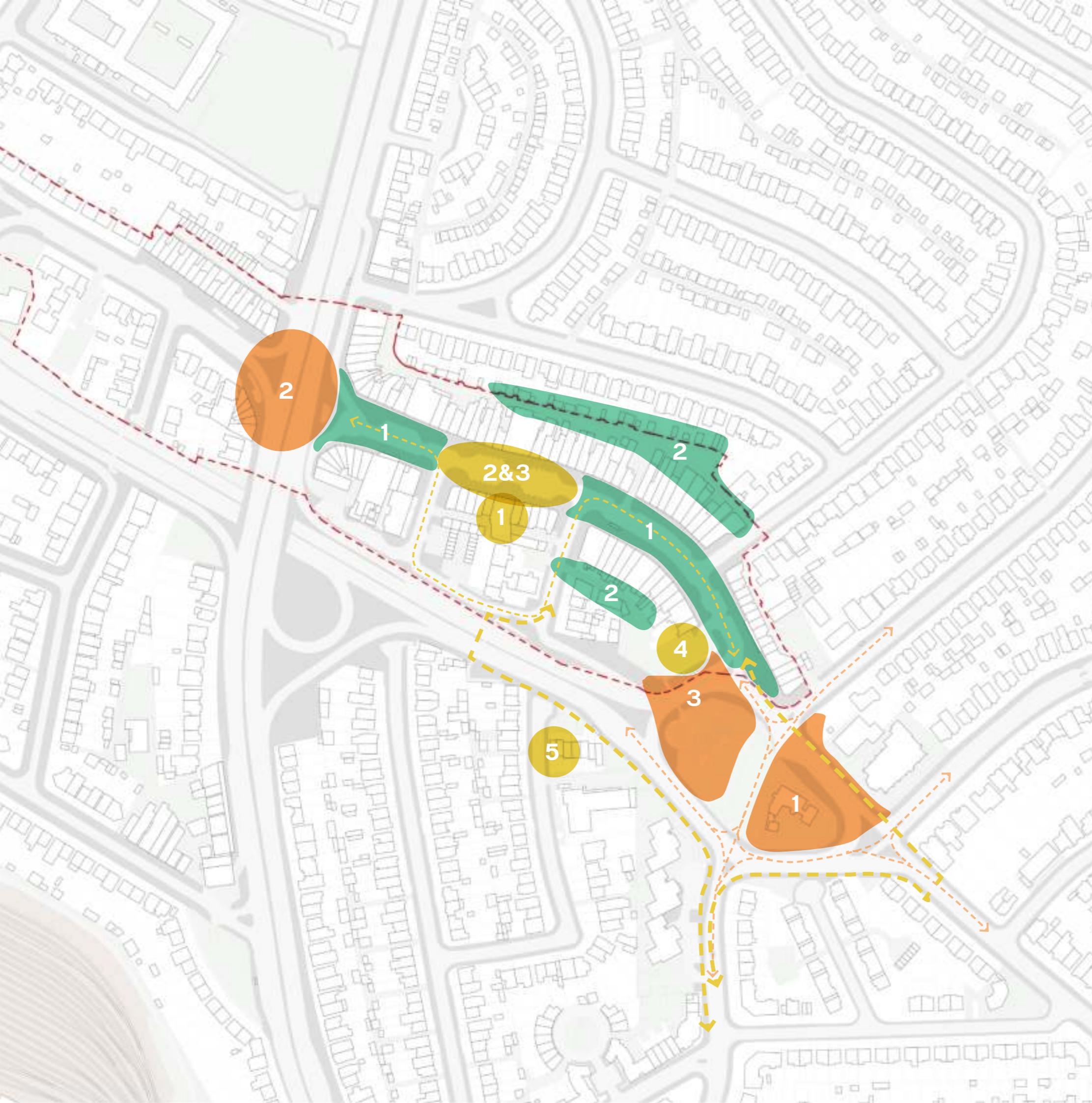
- gauge appetite and logistics for longer term management and permanent measures

Testing and building a strategy to transform Neasden Lane into a more climate-resilient

- neighbourhood.

Developing and implementing a coordinated waste management strategy for Neasden

- Town Centre, including enforcement



Short Term Proposals

- 1. The Ritz Urban Rooms & Kitchen
- 2. A Moveable Feast
- 3. Neasden Market
- 4. The Lighthouse
- 5. Visual Identity & Wayfinding

Medium Term Proposals

- 1. Pocket Forests & Gardens
- 2. Alleyways & Garage Spaces

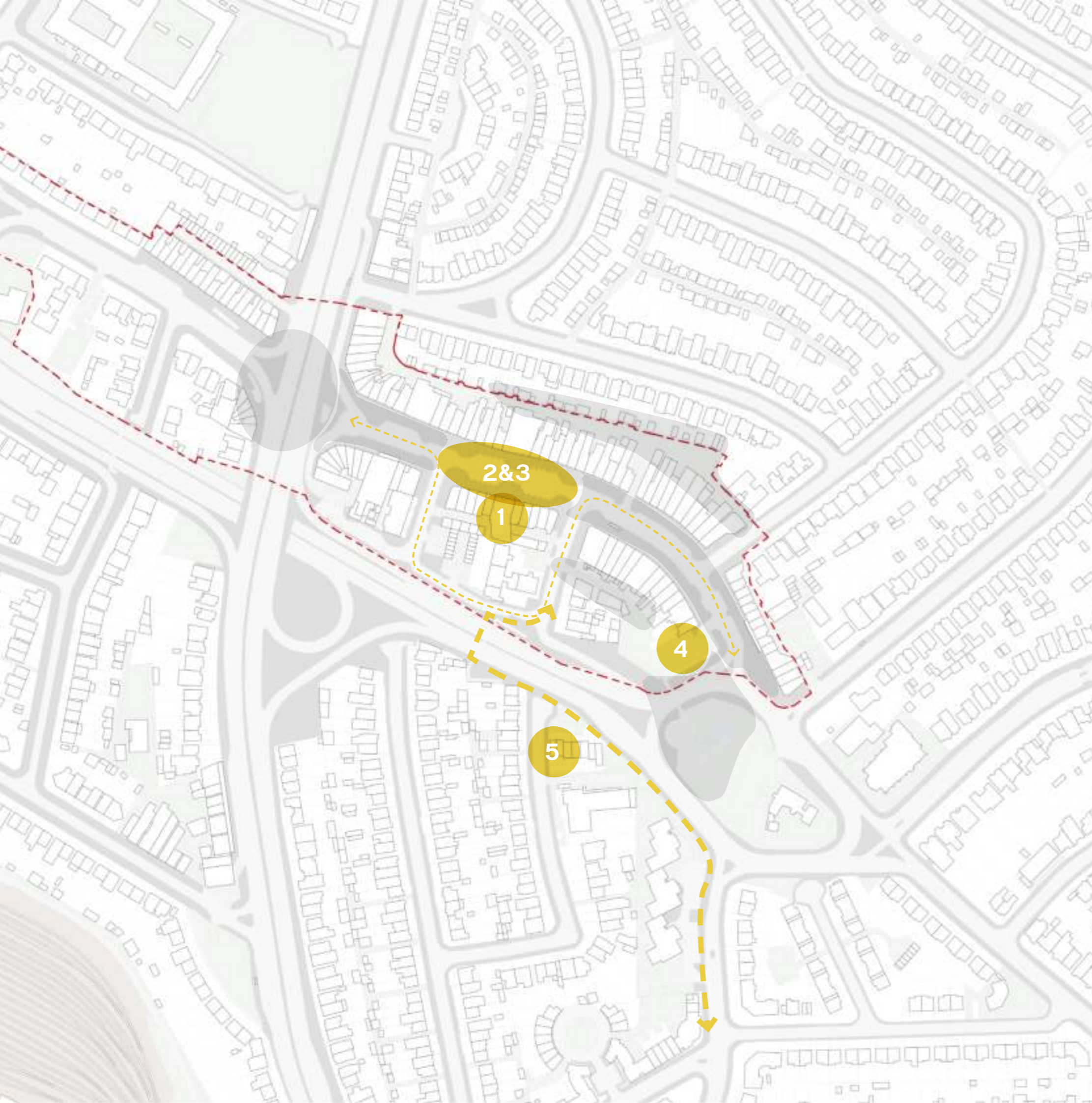
Long Term Proposals

- 1. The Green at the Grange
- 2. The Underpass
- 3. The Lighthouse (Permanent) & Future Development

3.2

SHORT TERM PROPOSALS

3. ACTIONS



Short Term Proposals

The ultimate ambition for Neasden is to deliver much-needed change to address some of the major barriers that sever the town centre and to transform Neasden into a much more healthy, sustainable and safer town centre. The initial phase sets out a collection of seed proposals that could be delivered in the initial period of 1-2 years, with additional, more complex projects, garnering support, building capacity and growing community partnership along the way. These interventions can be used to test ideas, innovate and be built upon at future stages.

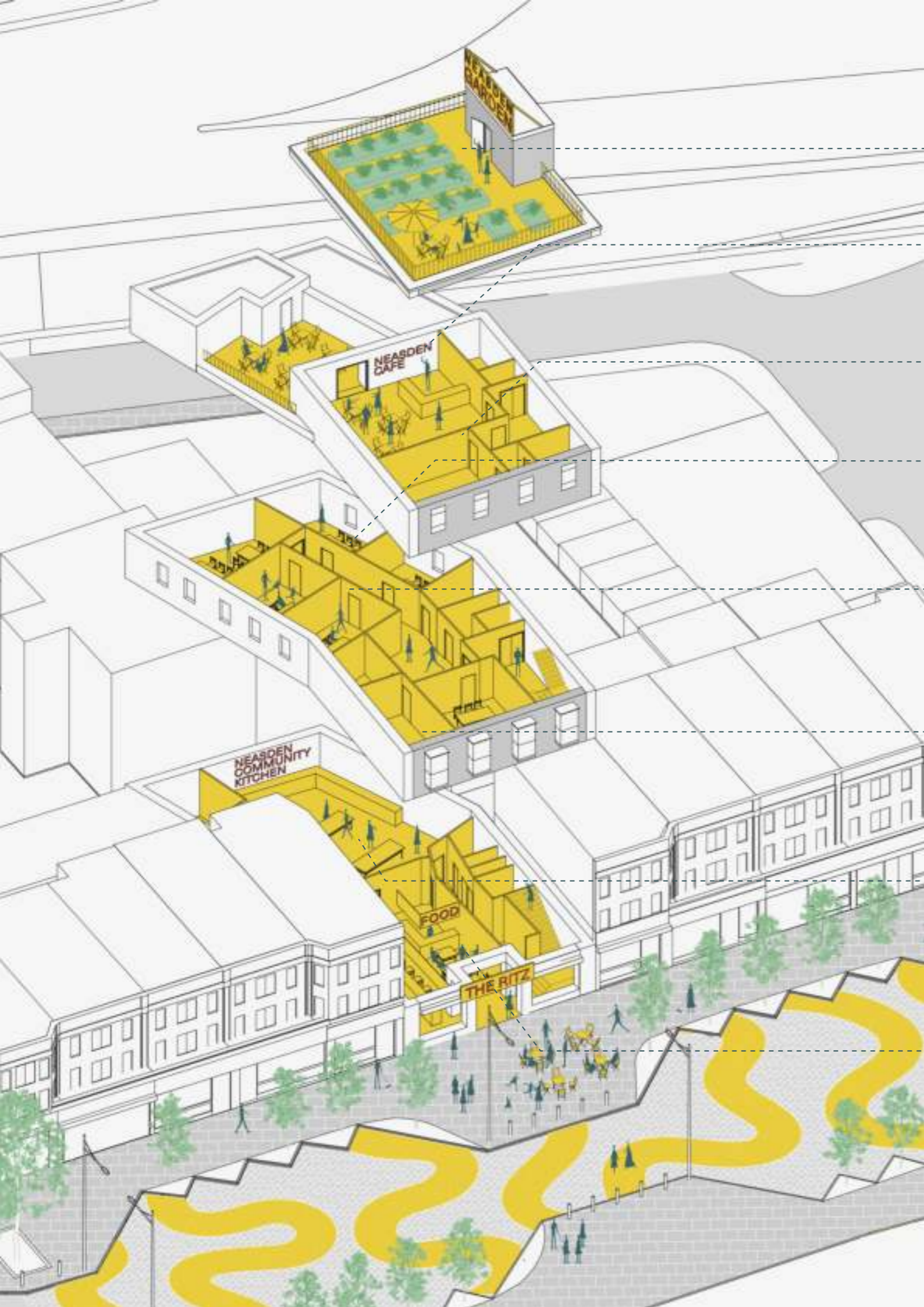
- 
1. The Ritz Urban Rooms & Kitchen
- 
2. A Moveable Feast
- 
3. Neasden Market
- 
4. The Lighthouse
- 
5. Wayfinding & Visual Identity



The Ritz Urban Rooms & Kitchen



The project will activate underused space to deliver a multicultural food court and training kitchens on the ground floor, with affordable workspace, a gym with female-only sessions to cater for diverse cultural groups, therapy rooms and podcasts studios on the upper floors. The roof also has development potential and could host a small garden with beehives, or a place for outdoor yoga or small gatherings in the warmer months.



Community Garden

- Horticultural training and gardening education and urban greening

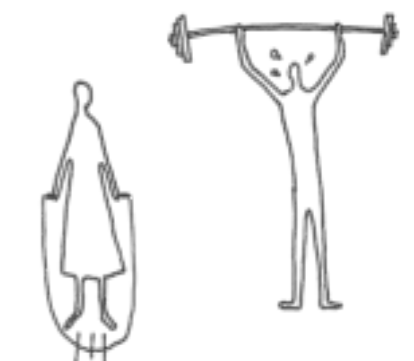


'Chatty Café'

- Sessions to address social isolation, and a meeting place for newcomers

Gym/Exercise Studios

- Including female-only sessions to cater for diverse cultural groups



Community Space

- Available for skills & training workshops used by local groups like Chalk Hill Radio Station, United Borders etc.

Affordable Workspace

- Space for local businesses
- Work-near-home space
- Therapy rooms to hire supporting local independent beauty businesses

Recording and Podcast Studio

- Available to hire for skills & training used by young people, professionals and local groups like Chalk Hill Radio Station, United Borders etc.



Community Kitchen

- Cooking lessons/community kitchen reflecting local diversity
- Local entrepreneurs to incubate food businesses within a low-cost outlet/training kitchen

Food Court

- Ground floor food court, with food kiosks showcasing the area's rich diversity
- Central hub open day and evening with pool tables, gallery, photo booth, café etc. for people to meet, socialise and dwell













Engagement & Partnerships

We set out opposite an enabling framework for collective action. This acts as a launchpad for creative ideas and discussions amongst community groups, businesses, landowners and stakeholders to support the delivery of proposals and supporting management and community initiatives. Each can be scalable and applicable across small, medium and large sites in Neasden.

- Early engagement told us:
Lack of family restaurants on the high street
- Poor evening economy being the Venue 295 nightclub
- No female-only facilities at Willesden Green Sports Centre
- No space to dwell in Neasden
- Demand for podcast/music studios from young people
- Demand for affordable workspace from local operators (Launch-It)
- We need a cultural or educational/skills programme,
- There is nothing in Neasden to offer this and no community sense.

 £ 986,600

 1-2 Years

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships
Project	The Ritz Urban Rooms & Kitchen			
			Capacity building Co-authorship	Brent Council Local food entrepreneurs Workspace Café operators Community gardeners
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	Neasden Skills Programme - Education & Business support			
			Co-design Co-authorship	Local Schools High Street Businesses
	Community Gardening Group & Food Growing			
		 	Capacity building Stewardship Community Pride	Brent Council (Parks Team) Neasden Residents Community gardeners
	Library of Things			
		 	Stewardship Community Pride	Local Residents High Street Businesses

Precedents



Nourish Hub North Kensington

From the sociable nature of sharing food, to the formal training opportunities afforded via its training kitchen and education programme, the Nourish Hub is a place for communities to come together, eat well and learn essential skills for life.



Holborn Community Association Central London

Community space and opportunities for individuals, groups and the wider community to thrive. Three centres and multiple outreach settings across the area which are welcoming, accessible and shaped by the community.



East Street Exchange Southwark

Adjoining East St Library, the extension now allows the library to host a flexible range of new uses. It offers an affordable space for local businesses, entrepreneurs and community groups; provides a much-needed flexible space for groups in the area to meet.



The Landing Manchester

The Landing is a collaborative community growing space designed and built as a sustainable food system and urban growing space for 'Where The Light Gets In' restaurant. The garden provides produce for the restaurant as well as the local community.



A Moveable Feast



A series of short-term creative projects to help raise awareness, foster ownership and custodianship to help inform longer-term strategies to deliver more and better green infrastructure.

The proposal is to commission a 'family' of temporary and engaging public realm/urban greening measures to test in different locations on Neasden High Street.

Planting trees, flowers and shrubs along the high street has multiple benefits; to reduce exposure to air pollution, to soften the streetscape and improve the look and feel of the high street. A key part of the initiative is to engage with local community members, to gauge their appetite for longer-term permanent greening measures, including management and maintenance.

A series of parklets and street trees will be planted in movable containers alongside the greening of fixed spaces up and down the high street. This will provide greening, shading, colour and fun. The green spaces can be designed with integrated seating and co-located with signage and other graphic elements to provide wayfinding and spots to dwell and socialise. The underpass is one such fixed spot which could be planted and used alongside the mobile sites.

The garland of micro sites combining in-ground planting, window boxes, wildlife boxes, street planters, mini-parklets and green walls along the high street can act as multifunctional islands of green. This will create small areas of habitat acting as stepping stones for pollinators and other wildlife, increasing biodiversity, enhancing Brent's Bee Corridor and leading to the local nature reserve at The Grange and beyond.





Mobile

Enabling active management, moved and deployed in different locations - thereby avoiding being colonised by anti-social behaviour.

Colourful

Injecting fun, animating the public realm, providing a point of interest and social interaction.

Green

Made of robust and sustainable materials and incorporating green infrastructure to add more greening in to Neasden Lane and test locations for longer term / permanent green measures.

Hyperlocal air quality improvement

Through planting buffers, green walls and suitable plant specification, e.g. Verbena and Lavender to encourage bees and birds, succulents, creeping ivy to absorb for particulate matter.

Place Identity

Creatively designed with a visual identity that speaks to the character and ambition of Neasden Lane

Street Furniture

- Moveable furniture allowing people to dwell on the street in a managed, timed way

Planted Seating

- Moveable planters incorporating lighting and seating

Planted Storage

- Moveable & secure storage units housing the street furniture



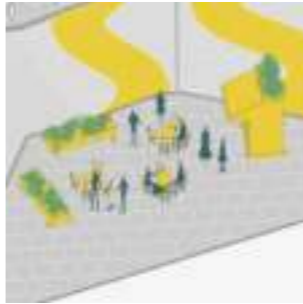



Engagement & Partnerships

Early engagement told us:

- There is a need for more green spaces and a more attractive environment overall
- More appealing green spaces for families
- No space to dwell in Neasden
- Would like appealing features like a living wall

£ 165,000

1-2 Years

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships
Project	A Moveable Feast	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brent Council Neasden Network 	Capacity building Co-authorship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Community gardeners
	High Street Gardening Days & Community Gardening Group	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brent Council 	Co-design Co-authorship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Neasden Residents High Street Businesses Community gardeners
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	Co-ordinated Waste Management Strategy	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brent Council Town Centre Manager 	Stewardship Community Pride	Neasden Residents High Street Businesses
	Host a window/bird box	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brent Council Neasden Collective 	Stewardship Community Pride	High Street Businesses

Precedents



Mobile Arboretum Cheapside

These engaging, temporary and mobile gardens explored the role of urban greening in a busy city environment incorporating trees and drought tolerant planting. The installation reflected local site histories in its design and narrative.



George's Square Pocket Park Baker Street, London

This site has been transformed through a series of low cost, flexible and imaginative interventions creating a place for nature to thrive and for people to connect in a busy city location.



Better Air Benches Borough Market

Commissioned as part of a Low Emissions Neighbourhood project, this suite of colourful and mobile street furniture combining seating and planting raised awareness of using low emissions routes across the Bankside Neighbourhood.



Palmers Green Action Team London

Palmers Green Action team is a group of local volunteers who got together to help the high street thrive, making changes so that it could once again be the heart of the community. This ensured that local residents were represented when decisions were made for the high street.



Neasden Market



The idea of Neasden as a market destination has come up several times during our early engagement. There have been previous pre-applications for a temporary market in this area.

A regular market can draw footfall to the area, whilst boosting local spend in the neighbouring shops. Specialist markets like antiques/bric-a-brac, art and craft, vintage clothing or food markets have a wide appeal, create a reason to visit and complement the local offer.

The form of the town centre lends itself to programming market days in the central area, which is currently used as car parking. Whilst a good idea principle, a successful outcome for this proposal rests on rationalising the car parking from the current diagonal bays, and the effective movement of traffic around Neasden Lane.



Programme

Annual programme run by Brent Council's Market team and/or independent markets

Local Entrepreneurs

Digital engagement campaign via TikTok / other social media platform to attract the next generation of entrepreneurs



Murals

- Implement market signage through collaboration with local artists and creators

A Civic Square

- Pedestrianise the centre through traffic re-routing on market days creating a lively, safe and activated town centre

Market Stalls

- Pitches to be provided at affordable rates, minimum of 80% of stallholders from Brent

Market Infrastructure

- Power is run in the ground to accesible points on the pavement for market stalls to connect to



Engagement & Partnerships

Early engagement told us:

- Trial a market in Neasden to create a destination and a reason to visit
- There have been previous pre-applications for a temporary market in this area
- A regular market can draw footfall to the area, whilst boosting local spend on the high street
- Neasden’s diversity could be brought out by creating a specialist market
- Build on the successes of the Neasden festival, last held in 2022
- Need to sort out the movement of traffic around Neasden Lane and people along the pavements.
- Use the broad pavements to create a day and night market
- Neasden is severed and ‘pocketed in’ which hampers trading and places to convene like markets

 £ 122,000

 1-2 Years

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships
Project	Neasden Market			
			Community Pride	Neasden Colletive Neasden Network Local entrepreneurs Transport for London
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	Feast Markets & Festivals			
			Community Pride Capacity Building	Neasden Network Local entrepreneurs
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	Brief Writing, Funding Applications & Crowdfunding			
			Community Pride Capacity Building Stewardship	Neasden Collective Neasden Network Local entrepreneurs

Precedents



East Street Market

A traditional and bustling South London market and thriving community hub. It is a welcoming space where locals and visitors alike can meet, sit, talk, and enjoy delicious street food, fresh fruit and vegetables, African clothing and vintage goods.



Feast

West Norwood Feast is a community managed market that happens monthly between April and December. It is run almost entirely by volunteers who book the stalls and organise a full programme of free children's activities and live entertainment. It is a farmer's market, a craft fair, a flea market and a street food hub all rolled into one.



Bohemia Market

Hackney

An independently run market since 2017, with community at its centre, showcasing local businesses small artisan traders, sustainable products and street food vendors. Market series such as Black Owned, Hackney Vegan and Wasted Chic.



London Makers Market

London

A convenient platform for the conscious consumer by hosting markets and features. Showcasing a range of beautiful artisan products from small businesses and independent makers enabling a sustainable lifestyles and supporting creative businesses.

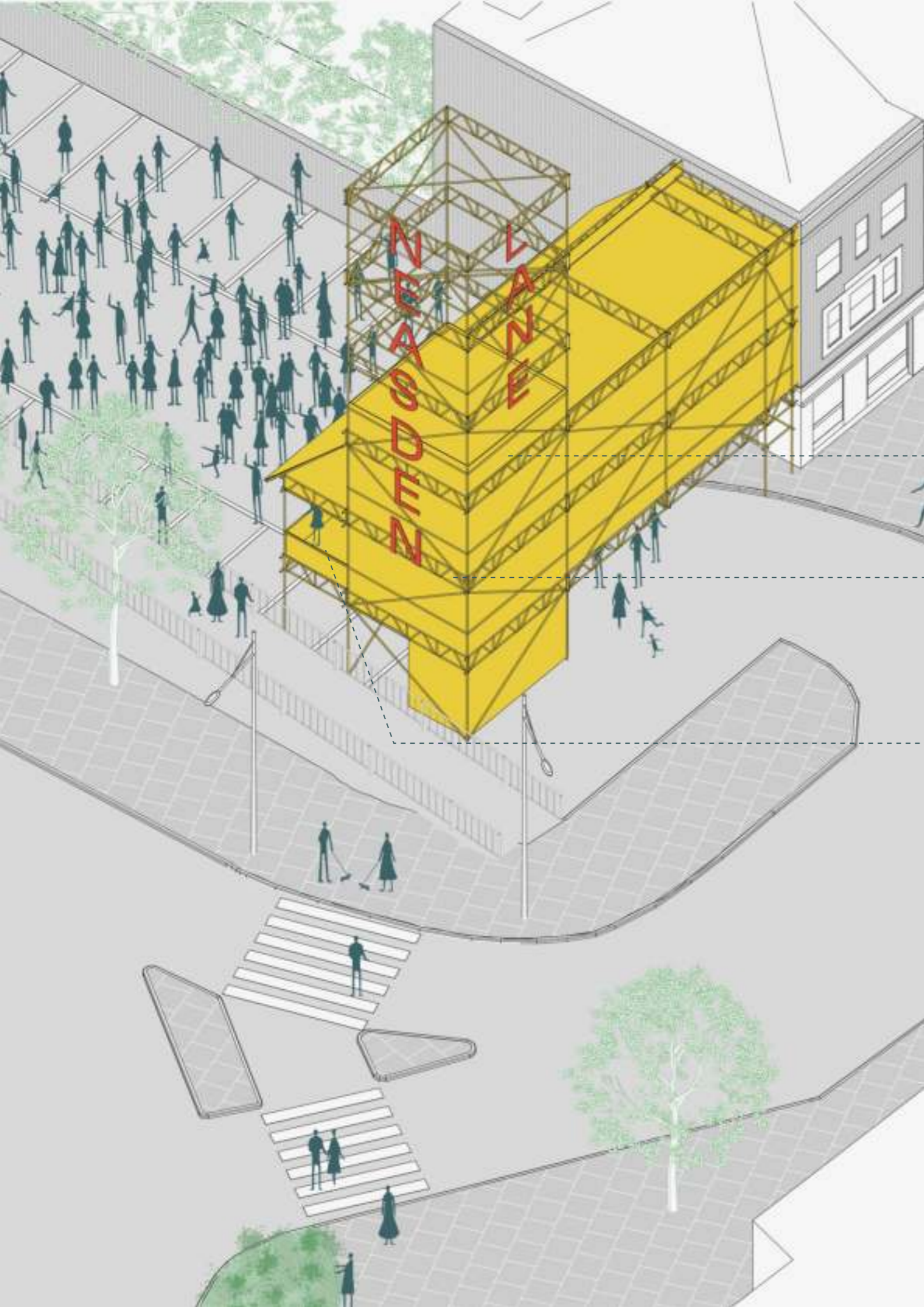


The Lighthouse



The Lighthouse is a meanwhile and demountable community pavilion, a multi-functional beacon to celebrate community and culture. Built within the town centre car park, the building takes up just 3 car parking spaces, and with its tall, brightly coloured form, is an identifiable landmark and gateway for Neasden town centre. Strictly for fun and community building, the conception and delivery of this folly offers opportunities for co-design and community build, and creates a high street anchor, a welcoming civic space, with a mixed programme of round-the-clock activities where people can meet, socialise and celebrate.

The intention for the building is to test innovative ways in which to pivot the high street to create a more diverse high street offer. The car park site is Brent-owned and earmarked for future housing. Depending on when this planned development comes forward, the design and programme for the meanwhile building could adapt, build and grow.



Circular Economy

A low-cost demountable structure with a minimal carbon footprint, sized to sit above standard car parking bays, it has the potential to be re-established elsewhere as a catalyst for growth.

Neasden Festival

The structure provides a central hub for Neasden Festival. The car park could be closed off to provide viewing space for artists to perform on the public balcony.

Signage Beacon

- A lightweight tower marking the entrance to the high street, giving Neasden a new identity and aiding orientation and wayfinding

Community Performance and Exhibition Space

- Flexible spaces for different programmes of activity like plays, concerts and other cultural events

Public Balcony

- A balcony facing the car park provides performance external performance space facing a public square on days the car park is closed off to cars.



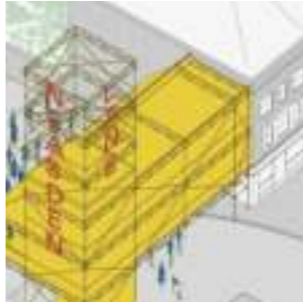

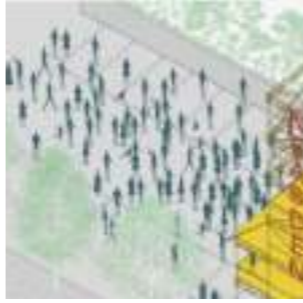






Engagement & Partnerships

Early engagement told us:

- Brent is the home of British Black Music. A long-term opportunity/aspiration exists to create a cultural anchor in the borough
- Reggae as a culture was predominantly hosted within the Caribbean community and is now becoming historic
- Turn legacy of Reggae into a meaningful narrative for Neasden today, by linking it to modern music genres and key socio-economic outputs.

 £ 1,110,000

 2 Years

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships	
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	The Lighthouse			Co-authorship Co-design Community Pride	Cultural Operators Local Artists Neasden Network Local Residents
	Neasden Festival			Co-authorship Community Pride Stewardship	Neasden Network Local Artists Neasden Collective Local Residents
	Neasden Reggae Museum Exhibitions & Events			Community Pride Stewardship	Local Artists Cultural Operators
	Cultural Programmes		 	Community Pride Capacity Building	Neasden Network Local Residents

Precedents



Potemkin Theatre Hackney

This small theatre draws on the changing use and cultural significance of the canalside location and presents a bold face to the Regent's Canal in London. On one side the canal frontage has a flat, abstract image; the other side open galleries overlook the rooftop and surrounds. The theatre was constructed over 25 days with the help of a team of volunteers.



Level Up Croatia

Designed to be a new place for locals in Rijeka, Croatia to socialise, it turns a previously disused rooftop area into a terrace. The pavilion, which doubles as street furniture, is formed of a series of levels linking up to an elevated terrace built on the roof. Different places and surfaces for visitors to sit, swing or relax in a hammock are placed all along the extended staircase to the top of the structure.



Theatre on the Fly Chichester

An experimental temporary venue for a season of new theatre built in the grounds of Chichester Festival Theatre. Built by a group of volunteers whose ages ranged from 16 to 68, the design used accessible processes and economic materials to maximise the involvement of the theatre's many supporters and create a generous space within a tight budget.



Horst Festival Belgium

A stage for the Horst Festival. Utilising a scaffold system for a budget of 10,000 euros a temporary structure was erected providing a dynamic, performance space with flanking viewing platforms. The structure was affordable but proved to be extremely effective in producing festival and performance space.



Visual Identity & Wayfinding



A strong and meaningful visual identity can celebrate civic pride, foster a communal sense of belonging, and spark a culture of creativity. We propose the commissioning of a strong visual identity for Neasden, with a subsequent public art and wayfinding project to animate and enhance the unique qualities of the town centre to create a visually stimulating environment. Pedestrian approaches into the Town Centre are poor, particularly the main route from Neasden Underground station to the town centre, which is negotiated by crossing a busy gyratory system with no surface-level crossings and a series of convoluted elevated footbridges. A key part of this proposal is addressing these issues by improving people's experience of these routes, and the connection to and from the town centre through a strong, clear and legible wayfinding strategy. Contemporary and engaging public art will complement this strategy and contribute to how Neasden is perceived and will derive inspiration from the fundamental identity of Neasden as a place and the communities who live here.



Rooftop and Facade Signage

- Large scale signage on either the rooftop or the facade of the Ritz Kitchen helps with identity and orientation at the heart of the high street



Murals

- Long-term community involvement in public spaces through co-design of public spaces.
- Engaging with local artists to produce art works and murals on blank facades along the high street that aid wayfinding and orientation

A High Street Identity

- Manifest Neasden's visual and spiritual identity in the public realm through a wayfinding and public art commission, which reflects its vibrant community and unique character.
- Engage with local artists to produce painted floor textures that orientate you with in Neasden and bring a new identity to the town centre



Signage Beacon

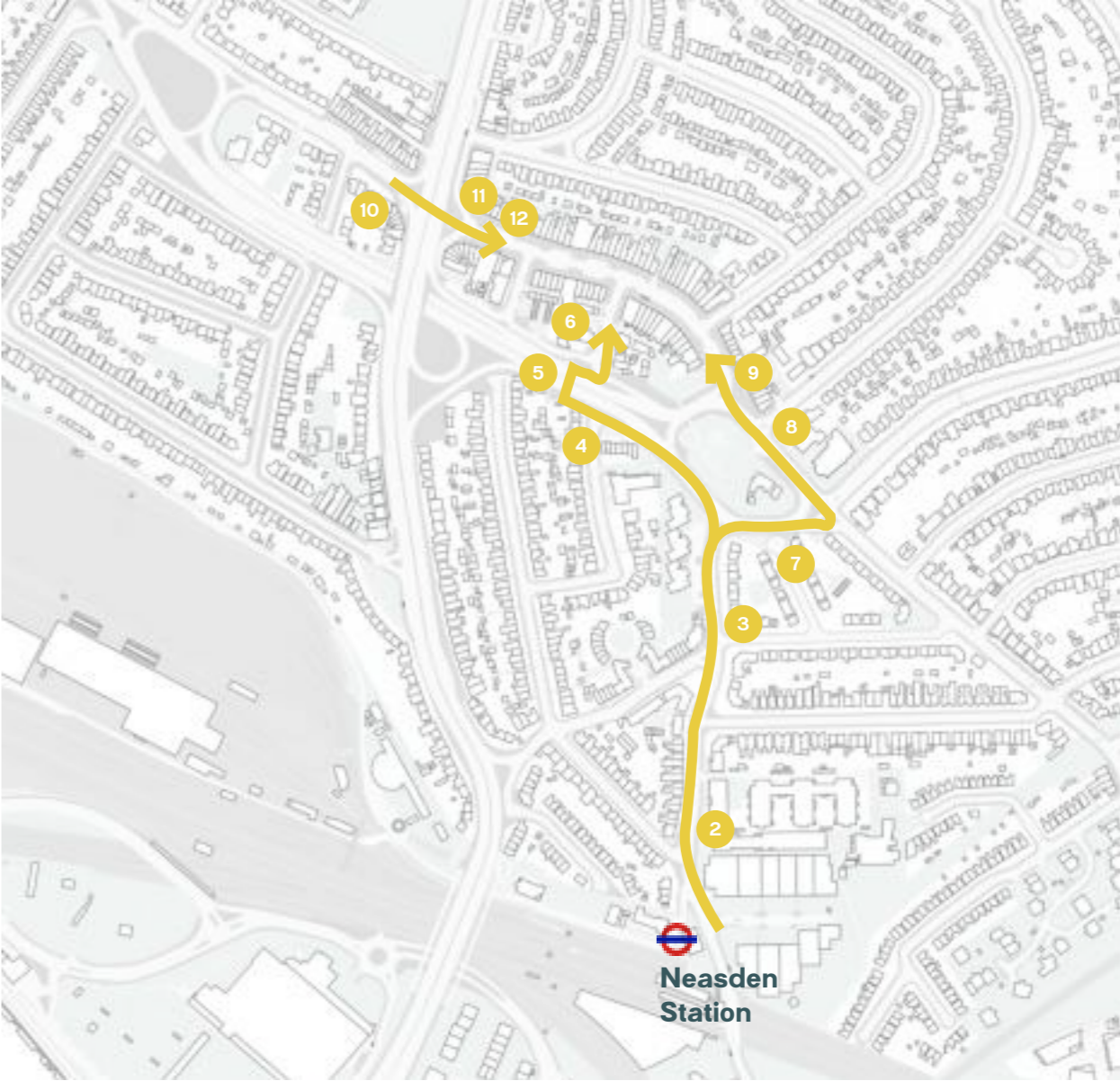
- A lightweight tower marking the entrance to the high street, giving Neasden a new identity and aiding orientation and wayfinding

Clear Routes

- Address need for Neasden's routes and spaces to be punctuated and defined by distinctive landmarks and identifying features such as graphics, wayfinding and public art, to help with legibility.
- Improving the experience of walking and cycling routes, to and from the town centre through a strong, clear and legible wayfinding strategy
- Use painted floor markings and signage to create clear, legible routes guiding visitors from the station to Neasden Town Centre



Getting to Neasden Town Centre



Visual Identity: Roots to Routes

Meaningful community engagement to achieve buy-in and promote inclusivity will help to produce a strong visual identity, wayfinding and public art commission that reflects the community it belongs to. This element has exciting potential to bring out what is authentic about Neasden and shape its identity for the future.

A dynamic logo that combines elements of roads and tree roots, symbolising the intertwining of routes and roots.

A colour palette inspired by the natural environment and the cultural vibrancy of Neasden, using greens for sustainability, vibrant colours for diversity, and earth tones for heritage.

Imagery that showcases the diversity of the community, green spaces, cultural festivals, and the architectural character of Neasden.













Engagement & Partnerships

Early engagement told us:

- Pedestrian entrances and arrivals from Neasden station to the high street are underwhelming or absent
- Poor connection and legibility for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly from station to high street
- Some would rather drive to the tube station than having to walk via the high street
- Clear wayfinding and signage connecting the station, high street and underpass is needed
- Make going to the high street a desire line
- Unsafe crossing locations at the gyratory, with pedestrians regularly climbing over railing to cross
- No 'wow factor' or public welcome as part of the civic space
- Improvements to pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure in Neasden Town Centre to enhance safety, accessibility, and connectivity
- Neasden isn't a 'pretty' place, there is nothing to make people come here. We need a rebrand!

 £ 150,000

 1 Year

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships	
Project	A Visual Identity for Neasden		 	Co-authorship Co-design Community Pride	Local Businesses Local Artists Local Makers
	Wayfinding		 	Co-authorship Co-design Community Pride	Local Businesses Local Residents
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	High Street Twinning/exchange visits			Community Pride	Local Residents Local Businesses BIDS
	Community Mural Painting			Community Pride Capacity Building Co-authorship Co-design	Neasden Network Local Artists Local Residents

Precedents



Tooley Street Triangle

London Bridge

Conceived as a map come to life, it transforms an overlooked piece of pavement into a local landmark and meeting point. It has three elements: a scale map of the area around London Bridge printed onto the pavement, a giant signpost with local directions and information on it, and a bench for passers-by to take a breather.



Southbank Centre

London

A new visual identity for London cultural institution Southbank Centre to give it a more "consistent" and less "complex" brand and identity which aimed to represent a more modern way of considering art, where particular disciplines are not "confined to particular buildings", "nor performances to a stage or audiences to seats"



Stratford Placemaking

Stratford

This project was part of the LB Newham's two-year commitment to public realm improvements working in partnership with Stratford Original. The aim was to make the town centre more welcoming and the large, brightly coloured murals on the Broadway shopfronts are part of a wider strategy delivered over two years.



Brent Cross Wayfinding

Brent

The exuberant wayfinding graphics guide people from London's Brent Cross tube station to a new residential, business and recreational development. Designed as a response and activation of Brent Cross Town's aims to be an unrivaled multisport destination. The goal was to capture the spirit of play and bring a bit of joy to the neighbourhood.

Addressing the Themes – Short Term Proposals

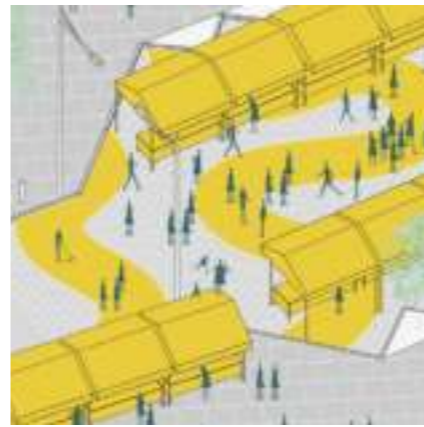
1 The Ritz Urban Rooms & Kitchen



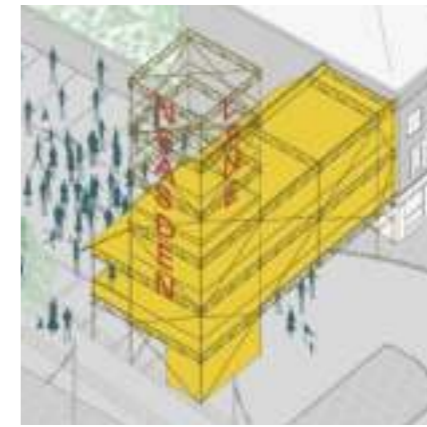
2 A Moveable Feast



3 Neasden Market



4 The Lighthouse



5 Visual Identity & Wayfinding



AUTHORSHIP & REPRESENTATION

Existing & New Communities	the Ritz is a community building that serves the needs and wants of the existing demographic of Neasden residents while also providing a unique and rich high street offering not currently provided for elsewhere locally which will bring new residents and visitors to use Neasden High Street	By establishing Neasden High Street as a green town centre in Brent, it will become more appealing to both existing and new communities in the local area	The Market will provide a stepping stone for local businesses to exhibit and sell goods and services. It will also provide an additional reason to visit Neasden, drawing in people from other local communities	A vibrant new beacon of community, identity and culture with space and programmes to showcase Neasden's community, diversity, culture and collaboration. The Lighthouse will reflect the existing culture of Neasden while also pulling in people from new communities being established locally to see performances, exhibitions etc.	The Visual Identity will reflect the vibrant and varied existing communities that make up Neasden
Co-Design	The concept for this proposal is informed by the engagement. The brief and design will be further developed with and alongside the local community to establish co-authorship and build capacity	Opportunities to shape the concept, proposals, commission and upkeep with the local community. The proposal promotes co-design and stewardship with local residents/businesses.	The types of market on offer will be defined through engagement with the local community	Opportunities to shape the concept, proposals, commission and programming with the local community	The local residents and business must be at the heart of a considered and well designed Place and visual identity that speaks to the character and ambition of Neasden Lane
Authorship	The Neasden Collective are already established as the custodians of the Ritz Kitchen and have galvanised to make initial inquiries with the landlord	The measures offer opportunities for the community to galvanise in a volunteering capacity to help adopt, manage and maintain the streetscape.	The market offer can be tested and curated over time, providing opportunities for local entrepreneurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible and local cultural/community/event space • Opportunity to nurture local skills/talent pipeline for young people • Cultural partnerships and delivery programme with local and regional organisations such as Reggae Museum, British Museum, UD, Museum of Migration seed Brent Cultural anchor for Black British Music Heritage • Partnership with local youth, music and radio organisations 	An identity is not a stagnant thing, it will evolve and adapt over time through local authorship
Social Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting local entrepreneurship • Accessible ground floor community space • Affordable workspace in partnership with local youth, music and radio organisations • Building skills and talent pipeline for local young people • Community rooftop gardening offers opportunity to tackle social isolation and skills sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public realm improved • Urban Greening Factor increase • Increased green space • SUDs planting • Community participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for local start-ups • Trader recruits using TikTok/other social media to attract new a young generation of entrepreneurs • Stalls provided at low cost • Min 80% local traders 		Celebrating and reflecting the fundamental identities of Neasden as a place and the communities who live here

		The Ritz Urban Rooms & Kitchen	A Moveable Feast	Neasden Market	The Lighthouse	Visual Identity & Wayfinding
 PUBLIC REALM	Public Realm	The Ritz will become the custodians of the area of street in-front of it, activating it with street furniture and planting. The building itself will also act as an extension of the street and public life of Neasden	The appearance of Neasden High Street will be significantly improved, boosting local pride and perception of the public realm	Rationalising the car parking in the town centre to make way for generous civic uses, such as regular specialty markets, will create a habitual reason to visit Neasden and dwell in the town centre, promoting gathering, identity, community events and footfall	On special event days the car park can be closed off to enable it to act as a new public square adjacent to the building, hosting festivals and performances	The proposal will make the public realm more accessible and increase footfall
	Access and Connectivity	With it's position at the heart of the high street, the Ritz Kitchen provides an anchor point for community and civic life on the high street	A Moveable Feast provides a characterful suite of planting to aid wayfinding and navigation to and through the town centre.	—	Car parking spaces are retained, the location is also adjacent to local bus stops	Clear wayfinding connects hard to find areas and improves enjoyment and perception of Neasden and its surroundings
	Exploiting Local Assets	As an un-used building on the high street, The Ritz Kitchen takes advantage of existing, under exploited assets	A Moveable Feast takes advantage of the wide pavements on Neasden High Street, populating and activating it without interrupting movement	Neasden High Street is unique in having particularly generous pavement and road widths. The generosity of the public realm allows it to become a meaningful civic space populated by a market,	The Lighthouse activates an existing, underused piece of public land while retaining the parking in the short term.	Existing lamp posts are used to hold new signage, large solid areas of walls are used to paint murals and wayfinding elements
	Green Space	The rooftop will become a lush communtiy garden used for training, workshops and education	Attractive, clean and green streetscape with colour, character and interest, using interesting planting to mitigate air pollution	—	There is opportunity to improve the green areas around the lighthouse and car park as part fo the project	—
 CLIMATE & ECOLOGY	Re-use and Demountability	Where possible existing walls, floors and ceilings will be retained or re-used in the design. Careful consideration will be given to imaginative re-use of materials	As temporary and mobile objects, A Moveable Feast will consider reuse and demountability as part of their design features	Sustainable material will be used for market stalls, with speciality markets for local producers, artisan crafts, green and eco-products	The lighthouse is designed as a fully demountable structure. If the site is developed in the future the project can be dismantled and re-assebled elsewhere. Designed to standard parking bays it could sit neatly in other car parks locally.	Signage is designed to be demountable and moveable so it can react to how Neasden changes over time
	Ecology and Green Space	Plant species on the roof garden will be carefully selected to contribute to local ecology and biodiversity	Plant species will be carefully selected to contribute to the local ecology and biodiversity and feed into Brent itiations like the Brent Bee Corridor	—	The Car Park does have existing greenry around its edges, there is opportunity to build on this and increase the biodiversity in the area	—
	Sustainable Travel	Centrally located building accessible by bus, bicycle and train/tube. Bike storage will be provided nearby.	—	Centrally located, accessible by bus, bicycle and train/tube	Centrally located, accessible by bus, bicycle and train/tube	Signage will focus on promoting sustainable travel methods
	SUDS and biodiversity	The existing rooftops will be greened where possible to contribute to the wider SUDS strategy	A moveable feast looks to provide stepping stones for pollinators and other wildlife. Given the increase in greenery, the scheme aims to contribute to the wider SUDS strategy	—	Drainage will be considered so as not to negatively impact on drainage systems and strategies	—
	Zero Carbon	Both operational and embodied carbon are taken into account. Where possible the building will be upgraded to reduce operational carbon requirements over the coming years using materials with low embodied carbon, locally sourced where possible	Low embodied carbon materials are ued where possible	Low embodied carbon materials are ued where possible	Designs will ensure a highly energy efficient building making use of bioclimatic architecture and passive concepts, provide renewable energy on site whenever possible, using energy efficiency of appliances and lighting, and considering embedded carbon.	Low embodied carbon materials are ued where possible

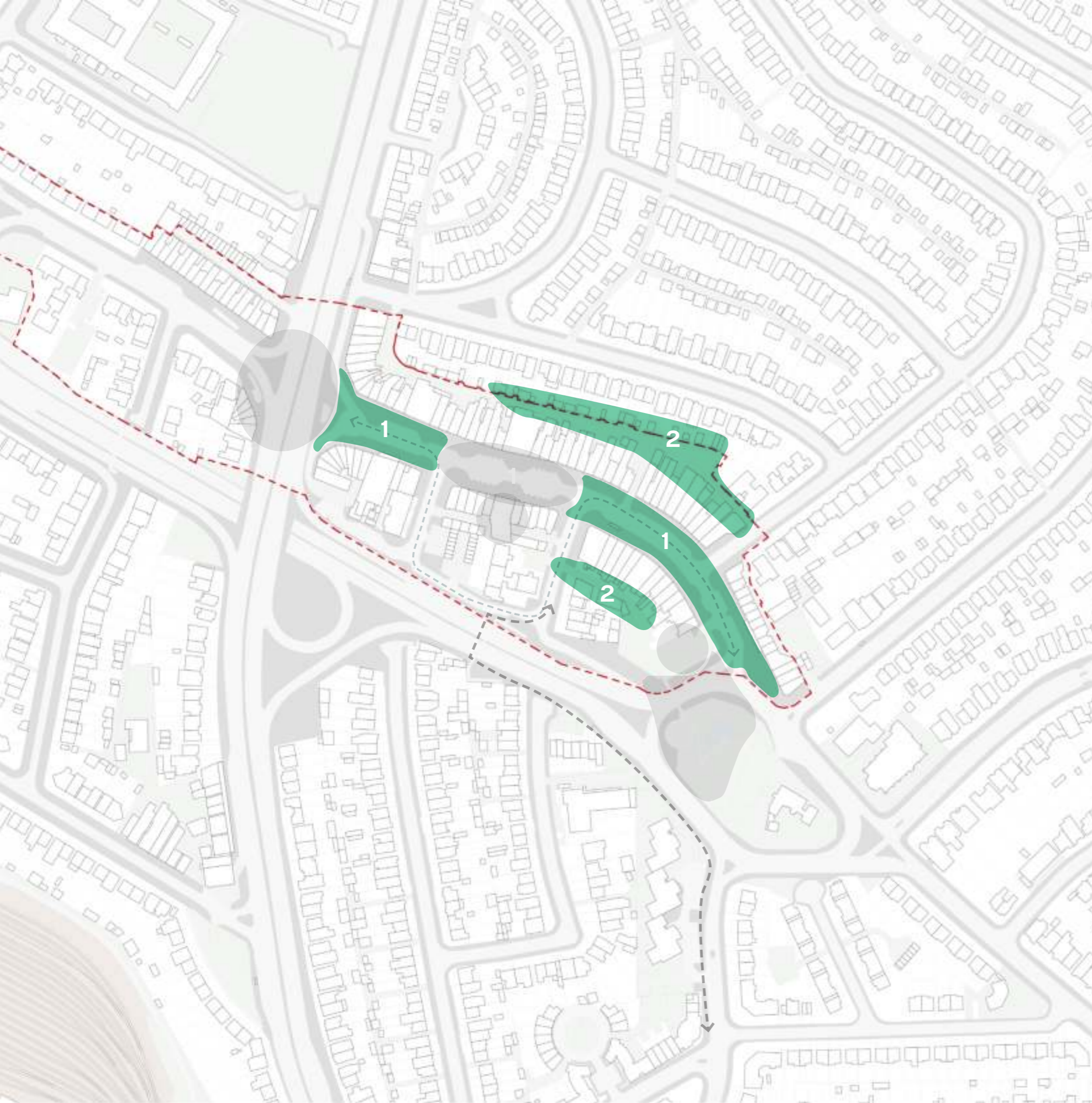




3.3

MEDIUM TERM PROPOSALS

3. ACTIONS



Medium Term Proposals

This phase focuses on greening the high street with Pocket Forests and a variety of different kinds of green spaces with dry, gravel and rain gardens, each promoting green measures such as drought tolerant planting, water attenuation and reuse of materials. These activations build on the previous phase, 'A Moveable Feast', having tested locations, plant species, wayfinding and biodiversity principles, and making them a more established set of features of the townscape.

1. 
**Pocket Forests &
Gardens**

2. 
**Alleyways &
Garage Spaces**



Pocket Forests & Gardens



Building on the pilot initiatives from Phase 1, the next phase proposals are to weave in-ground green infrastructure to transform Neasden Lane into a more climate-resilient neighbourhood. These are themed under three key headlines which collectively can help address the multitude of climate risks faced by Neasden.

Pocket Forests – trees and their canopies characterise some parts of Neasden Lane, notably on the gyratory at The Grange (where the overpass traverses through a tree canopy as it sweeps down to the pond area on the roundabout). There are a number of small pockets of residual space in the wider site area that could accommodate small stands or pockets of trees. The Urban Heat Island Effect is affecting cities increasingly each year. Urban forests can reduce this heating effect quite dramatically.

Gravel Gardens – there are a number of locations in Neasden that are very exposed and dry and would lend themselves to being re imagined as dry gardens, with plants growing in sand and gravel. The principal site for this is at the eastern end of the underpass. If there is any demolition happening locally that would result in crushed concrete this could add to sustainability credentials. Growing in gravel and sand is becoming increasingly prevalent as a tool in designing with climate resilience in mind.

Rain Gardens and de-paving – there are many places along Neasden Lane and in the side-streets off it where hard paving can be removed and green infrastructure retrofitted into the streetscape – either through the implementation of rain gardens or through more simple de-paving initiatives. Both offer a range of environmental and amenity benefits, Rain gardens are a powerful tool in urban greening and flood management. These rain gardens play a pivotal role in mitigating flooding caused by surface water runoff and in purifying water as it percolates through the soil.





Air Pollution

Mitigate air pollution issues through active travel, green infrastructure and enhancing biodiversity.

Ecology & Biodiversity

A garland of micro sites combining in-ground planting, window boxes, wildlife boxes and mini-parklets acting as islands of green habitat and stepping stones for wildlife, increasing biodiversity, enhancing Brent's Bee Corridor and leading to the local nature reserve

Community

The community growing group established on the rooftop garden of Unit 277 can play a pivotal role in the plant selection and management of the urban greening measures.

Rain Gardens /SUDs (Sustainable

• Urban Drainage systems)

Areas of hard landscaping are removed in favour of rain gardens which mitigate flood risk and purify water as it percolates through the soil

Pocket Forests

- Using wider sections of public realm and 'forgotten' spaces to introduce pockets of trees to combat the heat island effect and improve biodiversity





Gravel Gardens

- With a focus on circular economy, demolition from the urban greening interventions is crushed and used in a new garden in the existing underpass.

High Street Greening

- Greenery is implemented along the full length of the high street, giving Neasden a new identity as one of the greenest High Streets in Brent.

Pocket Parks

- Taking advantage of underused corners of Neasden to intensify greening, improved drainage and build upon local biodiversity and ecology.

The Nature Reserve


- The existing nature reserve is celebrated and managed to increase local awareness and number of visitors.











Engagement & Partnerships

Early engagement told us:

- There is a need for more green spaces and a more attractive environment overall
- Pedestrian entrances and arrivals from Neasden station to the high street are underwhelming or absent No 'wow factor' or public welcome as part of the civic space
- Neasden is not a 'pretty' place and that there is nothing to make people come here.

 £ 515,600

 4-5 Years

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships	
Project	Pocket Forests and Gardens		 	Community Pride Capacity Building Stewardship	Green Infrastructure Provider Neasden Network Brent Council Local Residents
	High Street Gardening Days & Community Gardening Group			Co-design Co-authorship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Neasden Residents High Street Businesses Community gardeners
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	Co-ordinated Waste Management Strategy		 	Stewardship Community Pride	Neasden Residents High Street Businesses
	Nature Trails			Community Pride Stewardship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Neasden Residents Community gardeners

Precedents



Royal Docks Raingarden

Rain Gardens are incorporated as part of the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) plan. Implemented across 5 phases, over 50 varieties of trees, shrubs and plants were used in the first phase including 5,000 plants in total! As the plants establish and bloom, they enhance the area's visual appeal while also serving as a vital food source for pollinators, thereby contributing to biodiversity.



A Flight Folly

An installation that aims to improve the visibility of Barnet's greenery and connect people with green spaces. It draws upon the Barnet district's aviation history and connection to the Royal Air Force. The structures connect several meters above ground level in the shape of 'flight paths'.



Guys Hospital Biodiversity Garden

A colourful garden on the entrance road to Guy's Hospital, made from recycled demolition material. Utilising ecological principles to match plants to the low-nutrient mounded rubblescapes, a series of drought tolerant plants have been used to create a robust evolving garden, brightening a much-needed plant-filled space.



Sugi Heritage Forest

Kensington

The forest will revive the UK's endangered flora, nurture pollinators vital for food production, and grow medicinal herbs known to bring balance back to body, mind, and spirit. The forest will be a green space for local neighbours to find quiet moments of respite and to take in the joys of nature in a vibrant and busy city.



Alleyways & Garage Spaces



The most frequently mentioned challenges in Neasden Town Centre include issues related to street drinking and groups of men hanging around, which contribute to a fear and perception of crime/anti-social behaviour.

Birse Crescent alleyway is a high problem area. Ongoing issues that the police tackle regularly in Neasden centre are centred around drug crime, gang violence, anti-social behaviour, waste management & fly tipping. Crowding out these issues with a variety of early initiatives around security, lighting, cleaning and public realm improvements will not solve the socio-economic issues, but will give an uplift to this part of the town centre that is increasingly becoming a no-go area because of the real and perceived threat of crime. Engaged and active groups in the town centre, like Neasden Collective meet with other groups like local Resident's Associations and Neasden Neighbourhood Watch, and local people are acutely aware of these issues. Neasden Collective have applied for funding to purchase CCTV cameras to be installed in the alleyway as a deterrent.

Our strategy is to crowd out these elements using natural surveillance, programming and co-authorship to overcoming crime and the fear of crime.



Changing Perception

- Activation of garage spaces to increase activity and surveillance
- Security measures such as lockable gates, and CCTV cameras

Combatting Anti-Social Behaviour

- Crowd out anti-social elements using natural surveillance, programming and co-authorship to overcoming crime and the fear of crime.
- 'Problem Oriented Policing' led by Metropolitan Police in partnership with Brent Council Neasden Neighbourhood Watch, Neasden Collective and residents

Clean and Welcoming Spaces

- Better care, surveillance and stewardship to ensure alleyways are clean and cared for
- Upgrade to lighting, waste management (litter-pick days) and greening to improve public realm



Engagement & Partnerships



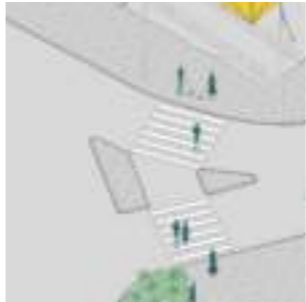







Early engagement told us:

- Operation Nightingale is being deployed in places like Neasden.
- Opportunities for young people to get out of a gang lifestyle are absent.

 £ 39,400

 3-4 Years

Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships
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Project	Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships
Alleyways & Garage Spaces			
		Community Pride Capacity Building Stewardship	Green Infrastructure Provider Neasden Network Brent Council Local Residents
Problem Oriented Policing			
	 	Capacity Building Stewardship	Local Residents Neasden Neighbourhood Watch Local Businesses Brent Council (Community Safety)
Neasden Litter Pick & Lunch			
	 	Community Pride Capacity Building Stewardship	Neasden Collective Local Residents
Neighbourhood Watch			
		Stewardship	Brent Council (Community Safety) Local Residents Local Businesses

Precedents



Breakthrough Purley

'Breakthrough' is a community-led public art installation in a well-used and under-lit narrow laneway that connects the train station to the town centre. The artwork was inspired by the hope and optimism of women of Purley.



Bristol Environmental Crimes Bristol

Bristol Council are working with an environmental enforcement company to tackle environmental crimes. Environmental Enforcement Officers patrol the city to cut down on the crimes and increase environmental awareness. Anyone caught committing an environmental crime, they will be given a fixed penalty notice charge on the spot.



Ray of Light Madrid



A temporary installation that gives a visual perception of a projected beam of light. The project's intention was to give the illusion of an artificial light shining from above made by using over 250 meters of yellow tape, pineapples, painted pieces of art, lawn furniture and a lamp.



The Blue Bermondsey Peoples Mural Southwark

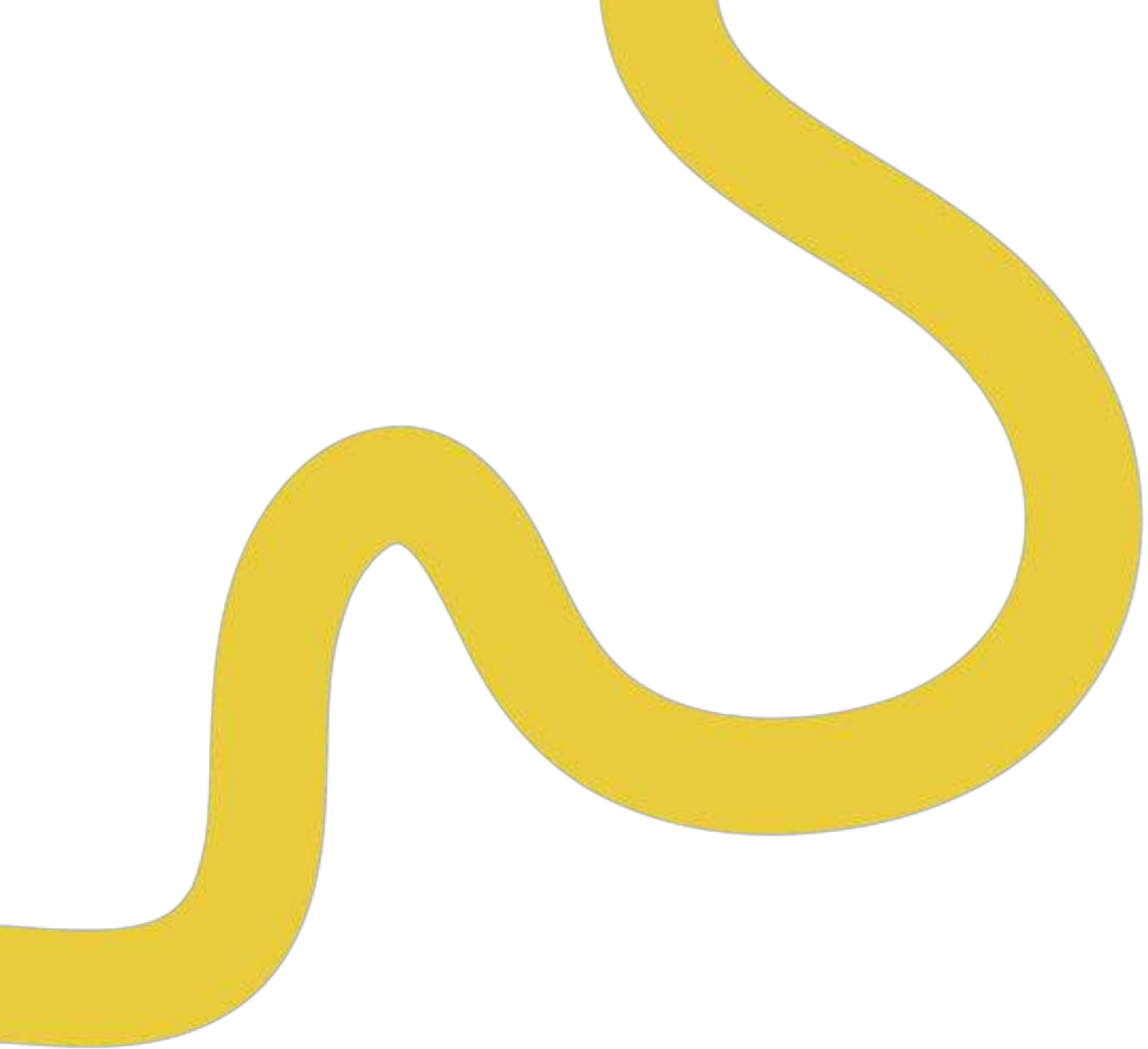
The final element of the Made in Bermondsey regeneration project this community mural celebrates the history and life of South Bermondsey, painted by distinguished mural artist Paul Butler and features legendary Bermondsey reformer Ada Salter.

Addressing the Themes - Medium Term Proposals

<p>1</p> <p>Pocket Forests & Gardens</p> 	<p>2</p> <p>Alleyways & Garage Spaces</p> 
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<p>AUTHORSHIP & REPRESENTATION</p>	<p>Existing & New Communities</p>	<p>By establishing Neasden High Street as a green town centre in Brent, it will become more appealing to both existing and new communities in the local area</p>	<p>Local artists and creatives will be commissioned to design artworks to install in the alleyways. There is potential to involve local schools and youth groups to both design and paint the installations through community events.</p>
	<p>Co-Design</p>	<p>Opportunities to shape the concept, proposals, commission and upkeep with the local community. Co-design and stewardship with local residents/businesses.</p>	
	<p>Authorship</p>	<p>Foster local appetite for permanent greening measures, including stewardship management and maintenance.</p>	
	<p>Social Value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public realm improved Urban Greening Factor increase Increased green space SUDs planting Community participation 	

		Pocket Forests & Gardens	Alleyways & Garage Spaces
<p>PUBLIC REALM</p>	<p>Public Realm</p>	<p>The appearance of Neasden High Street will be significantly improved, boosting local pride and perception of the public realm</p>	<p>The appearance of the alleyways will be significantly improved, boosting perception of the spaces and therefore footfall and use. The proposal aims to take these forgotten spaces and redefine their character and reputation in the local community.</p>
	<p>Access and Connectivity</p>	<p>The proposal provides a characterful suite of planting to aid wayfinding and navigation to and through the town centre.</p>	
	<p>Exploiting Local Assets</p>	<p>The design focusses on areas of the high street as well as forgotten pockets of public realm around Neasden High Street</p>	
	<p>Green Space</p>	<p>Attractive, clean and green streetscape with colour, character and interest, using interesting planting to mitigate air pollution</p>	
<p>CLIMATE & ECOLOGY</p>	<p>Re-use and Demountability</p>	<p>Elements of the design will focus on re-use and using local, unwanted material where possible. The rain gardens can be made from recycled demolition material coming out of other local projects.</p>	<p>The long term vision for the alleyways includes further greening and improving further the aesthetic and perception of them as places to enjoy. As part of the scheme environmental crime enforcement could be implemented. Environmental crimes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dropping litter on the street or from your vehicle: including chewing gum and cigarette butts graffiti: this includes painting or damaging a tree or any road signs flyposting flytipping nuisance parking not putting your domestic or commercial waste out properly breach of a Community Protection Notice dog fouling drinking in a no-drinking area
	<p>Ecology and Green Space</p>	<p>Plant species will be carefully selected to contribute to the local ecology and biodiversity and feed into Brent initiatives like the Brent Bee Corridor</p>	
	<p>Sustainable Travel</p>	<p>—</p>	
	<p>SUDS and biodiversity</p>	<p>The scheme will significantly improve the SUDS strategy along the high street. In addition it looks to provide stepping stones for pollinators and other local wildlife.</p>	
	<p>Zero Carbon</p>	<p>The pocket parks and forests will form mini carbon sinks along the high street</p>	



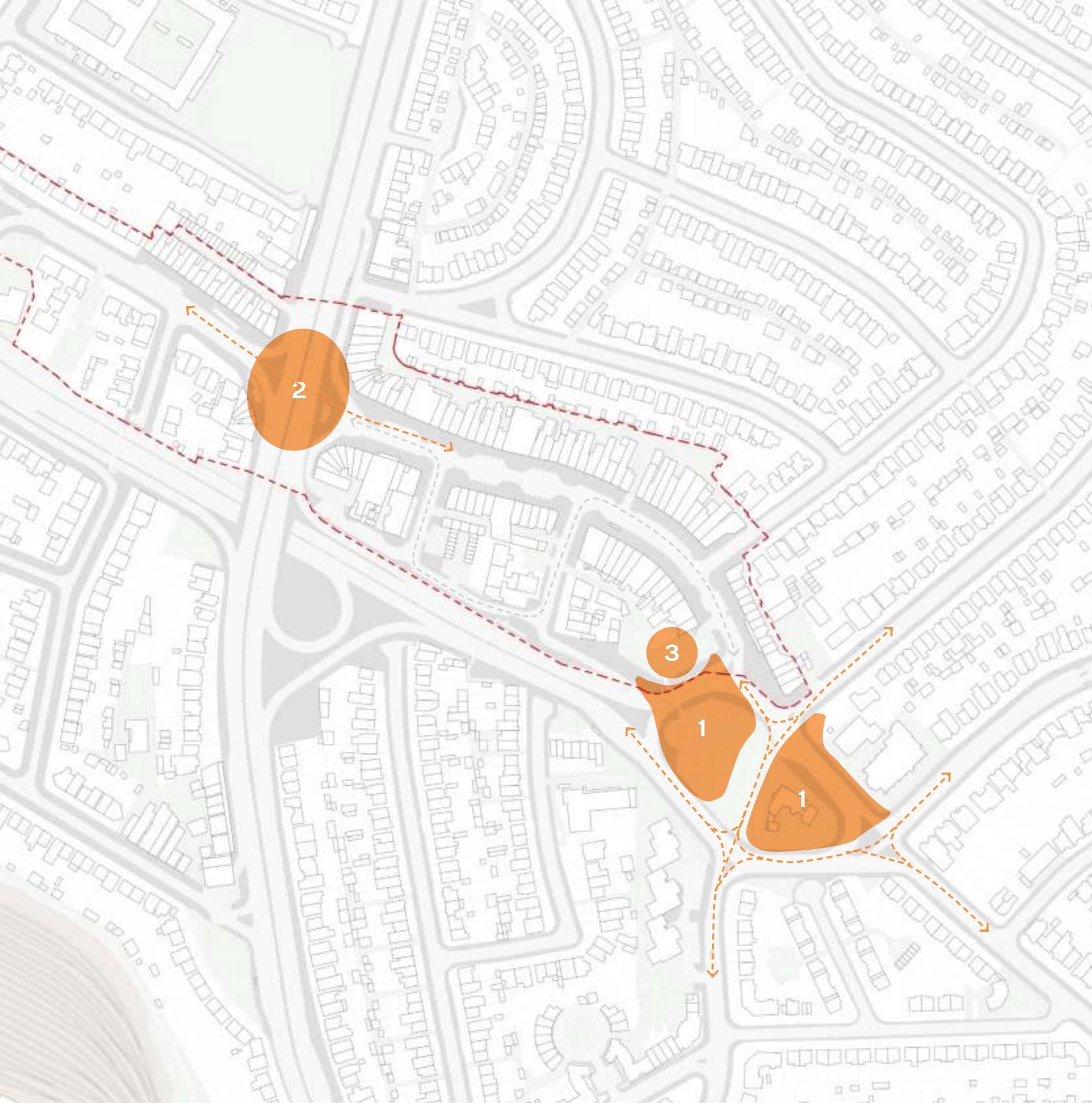
3.4

LONG TERM PROPOSALS

3. ACTIONS



NEASDEN
TOWN
CENTRE



Long Term Proposals

This phase builds on the greening of the last two phases, with the culmination in 3 larger-scale aspirational projects: to create a pronounced linear green connection with North Circular underpass, peninsularisation of the eastern gyratory, reconnecting The Grange back to the high street and a permanent cultural venue The Lighthouse, as part of a future housing development overlooking the Green.

1. 
**The Green at the
Grange**

2. 
The Underpass

3. 
**The Lighthouse
(Permanent) &
Future Development**



The Green at the Grange



The open space at The Grange roundabout is the largest green space in the immediate area and is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. In the 1980s, the London Wildlife Trust converted part of this roundabout into a nature area. This unique yet underutilised asset is accessed from the side near Neasden Parade via a footbridge, but is cut-off and hidden from the town centre because of the dominant and busy highway system.

The nature area includes a pond and wetland plants, wildflower grasslands, screening scrub and mature trees. Several flower species that grow here attract pollinators, adding to Brent's bee corridor. Although the site is rich in wildlife and protected from the surrounding urban activity, it would benefit from some upkeep to elevate its important role as a small nature reserve.

A bold opportunity exists for a comprehensive reconnection of the wider 'island' back to the high street, enhancing the town centre with a more substantially sized green space - revealed, renewed and brought closer to the town. Along with St. Catherine's church, Neasden Montessori School and the Grange Business Centre, the Lighthouse building/car park would face onto this new green, an ideal opportunity to build on its' civic potential to programme and animate the space.

As identified in the Jan Kattein study of 2020, 'Reconnecting The Grange' could be coupled with integrating the southern elbow of Birse Crescent (currently used for servicing and buses), to create a green buffer extending from The Grange between Neasden Lane and the A4088. This buffer could extend across the North Circular to the western end of the high street.





A Town Green

- Renew and protect the nature reserve through upgrade and maintenance
Culmination of the Green Garland urban greening, built on earlier phases (A Moveable Feast and Pockets forest & Gardens) to improve air quality, urban greening and enhance Brent's bee corridor



Create civic clusters

- Re-connect the grange, by peninsularising the gyratory
- Create a reimagined town green bounded by a civic cluster: The Lighthouse, The Grange Business Centre, St. Catharine's Church and former Montessori School
- The Montessori School is a potential development site which could add character and new community/cultural activity to the town centre



Re-establish historic routes

- Realign to the historic street pattern and desire lines across the gyratory

Improve connections


- New, wide at-grade pedestrian and cycle crossings, providing safety and legibility



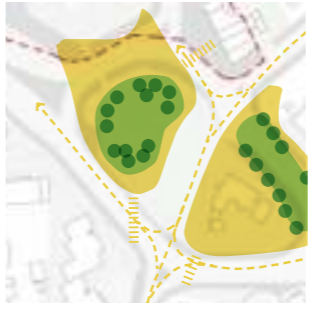







Engagement & Partnerships

Early engagement told us:

- Improvements to pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure to enhance safety, accessibility, and connectivity.
- Neasden is severed and 'pocketed in' This hampers trading, places to convene (markets and dwell spaces) safety, pedestrian comfort and quality of the public realm.
- Some would rather drive to the tube station than having to walk via the high street
- Clear wayfinding and signage connecting the station, high street and underpass
- Make going to the high street a desire line
- Unsafe crossing locations at the gyratory, with pedestrians regularly climbing over railing to cross

 £ 2,730,000

 5+ Years

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships	
Project	The Green at the Grange		 Brent Council	Community Pride Capacity Building Stewardship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Neasden Residents Community gardeners
	Supporting Actions & Initiatives	High Street Gardening Days & Community Gardening Group		 Brent Council	Co-design Co-authorship
Nature Trails			 Brent Council	Community Pride Stewardship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Neasden Residents Community gardeners
Bikeability - Cycle Training for Youth			 Bikeability	Capacity Building	Brent Council Neasden Residents

Precedents



Highbury Corner London

Segregated cycle lanes and a new green public space are introduced. New, wider and 'straight across' pedestrian crossings are implemented with more green space by partially opening the arboretum to public access. A new shared pedestrian/cycle toucan crossing across St Paul's Road to allow two-way cycling.



Phoenix Community Garden London

The Phoenix Garden is a community garden nestled in the heart of the West End. It provides a green retreat from the stresses of the city and a valuable habitat for urban wildlife. A modest garden building provides space for the charity, events, education and storage.



Stockwell Cross London

TfL is improving Stockwell Cross, as one of the 33 busiest and most dangerous junctions. Designed to encourage walking and cycling by providing a dedicated cycle route and creating a new public space. The removal of the gyratory system will help support local investment in the area.



Westfield Opens Nature Reserve London

A pioneering space, the Nature Reserve has been designed to feature a range of diverse horticultural areas. The Nature Reserve hosts a variety of different areas including a wild flower meadow, insect hotels, beehive, fruit trees, vegetable beds, herbs and a pond area

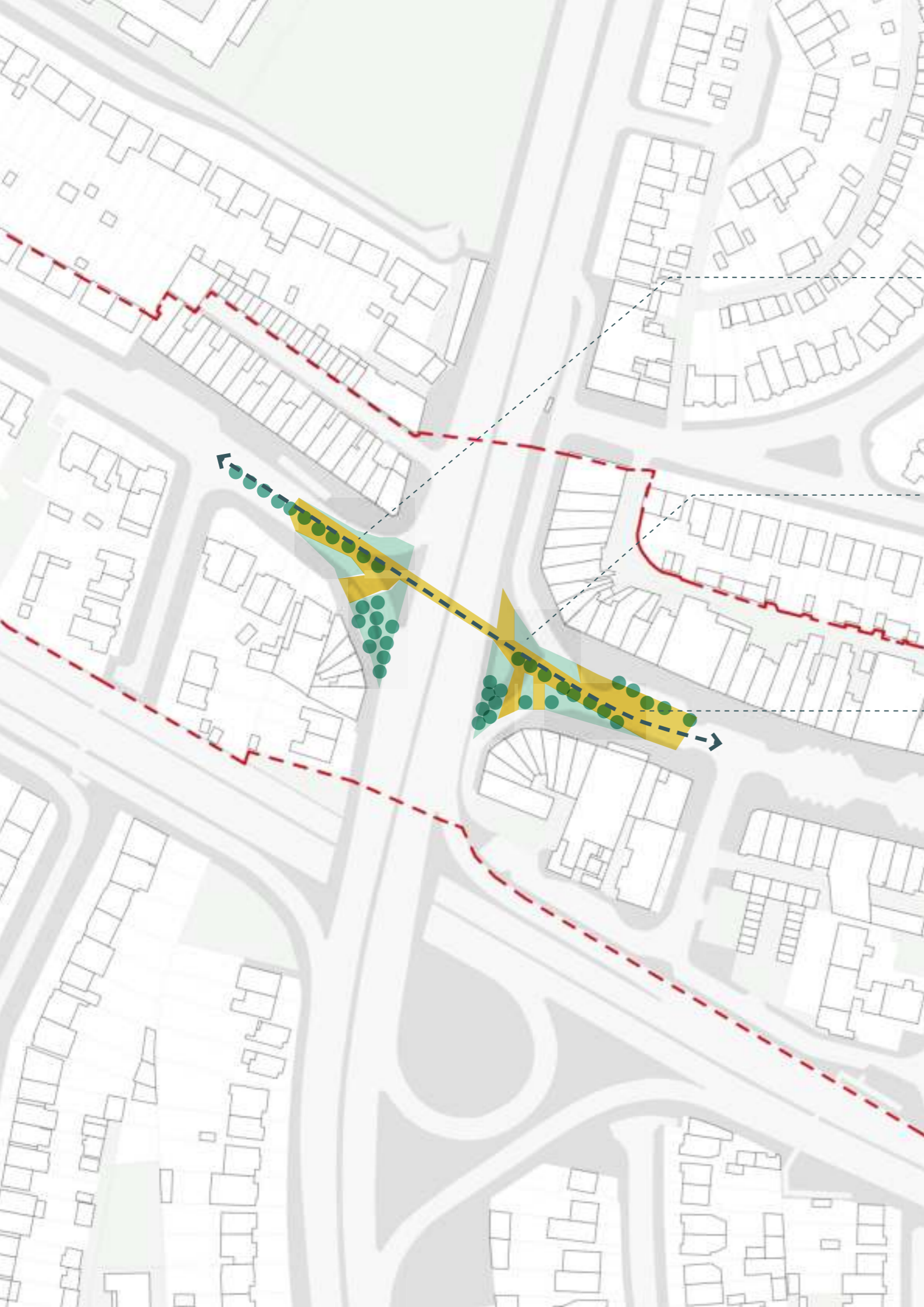


The Underpass



This project was the preferred option, proposed as part of the Wvg Neasden Lane Options study and looks to improve the approaches to the underpass, rationalise the convoluted approaches, improve greening and strengthen the linear connection between the two sides of Neasden Lane.

This is longer-term subway upgrade that sees the creation of a sunken garden landscaped with sloping garden terraces, planted with mixed grasses and flowering plants to create colour and interest. A retaining wall and an 'avenue' of tall trees further strengthens the linear connection between the two sides of Neasden Lane. Trees are also grouped close to the North Circular to act as a screen and noise buffer.



Safety & Visibility

- Upgrade the lighting throughout the underpass
- Improve visibility by straightening out the access points creating a clear linear route

Greening & Ecology

- Implement a terraced approach allowing for new trees and planting
- Integrate soft landscaping into the design, combating air pollution from the North Circular

Pedestrian & Cycle Usability


- Create cycle friendly ramps providing access to the underpass each side of the North Circular
- Excavation of existing carriageway and footway to enable widened approaches



Engagement & Partnerships

Early engagement told us:

- There is a need for more green spaces and a more attractive environment overall
- Pedestrian entrances and arrivals from Neasden station to the high street are underwhelming or absent No 'wow factor' or public welcome as part of the civic space
- Improvements to pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure in Neasden Town Centre to enhance safety, accessibility, and connectivity
- Neasden is severed and 'pocketed in' This hampers trading, places to convene (markets and dwell spaces) safety, pedestrian comfort and quality of the public realm.
- Clear wayfinding and signage connecting the station, high street and underpass
- Make going to the high street a desire line

 £ 1,101,100

 5+ Years

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships	
Project	The Underpass			Community Pride Stewardship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Community gardeners
	High Street Gardening Days & Community Gardening Group			Co-design Co-authorship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Neasden Residents High Street Businesses Community gardeners
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	Nature Trails			Community Pride Stewardship	Brent Council (Parks Team) Neasden Residents Community gardeners
	Bikeability - Cycle Training for Youth			Capacity Building	Brent Council Neasden Residents

Precedents



Happy Street

Nine Elms

With the aspiration to overhaul a "gloomy underpass" in Wandsworth, the Thessaly Road Railway Bridge transforms the underpass into a welcoming space for pedestrians and cyclists, which the local community can be proud of. The richly patterned vitreous enamel panels, and the illumination at night provide a new local landmark, giving users a greater sense of safety and visual enjoyment.



Wassenaar Bicycle Tunnel

Netherlands

This Bicycle tunnel in the Netherlands, opened in 2017 forms a pedestrian and cycle route that runs under a busy road. The tunnel allows direct and clear vision through its full extent increasing the feeling of safety as you enter. Mosaics line the walls while low and high level lighting ensure its well lit.



Bergen Cycle Tunnel

With its 3000 m, it is the world's longest purpose-built pedestrian and cycling tunnel. The path is 7.8 km long in total and takes about 25 minutes to cycle through. A blue rubber floor makes the tunnel a perfect place for running on rainy days. The opening of the new pedestrian and cycling paths is part of a decade-long strategy to make Bergen a more environmentally friendly and sustainable city.



The Olympic Park

The planting in the Olympic Park's 2012 gardens is highly structured, designed for dramatic, year-round effect. The plants themselves were carefully selected not only for their beauty but also for their durability and value in attracting bees, butterflies, hoverflies, and other species for increasing biodiversity.



The Lighthouse (Permanent) & Future Development



Building on the seed stage proposed in the last phase, The Lighthouse will now take on some of the programme, activities and operators trialled at the meanwhile stage, housed within a permanent space. The Town Centre car park site is earmarked by Brent Council for housing development. As this comes forward, the gateway location is an excellent opportunity to co-locate with residential use, cultural and community activities within part of the future development. The green buffer zone proposed above could fit well with public/private amenity space provided as part of a future housing site.



A New Gateway to Neasden

- A new public ground floor provides an activated and welcoming entry point to Neasden High Street



Culture and Community

- Cultural and community civic space activating the new green town square
- Permanent showcase for cultural diversity and interim home to Brent British Black Music cultural archive/ programme
- Creative economy co-located with residential and town centre uses
- Acknowledging role arts, culture and heritage will play in shaping the growing community



Biodiversity & Green Space


- Green finger extension from the Grange could be part of housing amenity









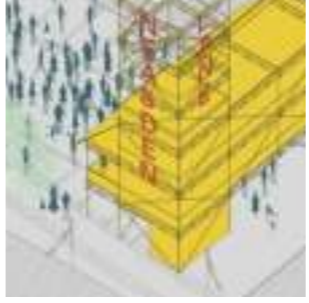


Engagement & Partnerships

Early engagement told us:

- Cultural and community civic space activating the new green town square
- Gateway to Neasden, located on the desire line from the Station to the High Street
- Permanent showcase for cultural diversity and home to Brent British Black Music cultural archive/ programme
- Co-location of residential/arts and culture
- Delivering through arts and culture, key socio-economic impacts like access to learning, training, skills and building a talent pipeline

 £ 1,200,000

 10+ Years

		Who is leading?	Potential to foster	Long term partnerships	
Supporting Actions & Initiatives	The Lighthouse (Permanent) & Future Development			Community Pride Capacity Building Stewardship	Cultural Operators Local Artists Neasden Network Local Residents
	Neasden Festival			Co-authorship Community Pride Stewardship	Neasden Network Local Artists Neasden Collective Local Residents
	Neasden Reggae Museum Exhibitions & Events			Community Pride Stewardship	Local Artists Cultural Operators
	Cultural Programmes		 	Community Pride Capacity Building	Neasden Network Local Residents

Precedents



M Shed Bristol

M Shed is a new kind of museum, one that challenges traditional ideas. It works with the people of Bristol to create displays which make everyone want to come and see. It is a living museum, where the stories of the past spark discussions about the future.



Rich Mix Hackney

Rich Mix is a cultural and community space in East London, offering live music, cinema, dance, theatre, spoken word, education, and a range of creative activities for people of all ages and cultures. Through our creative engagement programmes, we develop and facilitate the creative potential of young people, families, children and wide-ranging communities from across East London.



Peckham Levels Southwark

Peckham Levels is a vibrant cultural destination. Designed to act as a platform to help creative and ambitious local people get their ideas off the ground. Peckham Levels offers much needed performance space, creative workspace, designed to inspire and support a new community of artists, makers and entrepreneurs, as well as providing benefits to the wider community.



Talent House East London

UD is a London-based music organisation bringing communities together around Black music and Black music culture. UD and East London Dance have come together to offer opportunities for young people at Talent House. A pioneering music and dance hub it is a cultural hub for emerging talent.

Addressing the Themes – Long Term Proposals

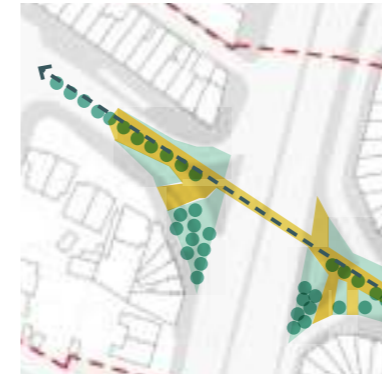
1

The Green at the Grange



2

The Underpass



3

The Lighthouse (Permanent) & Future Development



AUTHORSHIP & REPRESENTATION 	Existing & New Communities			
	Co-Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By establishing Neasden High Street as a town centre with a new and refreshed green space and identity in Brent, it will become more appealing to both existing and new communities in the local area. A new green town square, activated with community, and cultural programmes (The Lighthouse) to showcase Neasden's community, diversity, culture and collaboration. 	<p>The concept for this proposal is informed by the early studies and engagement. The brief and design will be further developed with and alongside the local community to establish co-authorship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent showcase for cultural diversity and home to Brent British Black Music cultural archive/programme. Co-location of residential/arts and culture Delivering through arts and culture, key socio-economic impacts like access to learning, training, skills and building a talent pipeline
	Authorship			
	Social Value			
PUBLIC REALM 	Public Realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reimagined green space is a desire line to the centre, and both a transit and dwell space to draw in people from new and existing communities. Builds on the on the unique and special character of The Grange and its surrounding green space and nature reserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public realm improved Restitching the severance of Neasden Lane through the strengthening the desire line, high quality public realm and an avenue of green planting 	<p>Cultural and community civic space activating the town green edge Gateway to Neasden, located on the desire line from the Station to the High Street</p>
	Access and Connectivity			
	Exploiting Local Assets			
	Green Space			
CLIMATE & ECOLOGY 	Re-use and Demountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds on the on the unique and special character of The Grange and its surrounding green space and nature reserve Acts as a stepping stone for wildlife, building on a green garland of micro sites (pocket park and forests) installed along Neasden Lane Adds to Brent's Bee Corridor The reimagined green space is a desire line to the centre, and both a transit and dwell space to draw in people from new and existing communities. Central location, accessible by public transport and active modes of travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased green space and SUDs Water attenuation, biodiversity and air quality impact Increasing the attractiveness of cycle and pedestrian travel across the North Circular through a more legible and pleasant connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-location within a new housing development built to high sustainable design standards Central location, accessible by public transport and active modes of travel
	Ecology and Green Space			
	Sustainable Travel			
	SUDS and biodiversity			
	Zero Carbon			



3.5

DELIVERABILITY

Partnership

Authorship & Stewardship

'Neasden Collective' are a newly formed business alliance, representing a number of high street businesses on the high street. The group represents an ideal partnership opportunity to build capacity, create co-authorship and legacy in the area through several town centre initiatives, including the activation and reimagination of no.277 into the Ritz Kitchen & Rooftop. Although the unit is not Council owned, there is promising potential to work in partnership with the Neasden Collective, who have the ability to fundraise and already have bold ambitions to take on the lease of no. 277, with the intention of creating a mixed-use civic hub. Neasden Collective have started negotiations with the landlord and if successful, they predict that the rental from the subdivided food outlets on the ground floor) could cross-subsidise upper floors. The Ritz Kitchen could unlock huge potential for the high street offer, community co-design and authorship.

During the Phase 1, light-touch, pilot projects which are proposed such as A Moveable Feast, are intended to test and foster local appetite for longer-term permanent greening measures, including stewardship management and maintenance. The measures themselves offer opportunities for the community to galvanise in a volunteering capacity to help adopt, manage and maintain the streetscape.

Neasden Town Centre is fortunate enough to have a dedicated Town Centre Manager for Neasden High Street who could be the conduit for such a partnership approach.

A Phased Approach to create a legacy

A phased approach starting with small-scale initiatives such as each business hosting a window box, starts to promote pride along the streetscape before moving onto larger scale initiatives like a Neasden High Street specific 'Library of Things' that can be used communally for activations and events. Items could include occasional tables and chairs, moveable planters, floor paint, crowd barriers, A-boards or street works signs to be creatively adapted to highlight community activities. Location/storage for this library of things could form part of the street furniture as multifunctional kiosks.

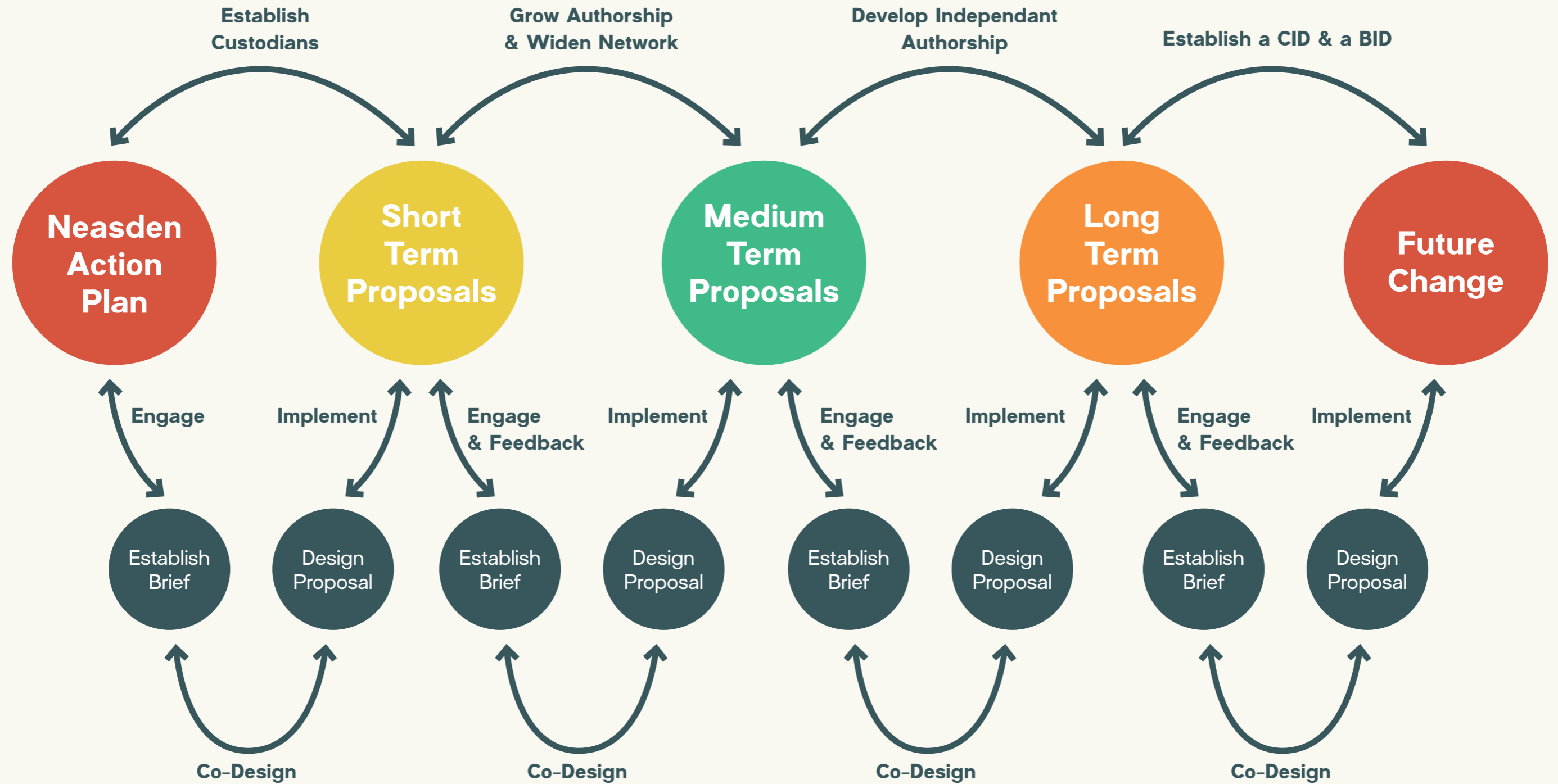
In addition to providing flexible spaces for community and cultural events, The Lighthouse offers the potential to seed a Brent cultural anchor, with its very early prototype starting life in Neasden. As the former home of Bob Marley, and with Brent as the root of British Black music culture, developing this ethereal historical asset into a cultural asset and physical space for the future is an idea that could be explored.

Moving into the permanent phase, a mixed use offer as part of a future housing development on the site, any such 'cultural anchor' would need to generate repeat footfall with key socio-economic impacts such as training, education, skills and building a talent pipeline for the future creative economy. This is the core idea that could be explored for Neasden, combining the activities and outputs at The Lighthouse and the music studios/enterprise space at no. 277.

The opportunity of promoting the ideas of a Brent Black British music cultural anchor, seeded as a pilot in Neasden should be explored with the Brent Council Culture team. Starting as small-scale community commissions taken from existing cultural archives at Willesden Library and The Reggae Museum to platform them on a London-wide stage, these could be developed into a future strategic package of regeneration and creative economy initiatives for Neasden and Brent over the next 5-10 years.

A Brief that Evolves Incrementally and Collaboratively

Paving the Way for Future Change
Improve community capacity, change perceptions & build momentum

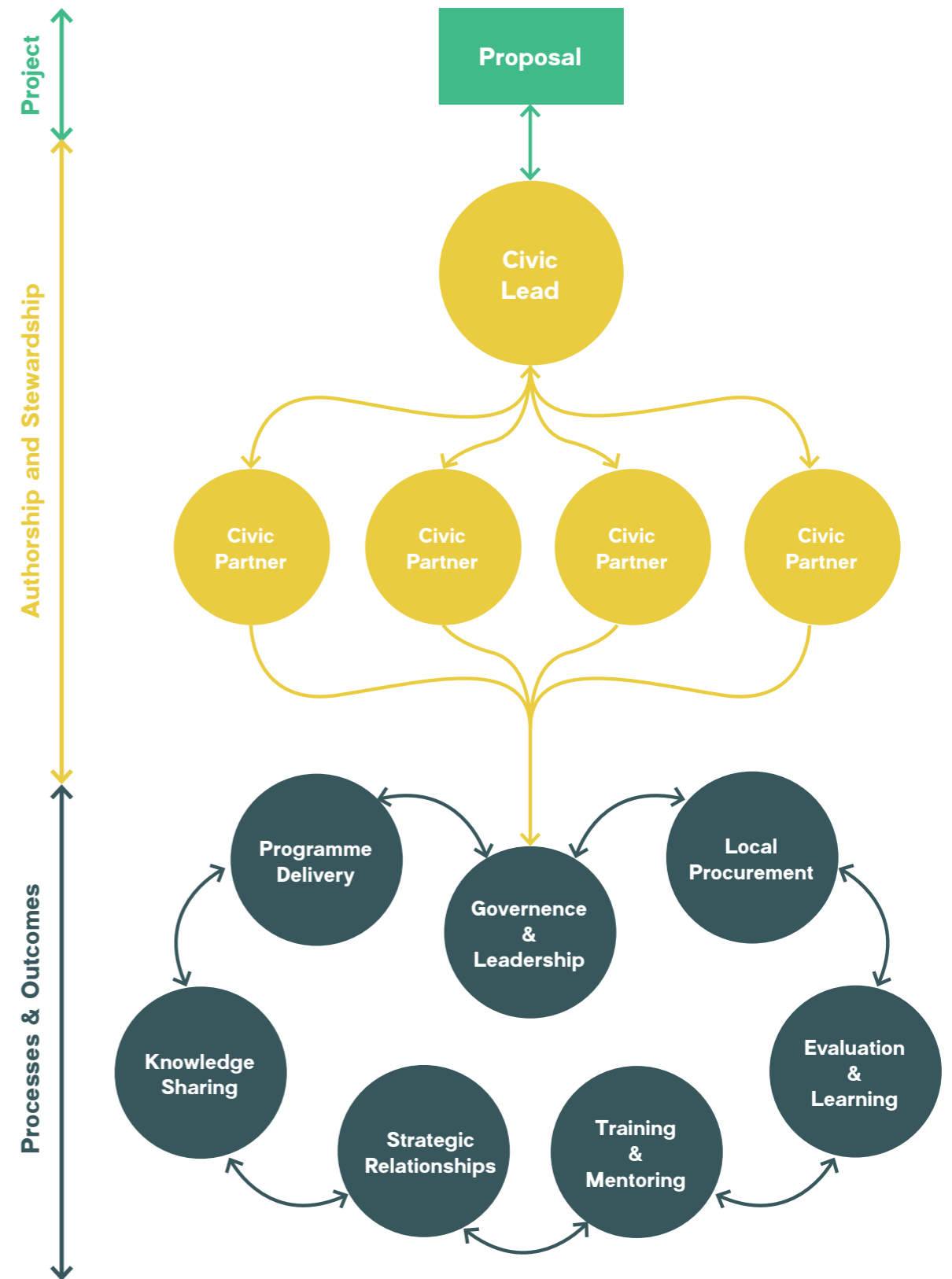





























Capacity Building

The Home Office programme 'Operation Nightingale' is being deployed in Neasden. This programme identifies 100 of the most violent hotspots across London and combines both hotspot policing and 'Problem Oriented Policing' (POP) to reduce serious violence. This involves enhancing visible presence in these key locations at peak times as well as funding for lighting, CCTV cameras and audio devices. Officers will be deployed on foot patrol and engage more with the public. This will be complemented with dedicated problem solving (POP) activity with partners to understand the underlying causes and contributors of serious violence in each of those hotspots and develop solutions to tackle them.

Through this action plan, we propose a dedicated partnership of local people working with the Metropolitan Police as part of their wider Home Office operation, using some of the measures outlined. With this framework set up, future funding can be directed towards a series of cleaning, surveillance and security measures, along with public realm improvements.

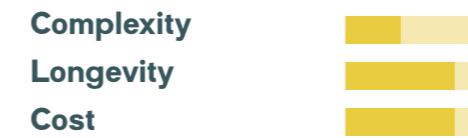
The tables set out under each proposal earlier in this document demonstrate the initiatives and actions which start to sow the seeds, test, flex and grow to deliver the longer-term vision. Each project has different civic leads, with a framework for civic partners to deliver a number of different actions. This approach is intended to provide an early framework which can be adapted as a useful tool for the community to build upon, and build into the existing mix of enterprise, cultural and streetscape activity happening in the area already.



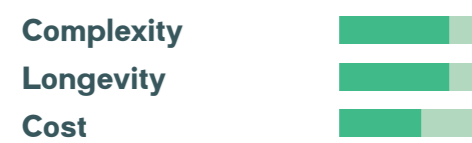
	Proposal	Cost	Risk	Funding
Phase 1	The Ritz Urban Rooms & Kitchen  	£ 986,600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site is in private ownership, favourable lease terms not yet secured - Delay in landlord approvals impact on programme - Prolonged programme and increased costs due to unforeseen circumstance (condition, asbestos, contamination etc.) - Project costs exceed funding available. Insufficient funding to deliver the scale of project desired. - Delay due to extended approvals process with internal stakeholders (Planning, Policy, Transport, Licensing etc.) 	CPP
	A Moveable Feast   	£ 165,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full and adequate maintenance strategy not in place - Community stewardship not present - ASB, (vandalism, graffiti or other damage) to finishes 	CPP
	Neasden Market  	£ 122,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Footfall not sufficient - Ancillary issues (waste, noise, traffic) are exacerbated 	CPP/LBB Match funding
	The Lighthouse  	£ 1,110,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential opposition to removing 2-3 car parking spaces - Delay in TfL/LBB approvals impact on programme - Delay due to extended approvals process with internal stakeholders (Planning, Policy, Transport, Licensing etc.) - ASB, (vandalism, graffiti or other damage) to finishes 	CPP
	Visual Identity & Wayfinding  	£ 150,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtaining TfL buy-in coordination and funding - Delay in TfL/LBB approvals impact on programme - Delay due to extended approvals process with internal stakeholders (Planning, Policy, Transport etc.) - ASB, (vandalism, graffiti or other damage) to finishes 	CPP/LBB Match funding
Phase 2	Pocket Forests & Gardens   	£ 515,600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full and adequate maintenance strategy not in place - Community stewardship not present - ASB, (vandalism, graffiti or other damage) to finishes 	CPP
	Alleyways & Garage Spaces   	£ 39,400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - POP strategy is only a temporary deterrent - Community stewardship not present - ASB, (vandalism, graffiti or other damage) to finishes 	CPP
Phase 3	The Green at the Grange (Light intervention)   	£ 600,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtaining TfL buy-in, coordination and funding - Securing LBB funding - Delay in TfL/LBB/utilities approvals impact on programme - Project costs exceed funding available. Insufficient funding to deliver the scale of project desired. - Delay due to extended approvals process with stakeholders (TfL, Thames Water, GLA etc.) 	LBB Match funding
	The Green at the Grange (Full reconfiguration)   	£ 2,730,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtaining TfL buy-in, coordination and funding - Securing LBB funding - Delay in TfL/LBB/utilities approvals impact on programme - Project costs exceed funding available. Insufficient funding to deliver the scale of project desired. - Delay due to extended approvals process with stakeholders (TfL, Thames Water, GLA etc.) - Delay due to extended approvals process with internal stakeholders (Planning, Policy, Transport etc.) 	LBB Match funding
	The Underpass  	£ 1,101,100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtaining TfL buy-in, coordination and funding - Securing LBB funding - Prolonged programme and increased costs due to unforeseen circumstance (condition, contamination etc.) - Project costs exceed funding available. Insufficient funding to deliver the scale of project desired. - Delay due to extended approvals process with external stakeholders (TfL, Thames Water, GLA etc.) - Delay due to extended approvals process with internal stakeholders (Planning, Policy, Transport etc.) - ASB, (vandalism, graffiti or other damage) to finishes 	LBB Match funding
	The Lighthouse (permanent)  	£ 1,200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site allocated to housing, but development is not committed at this stage - Potential opposition to removing town centre car park - Prolonged programme and increased costs due to unforeseen circumstance (condition, contamination etc.) - Delay due to extended approvals process with internal stakeholders (Planning, Policy, Transport etc.) - ASB, (vandalism, graffiti or other damage) to finishes 	LBB Match funding



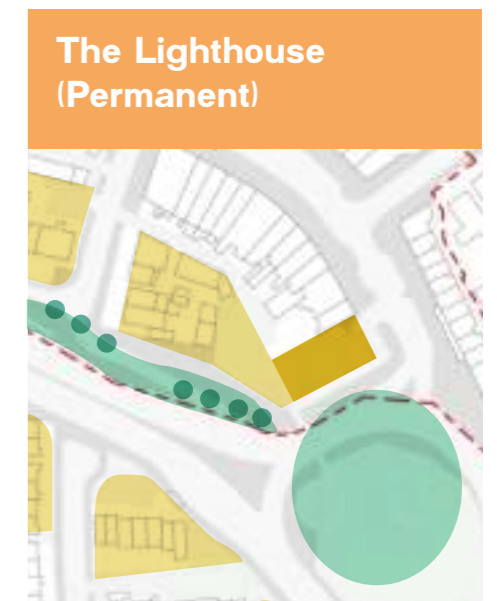
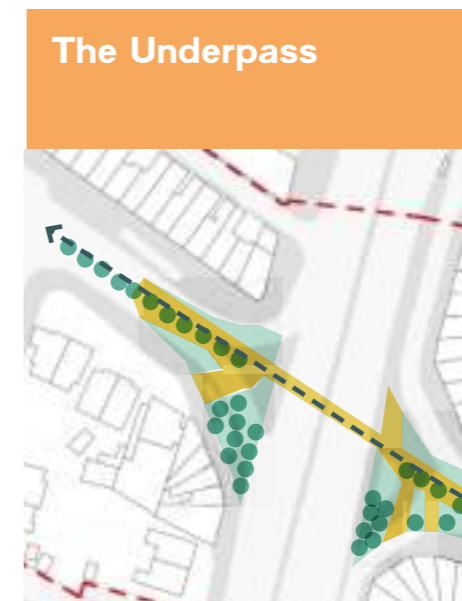
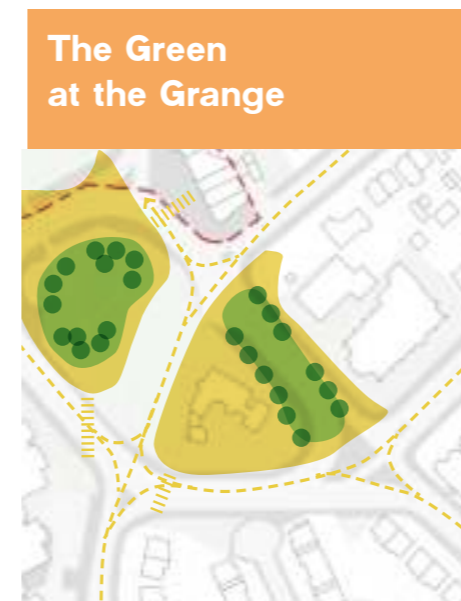
Short Term Proposals

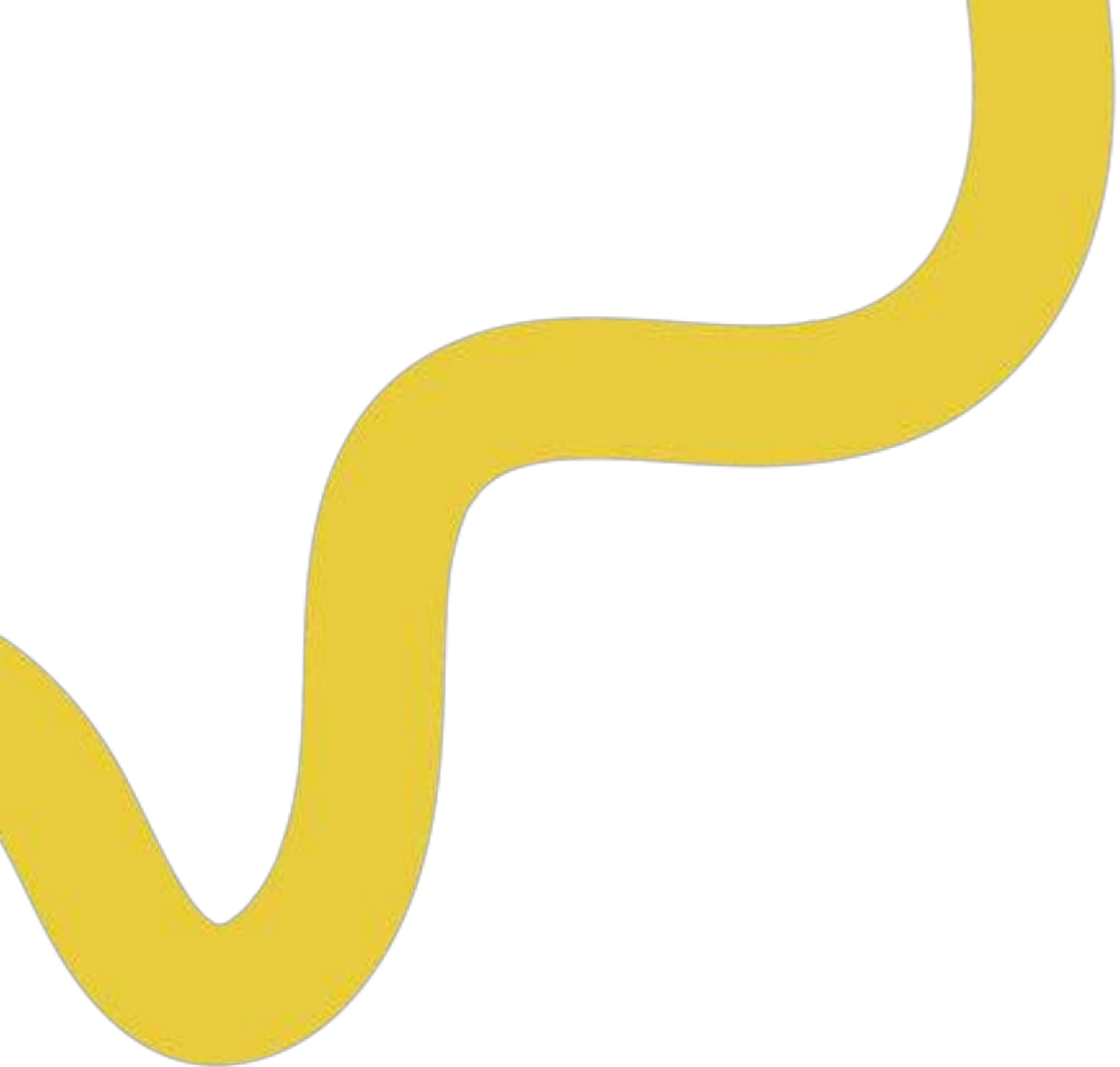


Medium Term Proposals



Long Term Proposals





3.6

OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES

Project outputs include:

The Ritz Urban Rooms & Kitchen

- Number of sqm of workspace created within an underused building
- Number of start-up phase/incubator workspace units
- Number of skills sharing, training or business development partnerships with local community organisations (e.g. Chalk Hill Radio Station, The Grange, Launch-It, Reggae Museum, College of NW London, Brent Youth Foundation, United Borders etc.)
- Number of community organisations making use of ancillary and shared spaces available at low/ no cost

The Lighthouse

- Amount of newly created cultural/community/event space (sqm)
- No. of new cultural partnerships and delivery programme with organisations such as Reggae Museum, British Museum, UD, Museum of Migration to seed concept of a Brent Cultural anchor for Black British

Neasden Market

- Number of opportunities for local start-up businesses
- Number of new market trader recruits using TikTok/other social media to attract new a young generation of entrepreneurs
100% of stalls to be provided on affordable low cost
- Amount of typical average weekly local spend (£) Minimum of 80% of market stall holders from Brent
- Percentage of increasing footfall on the high street (baseline stats required)

High Street Greening (A Moveable Feast, Pocket Forests & Gardens, The Grange Green):

- Amount of public realm improved (sqm)
- Urban Greening Factor score
- Number of new trees planted
- Amount of green space created (sqm)
- Amount of green space improved (sqm)

Wayfinding

- Amount of public realm improved (sqm)

Alleyways & Garage Spaces

- Amount of public realm improved (sqm)
- Urban Greening Factor score
- Number of new trees planted
- Amount of new green space (sqm)

The Underpass (Sunken Garden)

- Amount of new green space (sqm)
- Amount of public realm improved (sqm)
- Urban Greening Factor score
- Number of new trees planted

4

EVIDENCE



4.1

ENGAGEMENT

A Community Framework

During a 4-week period in February 2024, the consultant team, held a series of engagement events with a variety of community groups in Neasden. This was carried out to inform and test some of the early proposals we are putting forward as part of this Action Plan.

Any plans for future development must be authentic and rooted in Neasden's people and place. This can only come with in-depth programme of engagement and an organised community framework, nurtured over time, with trust and agency, co-design, co-authorship and with the local community as stewards of place. Our early engagement was intended to:

- sow the seeds of this long-term framework
- to promote the Action Plan, a baseline piece of work being developed as a background for Brent Council's CPP Exemplar funding application
- to shape and test emerging proposals within the Action Plan
- build on the prior studies commissioned out by the council.

Through this process, a key outcome was to garner interest, start to forge long-term relationships and build on existing and burgeoning networks to galvanise a diverse set of organised community stakeholders, to form a long-term strategic network, ready to receive and implement real change when it comes, empowered to take on the stewardship and agency of a renewed Neasden.

In total:

- 156 contacts were reached out via email
- 62 young people from Crest Academy and College of North West London took part in focus group and vox pops sessions
- 47 high street businesses were visited and spoken to in-person
- 50 people responded to our online survey
- +20 people attended our community hackathon

Neasden Action Plan

JOIN US AND HELP US SHAPE THE FUTURE OF NEASDEN TOWN CENTRE

Brent Council is developing an action plan for the area with the aim of making Neasden Town Centre more connected, sustainable and welcoming for its residents, businesses and communities.

Tell us how we can make change happen by:

1. Taking part in our online survey

Scan me



**3. Call us on:
020 8937 6113**

2. Come along to one of our public workshops

Tues, 13th February, 5pm–7pm

Sat, 17th February 1pm–3pm

**@Launch It Neasden
60 Neasden Lane NW10 2UW**

Sanchez Benton architects



CONCEPT
CULTURE

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



This initiative is being supported and facilitated by the Mayor's Civic Partnership Programme (CPP), London's new regeneration funding programme, as well as by Sanchez Benton Architects, Rumi Rose and Concept Culture.

4.2

PLACE IDENTITY

4. EVIDENCE



NEASDEN
TOWN
CENTRE

Workshop Insights

We have organised insights from the engagement workshops to try and understand the key elements of Neasden’s place identity.



EMERGING THEMES:	1. COMMUNITY & IDENTITY	2. SAFETY AND WELL-BEING	3. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT	4. SUSTAINABILITY & GREEN SPACES
ACTIONABLE BRANDING ELEMENTS	<p>Develop narratives and visuals celebrating Neasden’s multicultural community.</p> <p>Initiatives promoting community hubs and spaces for enhanced cohesion and engagement.</p>	<p>Safety campaigns and community watch programs.</p> <p>Engagement initiatives involving local police and community members to foster a sense of safety and belonging.</p>	<p>Youth-focused events and spaces, leveraging educational and cultural programs.</p> <p>Incorporate youth voices in branding materials to reflect their aspirations and contributions to Neasden.</p>	<p>Highlighting green initiatives and parks in branding materials.</p> <p>Promoting sustainable practices through community workshops and events.</p>
	5. CONNECTIVITY & INFRASTRUCTURE	6. CULTURAL DIVERSITY & HERITAGE	7. ECONOMIC VIBRANCY	8. PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT
	<p>Visuals and messages showcasing improved accessibility and transport links.</p> <p>Highlight pedestrian-friendly routes and community connectivity in marketing efforts.</p>	<p>Use of Neasden’s cultural events, landmarks, and stories in the brand narrative.</p> <p>Marketing materials featuring diverse cultural expressions and heritage conservation efforts.</p>	<p>Campaigns promoting a diverse high street offer.</p> <p>Branding that emphasises Neasden as a vibrant place for business, innovation, and leisure.</p>	<p>Showcase transformation projects in public spaces to emphasise inclusivity and improved connectivity.</p> <p>Use before-and-after imagery in promotional content to demonstrate tangible changes.</p>

Swot Analysis

SWOT COMPONENT	INSIGHT	INTEGRATION WITH IDENTITY ESSENCE AND VALUES
STRENGTHS	Community Spirit Cultural Diversity Historical and Architectural Assets Existing Civic Engagement	These strengths are the pillars of Neasden’s brand essence. They showcase Neasden as a community rich in history and cultural diversity, committed to sustainable and inclusive growth. The strategy will highlight these strengths in its narrative, ensuring the brand essence and values are communicated effectively.
WEAKNESSES	Public Realm and Connectivity Perception of Safety Quality of Local Offer Physical and Social Fragmentation	The strategy aims to transform these weaknesses by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing public spaces and connectivity to reflect the value of inclusivity and accessibility. - Implementing safety measures and community initiatives to improve perceptions and real safety. - Diversifying the high street offer to reflect Neasden’s cultural diversity. - Addressing fragmentation through community-driven projects and improved infrastructure.
OPPORTUNITIES	Regeneration Funding Cultural and Creative Anchors Community-Led Initiatives Green and Sustainable Development	Opportunities align with Neasden’s values by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leveraging funding for projects that emphasise sustainability and community engagement. - Utilising Neasden’s musical heritage and cultural diversity as key themes in place branding. - Encouraging community-led initiatives that foster a strong sense of belonging. - Prioritising green infrastructure and sustainable practices in development projects.
THREATS	Economic and Social Challenges Infrastructure Limitations Rapid Urban Development Changing Demographics	The strategy addresses threats by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing inclusive programs that support economic growth and social well-being, mitigating the impact of economic and social challenges. - Planning infrastructure improvements to enhance connectivity. - Ensuring that urban development projects are community-focused and sustainable. - Embracing changing demographics as an opportunity to enrich the cultural tapestry of Neasden.

Changing Perception

Neasden Town Centre is ready for a fresh approach. The model below shows where we feel the Town centre is today. And where it could be tomorrow.



Neasden Town Centre Place Identity Strategy

Neasden Town Centre, a gem in Northwest London, is on the brink of an exciting transformation. Central to this journey is the powerful reflection of our town's uniqueness, drawn directly from the heart of our community. With the Civic Partnership Programme's support, our aim is to elevate Neasden as an epitome of inclusivity, environmental stewardship, and cultural wealth.

Strategic Objectives

Our place identity strategy for Neasden is guided by five pivotal objectives, each designed to usher in a new era of prosperity and unity:

- **Community and Diversity:** Championing Neasden's diverse fabric to nurture a deeper sense of community and belonging, and to celebrate our rich cultural diversity.
- **Sustainability:** Showcasing our commitment to sustainability, positioning Neasden as a pioneer in eco-friendly urban living.
- **Connectivity:** Enhancing Neasden's infrastructure to ensure it is more accessible and interconnected, fostering a more welcoming environment for all.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Capitalising on Neasden's historical and cultural significance to deepen our town's identity and sense of pride.
- **Collaborative Regeneration:** Mobilising community engagement in the regeneration process to ensure that future developments resonate with the needs and visions of Neasden's residents.

This strategy envisions a reimagined Neasden – a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation, where the collective spirit drives a vibrant and inclusive future. Together, we aim to transform Neasden into a thriving community where every individual, business, and visitor plays a role in crafting a unified and prosperous town.



Positioning Overview

Values	Community, Sustainability, Connectivity, Cultural Diversity
Mission	To transform Neasden Town Centre into a vibrant, inclusive, and green community hub that celebrates its diverse cultural heritage and improves quality of life for all residents.
Vision	A regenerated Neasden Town Centre that stands as a beacon of community-driven urban development, showcasing a harmonious blend of cultural diversity, environmental sustainability, and economic vitality.
Essence	Neasden's essence is its vibrant community spirit, rich cultural mosaic, and commitment to sustainable urban living.



Values

COMMUNITY



Emphasises the importance of collective action, inclusivity, and fostering a strong sense of belonging among Neasden's diverse residents.

SUSTAINABILITY



Focuses on environmental stewardship, green spaces, and sustainable practices that contribute to a healthier, more resilient Neasden.

CONNECTIVITY



Highlights the goal of improving physical and social connections within Neasden, making it more accessible and fostering interactions among its people.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY



Celebrates the rich tapestry of cultures that make Neasden unique, encouraging cultural exchanges and the preservation of its multicultural identity.

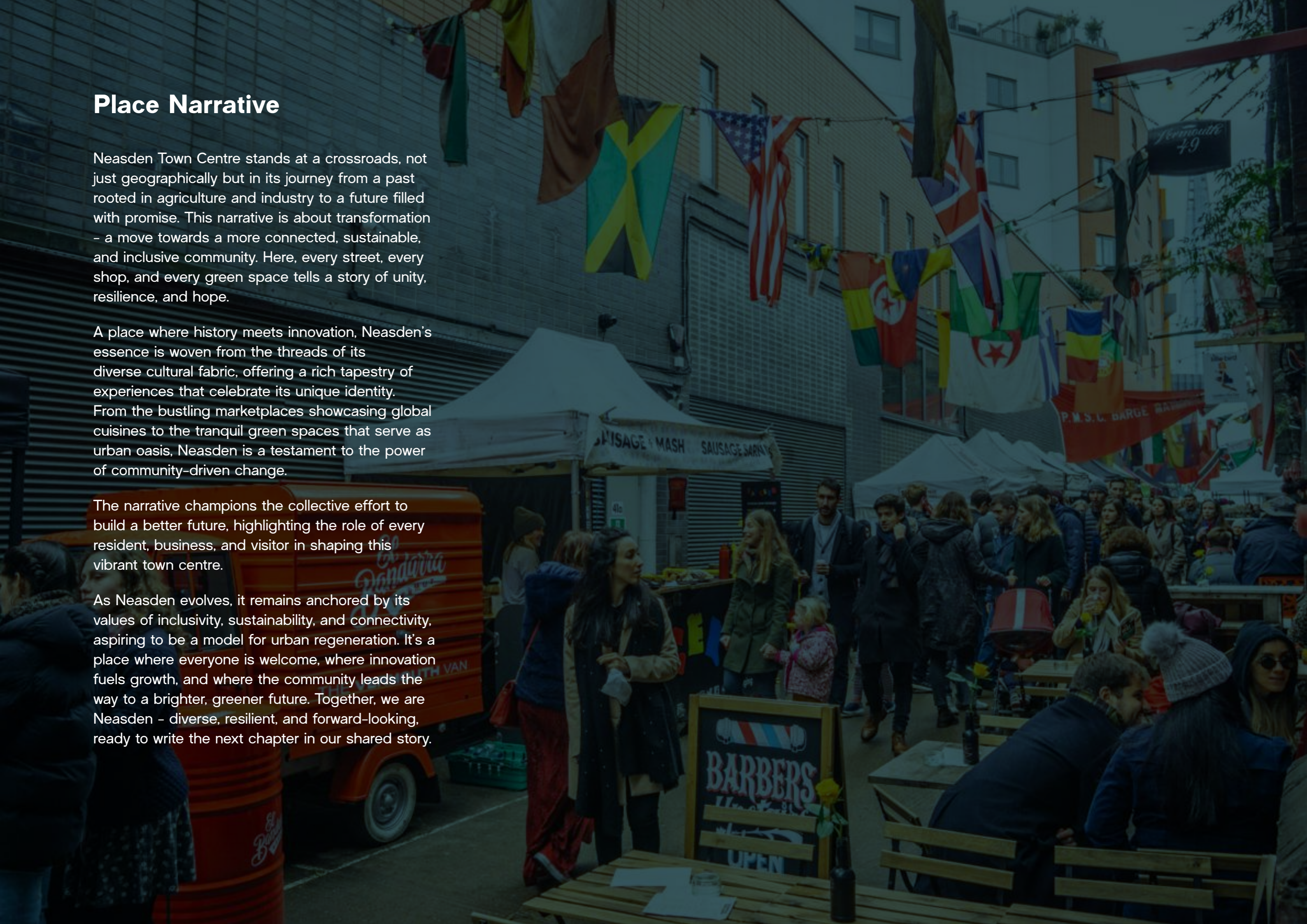
Place Narrative

Neasden Town Centre stands at a crossroads, not just geographically but in its journey from a past rooted in agriculture and industry to a future filled with promise. This narrative is about transformation – a move towards a more connected, sustainable, and inclusive community. Here, every street, every shop, and every green space tells a story of unity, resilience, and hope.

A place where history meets innovation, Neasden's essence is woven from the threads of its diverse cultural fabric, offering a rich tapestry of experiences that celebrate its unique identity. From the bustling marketplaces showcasing global cuisines to the tranquil green spaces that serve as urban oasis, Neasden is a testament to the power of community-driven change.

The narrative champions the collective effort to build a better future, highlighting the role of every resident, business, and visitor in shaping this vibrant town centre.

As Neasden evolves, it remains anchored by its values of inclusivity, sustainability, and connectivity, aspiring to be a model for urban regeneration. It's a place where everyone is welcome, where innovation fuels growth, and where the community leads the way to a brighter, greener future. Together, we are Neasden – diverse, resilient, and forward-looking, ready to write the next chapter in our shared story.



Creative Concept Directions

These concepts are our first step in defining the look and feel, helping us visualise the possibilities. It was decided that 'Routes to Roots' captured the project's essence and objectives.

Cultural Mosaic

Envision Neasden as a vibrant tapestry of cultures, where every thread represents a different community, tradition, and story. This route will celebrate the town's rich cultural diversity through visual narratives and initiatives that highlight multicultural festivals, art installations, and culinary experiences. It aims to foster inclusivity and pride in Neasden's identity as a multicultural hub, encouraging locals and visitors to explore and appreciate the variety of cultural expressions that thrive in the heart of the town.

(Brand values: Cultural Diversity, Community)



Routes to Roots

This narrative celebrates Neasden as a vibrant crossroads of cultures, that come together harmoniously. It's a testament to the power of diversity, highlighting how each individual's journey contributes to the collective experience, fostering a deep sense of belonging and connection. Neasden Town Centre is envisioned as a dynamic canvas for storytelling, where cultural festivals, community programs, and everyday interactions invite everyone to share and celebrate their unique stories.

It's a call to discover, engage, and become part of a larger narrative that values every path and every story, making Neasden a place where journeys begin, cultures converge.

(Brand Values: Sustainability, Connectivity, Cultural Diversity)



Heart of Diversity

Focus on the vibrant heart of Neasden, pulsing with the energy of diverse communities, activities, and green initiatives. This route will portray Neasden as a dynamic centre of community engagement, where diversity fuels creativity and collaboration. Featuring stories of community-led initiatives, green urban spaces, and events that bring people together, this route will celebrate Neasden's role as a beacon of diversity and inclusivity. It's about showcasing how a united community can drive positive change, making Neasden a model for multicultural urban living.

(Brand Values: Cultural Diversity, Community, Sustainability)



Positioning to Visual Identity



Vauxhall, London: Vauxhall's identity marries its edgy punk past with its contemporary vibe, capturing the unique spirit of the place. It's a nod to its musical roots while embracing the area's current evolution, creating a design that resonates with both history buffs and modern visitors.



Azerbaijan: This branding effort aims to shake off old stereotypes, shining a light on the country's rich diversity and stunning landscapes. It's about showing off a vibrant, ever-evolving Azerbaijan through a dynamic design identity that adapts and celebrates its variety.



Vauxhall, London

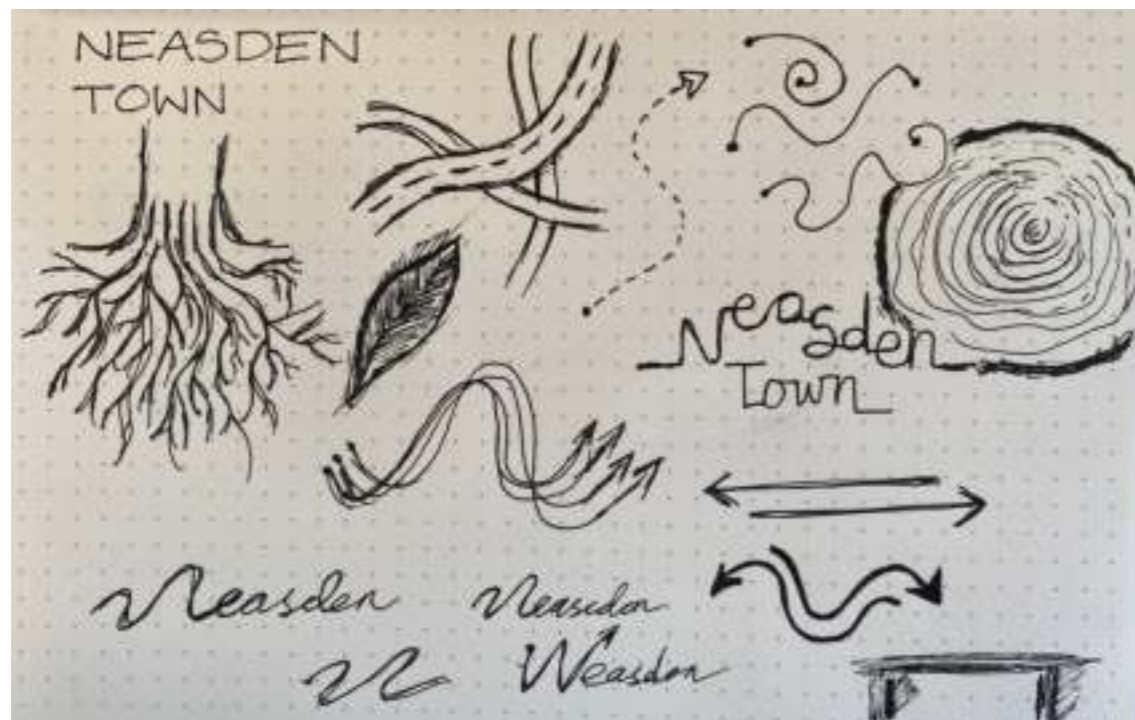
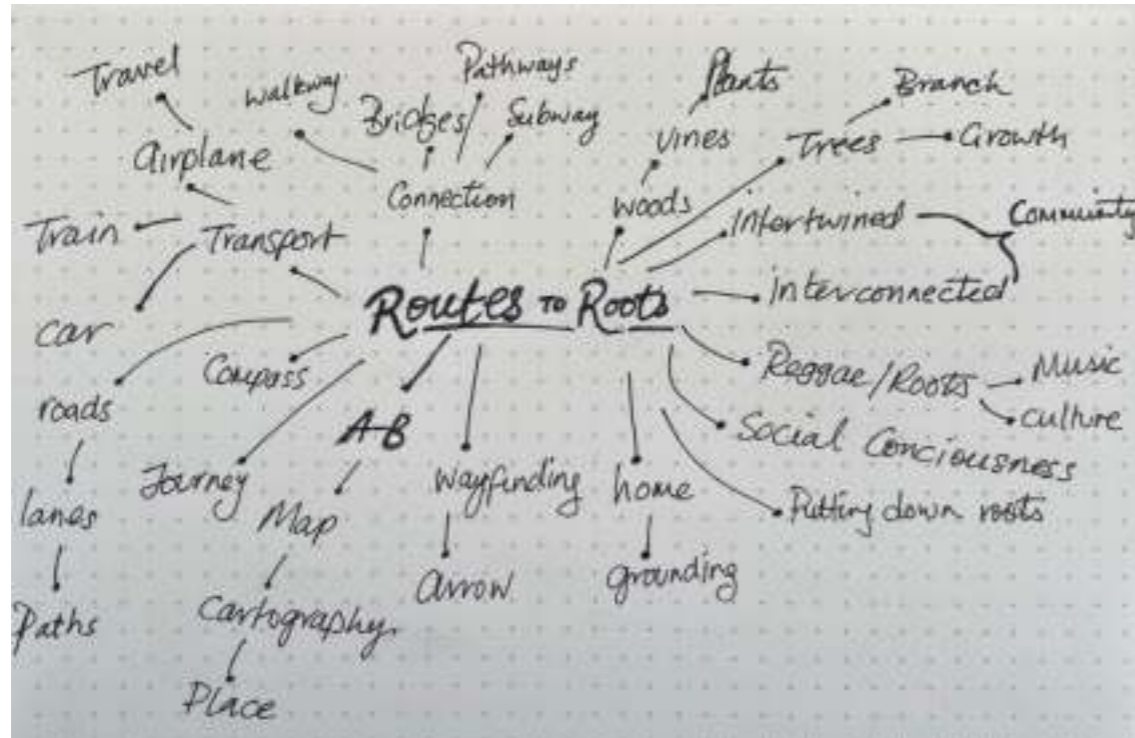


Eindhoven, Netherlands: Eindhoven's brand strategy is all about community and growth, turning local pride into a driver for economic success. It leverages the city's innovative spirit to foster a sense of belonging among its residents while attracting economic opportunities, showing how a city can thrive by staying true to its roots and looking forward to the future.

Concept Development

Transforming initial ideas into actionable plans, refining creative visions through brainstorming and experimentation to find the best direction.

ROUTES TO ROOTS: Grounded in our past, growing towards our future



Neasden Action Plan



Neasden Action Plan

Identity development: Orientation Routes to Roots



4.3

CONTEXT & HISTORY

4. EVIDENCE



History

The name Neasden means 'the nose-shaped hill' in Anglo-Saxon, a reference to its location on a small promontory at the end of the Dollis Hill ridge. By the Middle Ages the village comprised a number of small buildings and there was a green near the site of the current gyratory. The Grove was built by one of the few wealthy families in 1720, the stables of which is now The Grange. Neasden was dominated by agriculture until just before the First World War. Dairy farming, hay production and the rearing and stabling of horses all thrived because of Neasden's proximity to London.

Community Parish

The 'Spotted Dog' publican house became a social centre for local people and a clay pigeon shooting ground opened north of the local vicarage. The vicar, Reverend James Mills, was a key figure of the new enlarged parish, created because of the area's rising population. Mills founded the Neasden Cricket Club and encouraged musical societies. In 1893 a golf club was founded at Neasden House, which attracted members from wealthy London society.

Railways & Growth

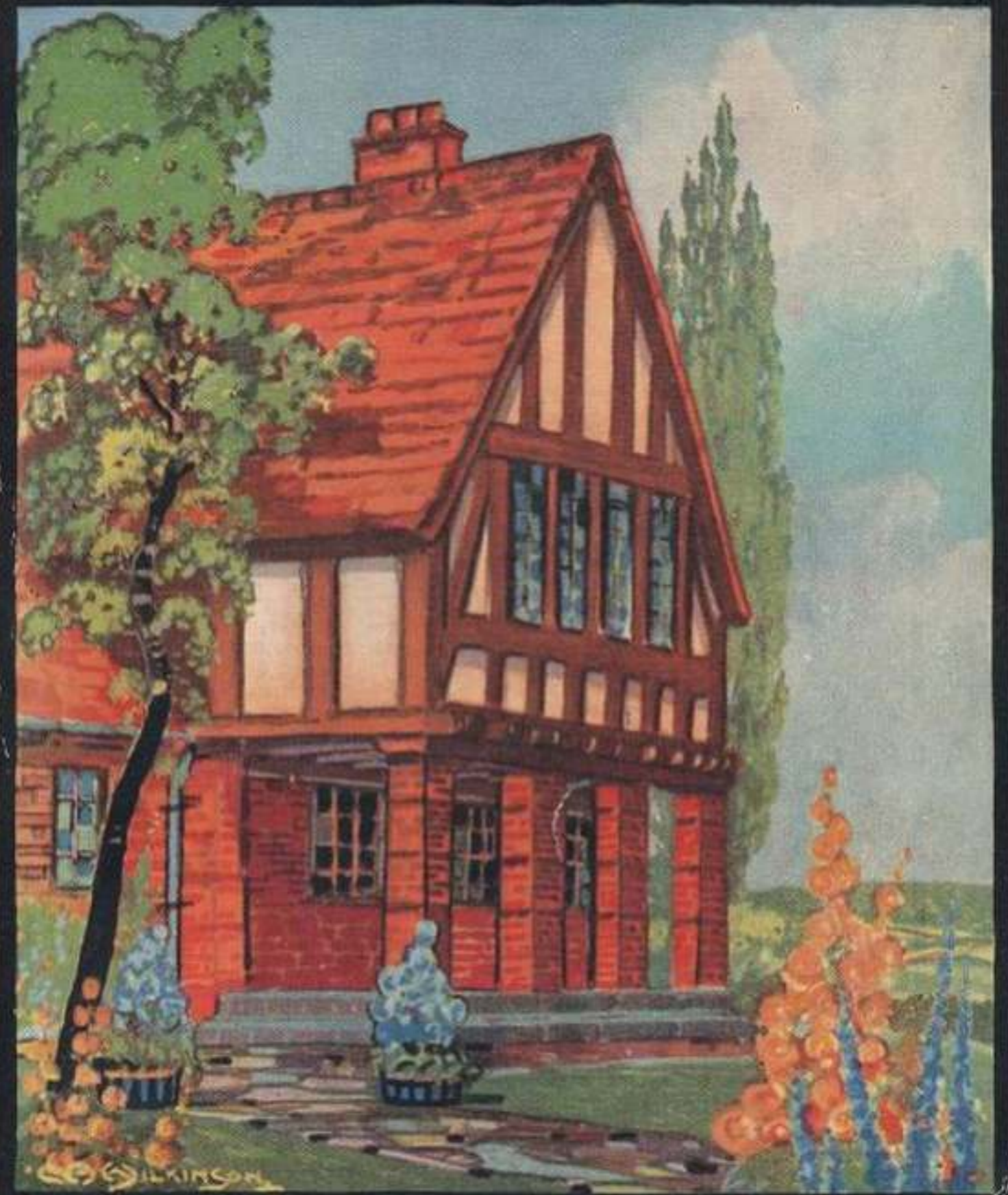
The first railway came to Neasden in 1868 and in 1875 a station opened on Dudden Hill Lane. Much like today, the station was not well located in relation to the town, and as there were no passenger trains on the new line, the railways had no effect on development. This changed in 1880 when the Metropolitan Railway extended and opened a station on Neasden Lane. With 30 trains a day into London and a journey time of 20 minutes to Baker Street, land values increased with more farmland being sold for development.

In 1882 the Metropolitan Railway built a railway engineering works with workers' housing creating Neasden Village. Situated to the west of Neasden, it was called "the loneliest village in London." A power station was added in 1903 and the village grew over the next 25 years. In 1893 the Great Central Railway connected its main line from the Midlands, setting up another depot and more worker's housing. By the 1930s the two railways combined employed over 1,000 men while other industries (mainly farming) in south Neasden employed over 2,000 more. A community was built up around the railway estates.

Industry, housing growth and the North Circular

The arrival of new infrastructure for the motor car changed the rural, 'farming village' feel of Neasden. By 1913 light industry had spread towards Neasden Lane. In the mid- 1920s, bus services along with the arrival of the new North Circular dawned a new era for Neasden as a middle-class residential suburb. New schools, and a public library at Welsh Harp were built to serve the growing population. Over the next decade, the 'Metroland' movement created huge private housing estates taking almost all the remaining farmland.

The Metropolitan Railway pushed the 'Metroland' concept, marketing its surplus railway lands with the idea of desirable places to live. Heavy stylised magazines and posters were used to promote an idyllic country lifestyle with beautiful homes within easy reach of London. From the end of World War One through to the 1920s, Metroland boomed, as London's new middle class bought into the advertising and took advantage of affordable homes. Between the wars, all of Neasden's older houses were demolished except for The Grange, the only pre-Victorian building remaining in the area.



METRO-LAND

PRICE TWOPENCE



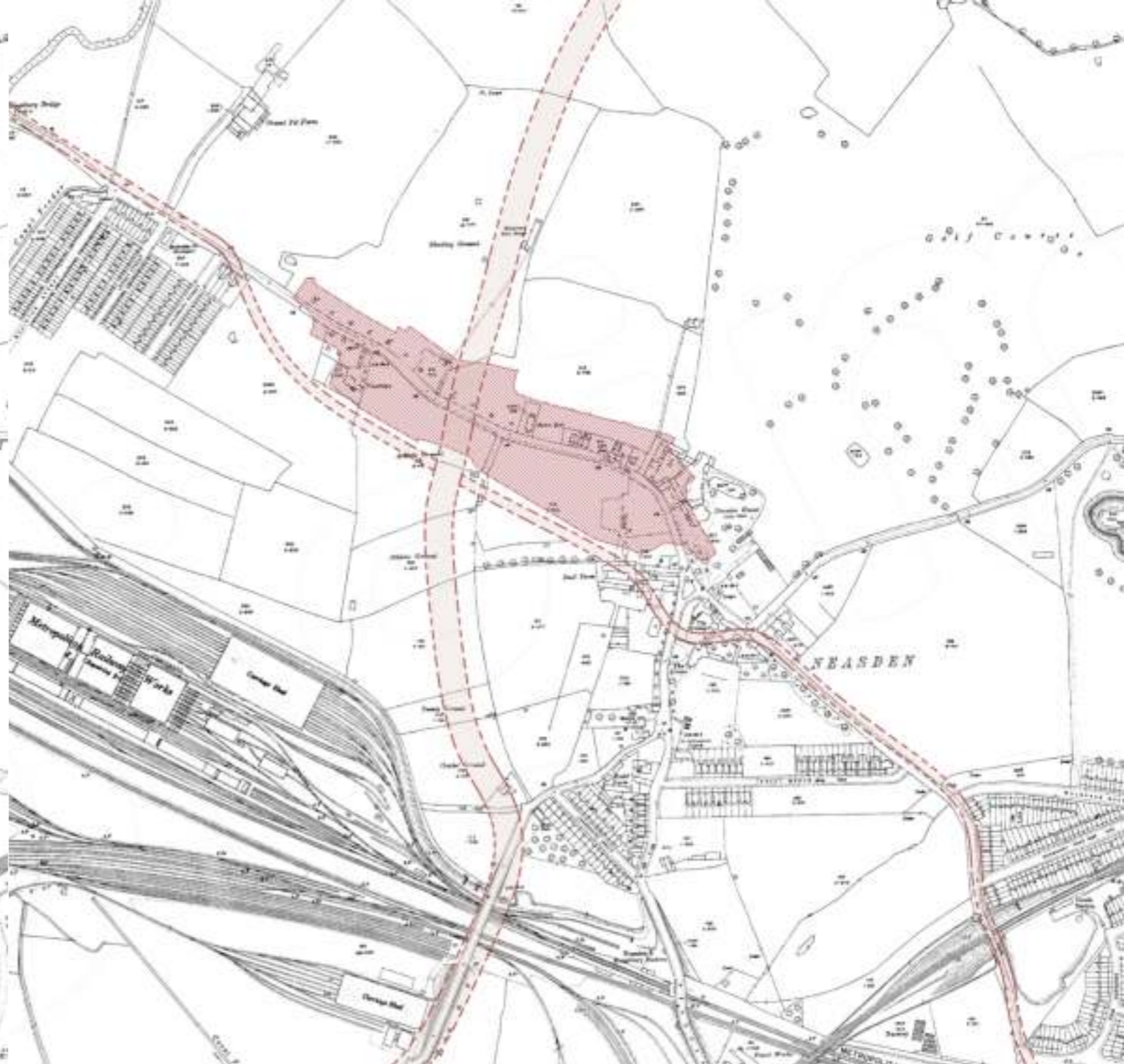
Neasden saw its heyday in the 1930s with one of the most modern high streets of its era, complete with a new shopping centre and the old 'Spotted Dog' and Dollis Hill Station being rebuilt in mock-Tudor/'Metroland' style. The Ritz Cinema opened in 1936, on the current site of the former library at no 277 Neasden Lane. Traffic on the North Circular and Neasden Lane became an increasing problem in the post war years.

In 1973 the North Circular was expanded, taking out more housing. There was strong resistance to this move, with campaigns on the streets and local press. Despite this however, the ministry of Transport pressed ahead. This blighted the shopping centre and since then large retail warehouses like Tesco, Asda and Ikea have located to the south, driving away footfall. The opening of Brent Cross out-of-town shopping centre in 1976 encouraged buses to bypass Neasden, to the further detriment of the centre.

Industrial decline dealt another blow to Neasden and the area changed from a middle class suburb to an area with higher levels of deprivation, relatively lower property values and a diminished sense of place. Waves of immigration to the area from India, Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, Romania and Poland have kept retail services and pubs going. Much of this is evident in Neasden High Street, which reflects this multicultural make-up, largely consisting of ethnic food and grocery stores, cafes and barber shops. In 1995, Asian immigrants built the largest Hindu temple outside India - the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir located in south-west Neasden.



Historic map from 1890
With current Neasden high street area
and important roads highlighted



Historic map from 1910
With current Neasden high street area
and important roads highlighted



Historic map from 1930
With current Neasden high street area
and important roads highlighted



Historic map from 1950
With current Neasden high street area
and important roads highlighted



4.4

SITE ANALYSIS

Character

Neasden is suburban in nature with the town centre servicing the surrounding residential area. Some industrial and wider employment activities are located to the south near Neasden station and bordering the A406 North Circular.

Neasden Town Centre is characterised by a traditional high street typology, with 3-storey inter-war terraces lining the north and south of Neasden Lane. These terraces have been converted to shops on the ground floor with flats above. There are roughly 100 business units (14,300m²) along Neasden Lane. There are a few relics of Art Deco architecture, namely the façades at the former Ritz Cinema (no. 277 Neasden Lane, the old public library) and the former Dicey's Nightclub.

The North Circular is a six-lane dual carriageway that connects the industrial estates outside town, and bisects Neasden High Street into two halves. To the south of the high street, a rear access alley (Birse Crescent) runs behind the shop units, a hotspot for rough sleeping, flytipping and anti-social behaviour. Pedestrian routes between the eastern and western halves of the high street is run down through a subway, accessed by winding ramp or via a complex arrangement of steps.



Neasden Action Plan





A characterful mock-Tudor parade sits at the northern side of the western half of the high street (nos. 354–388). On the south side of Neasden Lane, a single 2-storey Art Deco building occupies the corner before the high street gives way to semi-detached homes.

Public Realm

Broad pavements run alongside the shopfronts on the high street and provide the potential for generous civic space. This is sometimes taken up by grocery produce and other retail displays. Oblique car parking on both sides of the street dominates the very central part of high street on the eastern half, where there is also an 'avenue-style' concentration of small street trees. This is really the only green focal point in the area, (apart from at The Grange roundabout) with little to no planting in high street other locations.

Despite the context having a human scale with 1930s features, the public realm is poor, offering no amenity or dwell spots and very few of the businesses contribute to positive streetlife.

Pollution, noise, poor waste management and ongoing anti-social behaviour (gang violence, rough sleeping and street drinking) are recurrent complaints from both residents and business owners. There is a very high proportion of private rented homes and Houses in Multiple Occupation in the Neasden area. Transient, disengaged communities can sometimes correlate to lack of care, stewardship and pride in the local area.

The high street offer is limited, consisting largely of small-scale independent traders of services (launderette, barbers), several ethnic food and grocery stores and cafes reflecting the area's diversity. There is a bank, post office, national supermarket chain and pharmacy, but very few comparison retailers or national multiples.

Ownership

The Council has a moderate level of property ownership in and around the Town Centre. This includes a significant block of row housing surrounding Wykeham Primary School and Jackman Mews to the north. The council also owns a contiguous strip of backland sites running along the A4088, funnelling out to a small town centre car park that heralds the start of the western high street and faces The Grange itself. Other key assets outside of ownership include the former Ritz Cinema/former library at no. 277 and the former Neasden Montessori School next to St. Catherine's church show on map.



Economic context

Brent has undergone significant regeneration over the last 20 years, which has improved prosperity and life chances. The borough has experienced strong economic growth since 2014. The number of jobs has increased by 17%, and the number of businesses by 24%. Despite this, there are still parts of the borough that suffer high levels of social and economic disadvantage.





Nationally, Brent is the fourth most deprived borough in London. Neasden is classified as falling into the 10% and 20% of most deprived areas in London, according to the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). In employment terms, Neasden's economy is driven by typically lower value sectors such as wholesale and retail, construction, transport and manufacturing. There is a lower than average concentration of higher value activities such as business, professional services technology and communications.

The area experiences a number of labour market challenges including below average economic activity levels, higher than average unemployment, lower than average skills levels and therefore lower levels of income. A reported 9,900 working age people in Brent are unemployed, slightly higher than London as a whole. This shows a need to provide further education to help uplift the economic base of the borough, as well as the need for additional jobs, and other initiatives to improve Brent's skills base. The multicultural nature of the population also requires specific needs such as a wide range of community and cultural facilities.

Neasden has a weak evening economy, and has a high proportions of convenience and betting. The impact of Brent Cross Shopping Centre and larger footprint retail parks to the south have hit Neasden local economy hard.

This Action Plan will explore the concept of building and strengthen a local round-the clock offer through diversification of offer, mixed uses and capacity building .

Green Space

Whilst the Welsh Harp Reservoir and Gladstone Park offer good quality open spaces for recreation, increasing biodiversity and improving well-being, Neasden Town Centre lacks good quality, quantity and access to green infrastructure. This adversely impacts the liveability of the place. In the

1980s, the London Wildlife Trust converted part of The Grange roundabout into a nature area. This is a unique yet underutilised asset for the town centre, currently cut off and hidden due to the gyratory. Whilst the bolder opportunity to reconnect this 'island' back to the high street exists, this is a complex and long-term aspiration due to its context of the road infrastructure surrounding it.

Unless there is a step-change in the surrounding road infrastructure, the opportunities to introduce new and significant green spaces to impactfully improve the pedestrian environment are limited.

Brent Bee Corridor

Brent Council has sown a 7-mile long 'bee corridor' of wildflower meadows across 24 of its parks and green spaces to support dwindling bee populations in the city. The corridor was created over a three year period (2019-2021).

To increase biodiversity and help flora and fauna to thrive, the Council has changed the management strategy for some of its grassed areas to create wildflower meadows. 22 of these wildflower meadows make up Brent's Bee Corridor. The bee corridor is an attempt to provide much-needed habitats within a densely populated urban area. 5 years on, bees and other pollinating insects, such as butterflies, are benefiting due to the increase in habitat.

The initiative won the APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) award in 2019 and the council is monitoring impact on biodiversity. A species of butterfly that had not been seen locally for many years has emerged, as well as a type of long grass called 'Yorkshire Fog', which is attractive to caterpillars and the small skipper butterfly.

The opportunities exist to re imagine even the smallest pockets of land, and convert them into hard-working high street islands of green, adding to Brent's bee corridor and improving the air quality of the local area.

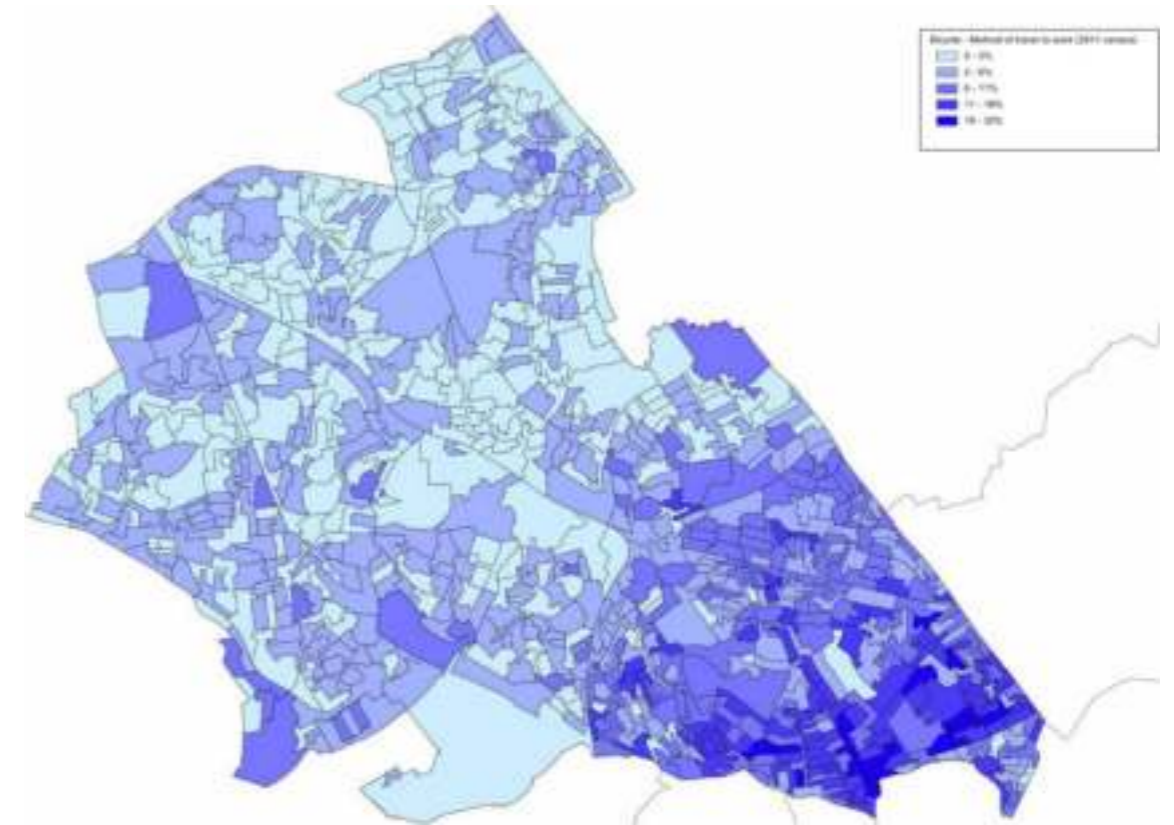


Transport and Active Travel

The public transport offer in Neasden is sub-optimal, with Neasden tube station (Jubilee Line) located some way from the town centre. Dollis Hill underground provides public transport accessibility to the south. Bus services bypass the town centre itself and operate mainly along the principal routes of the of the A5 Edgware Road, A4140 Salmon Street, A4088 Dudden Hill Road/Neasden Lane and the A406 North Circular. Cycle access into the town centre is unappealing due to the poor air quality, dominance of road traffic, busy A-roads and the difficult gyratory. Birse Crescent runs along the southern edge of the town centre at lower level where the A4088 dips under the North Circular.

The Council has a long-term ambition to create a coherent network of direct, comfortable and attractive cycle routes to enhance wider connectivity. Although reconfiguring the gyratory and connecting back The Grange is a wider term aspiration, it is an undertaking that requires far more research, modelling, testing and finding frameworks that are beyond the scope of this action plan. However, this plan will explore:

- Improving the approaches to, from and through the town centre, through wayfinding, green infrastructure, for example pocket parks and the subway
- Rationalisation of the car parking in the town centre to partially pedestrianise the core and encourage other civic uses of the space to improve the townscape (greening, seating, markets, public art)
- Supporting Neasden Collective explore ways to encourage businesses to improve their servicing and delivery plans to help reduce motorised vehicle trips in the town centre.
- An intention to realign back to the historic street pattern and desire lines across the gyratory will be explored.

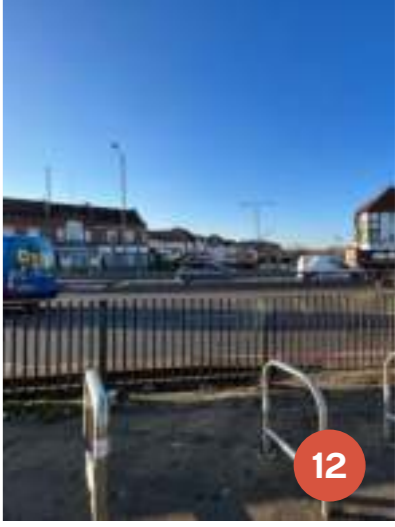
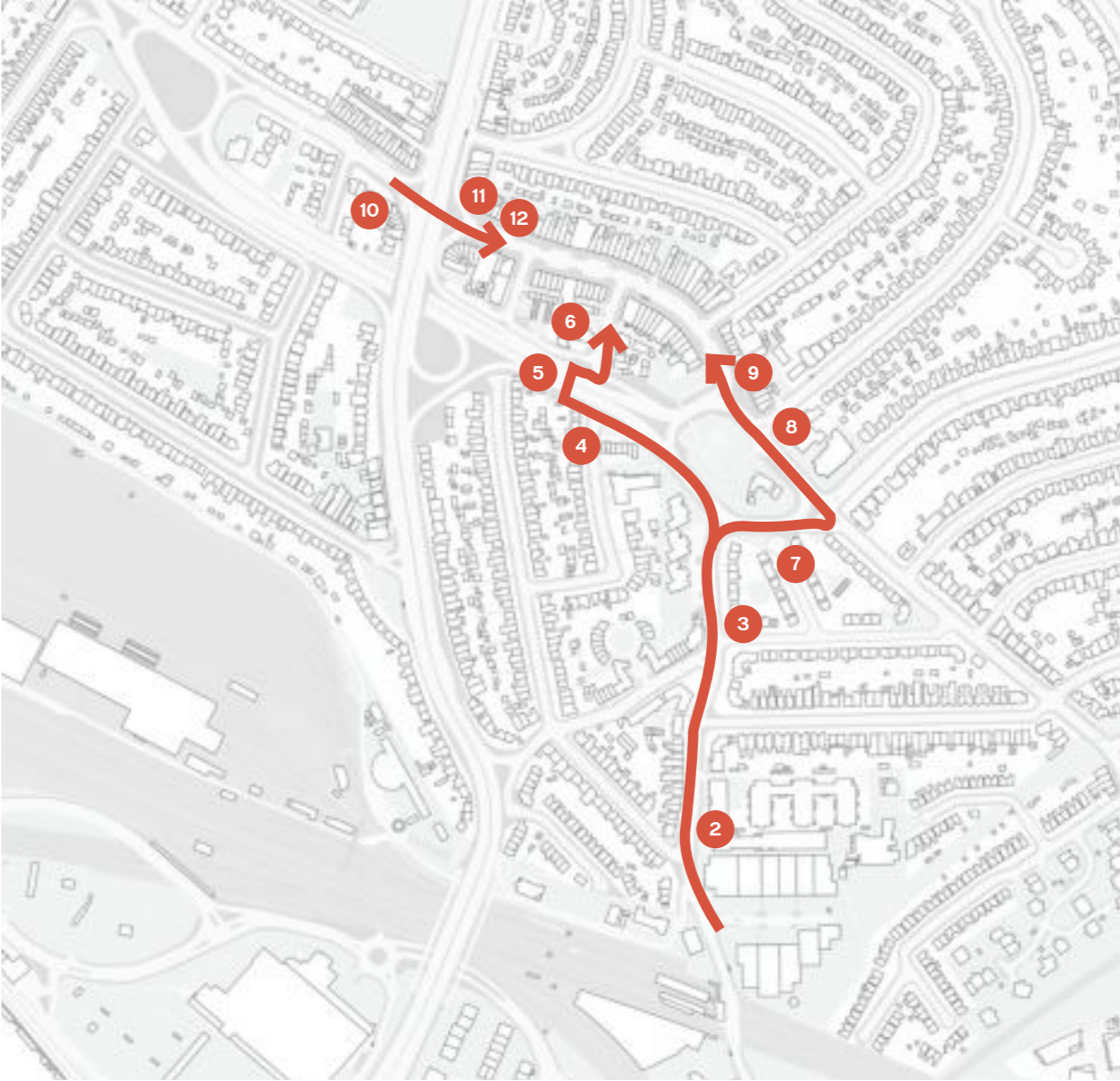
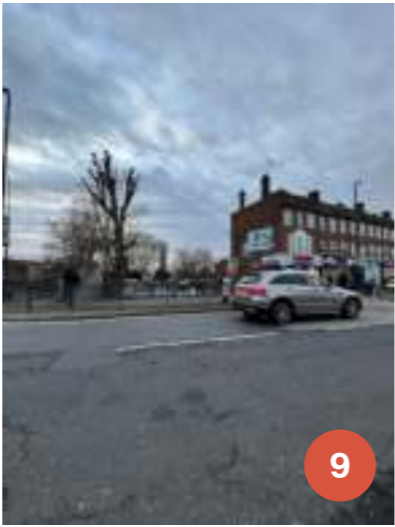
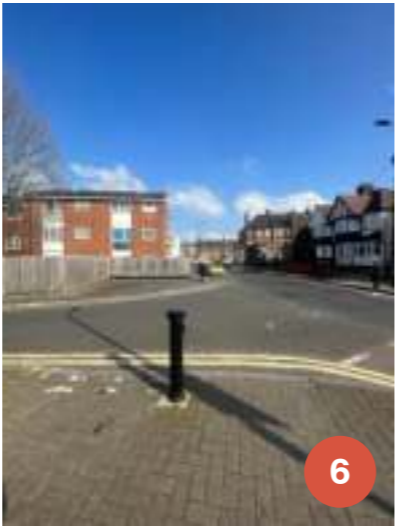
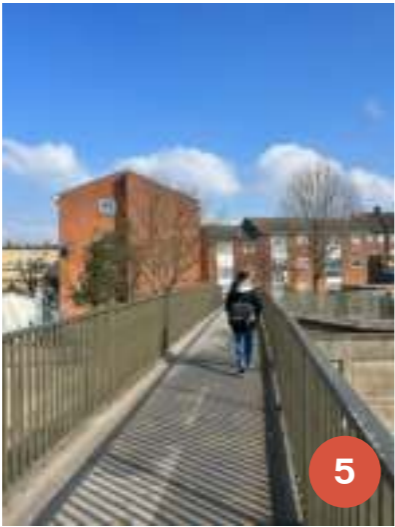
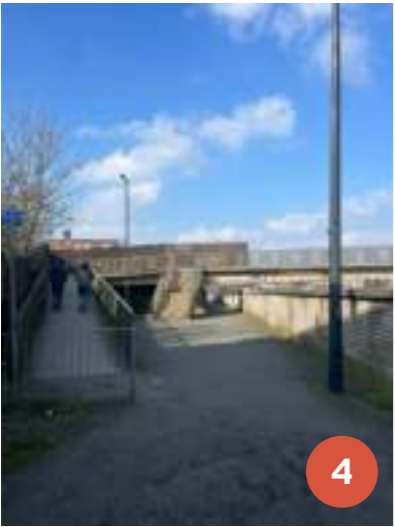




Connectivity

Pedestrian approaches into the Town Centre are poor, particularly the main route to the town centre from Neasden Underground station, which is negotiated by crossing a busy gyratory system with no surface-level crossings and a series of convoluted elevated footbridges. The following page highlights these routes through a series of photographs.

The Route to Neasden High Street



Air quality

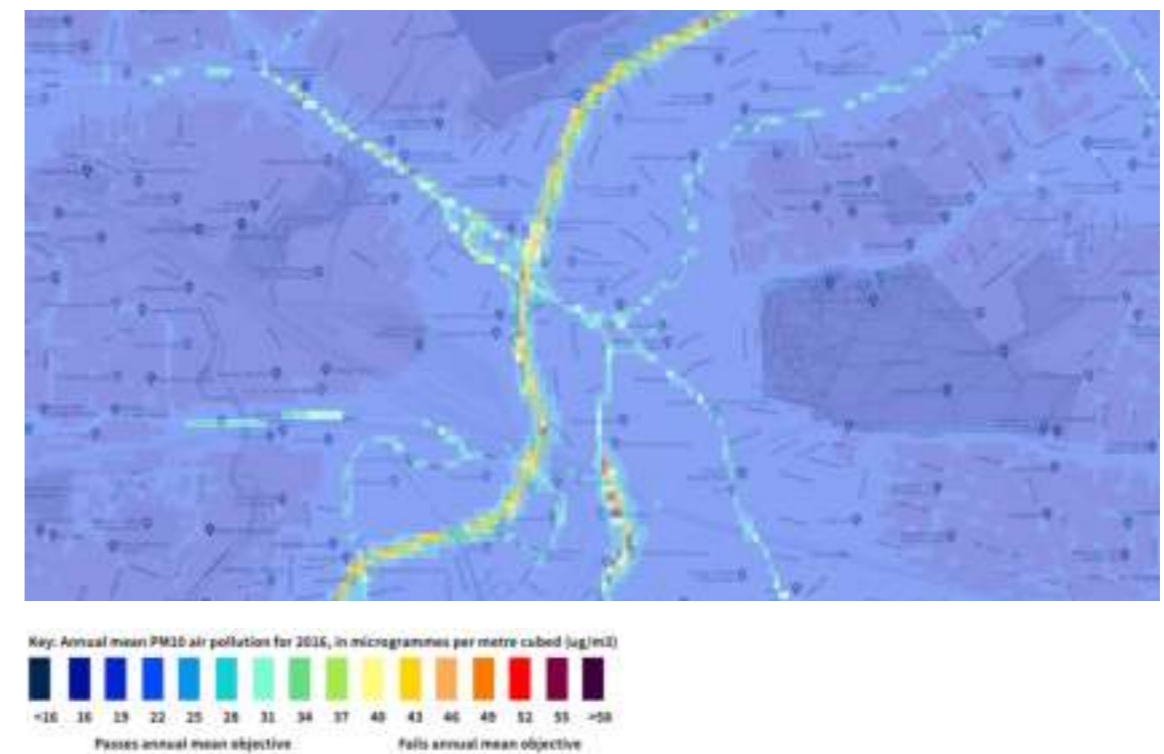
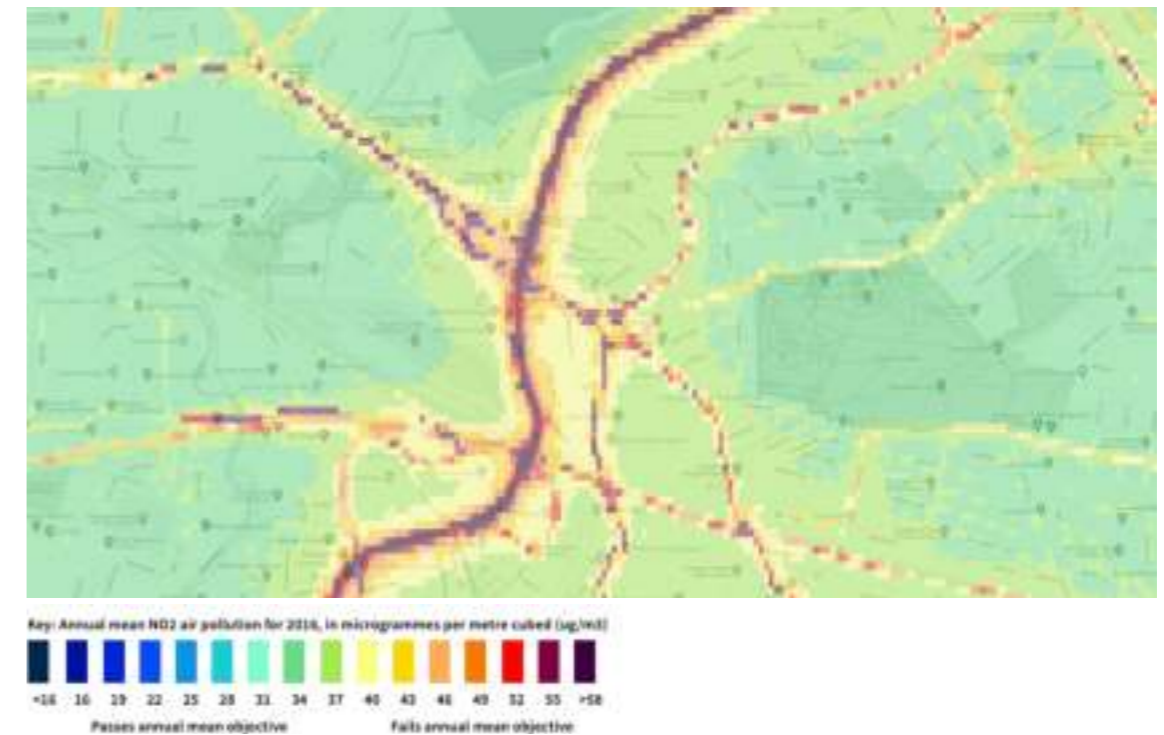
Much of Brent is covered by an Air Quality Management Area, principally related to pollution caused by vehicles. These impacts can also be made worse by wider issues such as poverty, deprivation and general poor health. The Brent Local Plan 2019-2041 sets out particular initiatives under the London Plan's Good Growth Objectives. These include:

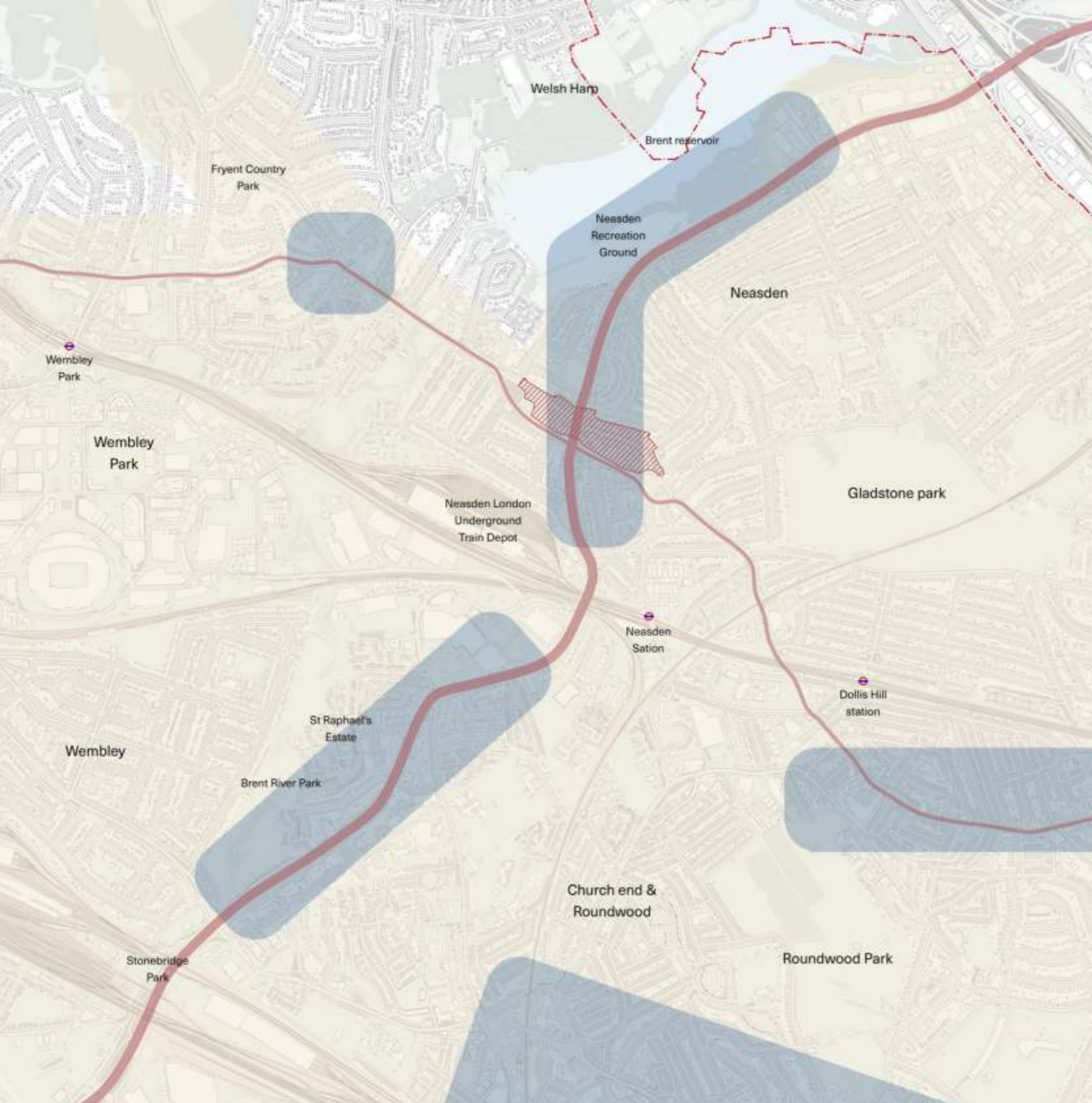
- Creating a Healthy Borough - Improving Brent's air quality overall and particularly in Growth Areas.
- Increasing Efficiency and Resilience - Tackling congestion and air quality around the North Circular, improving orbital public transport routes such as the West London Orbital railway scheme and prioritising active travel to provide realistic alternatives to travelling by car.

Local Plan Policy BSUI2 Air Quality says that major developments within Growth Areas and Air Quality Focus Areas will be required to be Air Quality Positive and elsewhere Air Quality Neutral.

Brent Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2017-2022 undertook local air quality testing and modelling and identified four areas as the worst affected sites within Brent. Neasden town centre is one these Air Quality Focus Areas (AQFA) or hotspots.


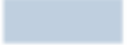
Unsurprisingly, as Neasden town centre incorporates part of the North Circular Road and Dudden Hill Lane (A4088), these major roads contribute significantly to the poor air quality in the area. Neasden Goods Yard has also been identified as a significant source of PM10. As Neasden is a growth area, it is important to implement active and mitigating measures with as future development is delivered in the area.





Air Quality

Air quality

-  Air quality management area
-  Air quality focus area

https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/details?aqma_ref=120#191 Accessed 19-02-24

Climate Resilience

The project area has a higher than average climate risk rating on the GLA's Climate Risk Register. Brent Council have declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency, and have developed a strategy to help address some of the local climate related challenges. The Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy has five key themes which are closely aligned to the priorities set out by residents within the Brent Climate Assembly and also align to the Climate Change priorities being pursued across London.

The five strategy themes are:

- Consumption, resources and waste
- Transport (Sustainable Travel)
- Homes, Buildings and the Built Environment
- Nature and Green Space
- Supporting Communities.

Our proposals and action plan align with this broader strategy to help implement measures that mitigate the impact of a changing climate.





Neasden High Street

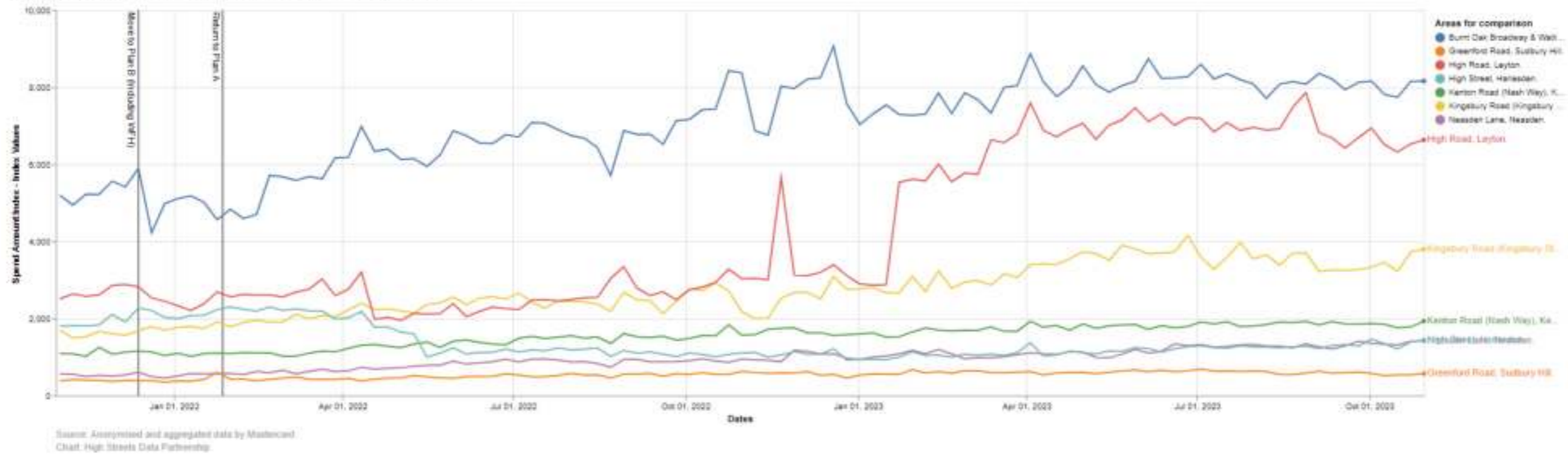
Neasden town centre exhibits distinct characteristics that set it apart from neighbouring town centres, including Church End, Willesden Green, and Wembley. The town centre hosts some prominent establishments such as Tesco, Iceland, and Costa. Neasden is undergoing a transformation into a comprehensive destination and it has the potential to cater to both local residents and visitors from the wider area .

The town centre currently has a variety of ethnic groceries offering Polish, Turkish, Greek, Afghan, and Romanian products and is equipped with some vital local services such as pharmacists, launderettes, and barbers. There is also a growing market specialising in black hair and beauty. There has been a chronic lack of investment in the town centre work in recent decades.

The upcoming Neasden Goods Yard is expected to bring about new economic opportunities in the surrounding area of Neasden Station and a new range of businesses. It is important to ensure that this new development knits into and benefits the existing communities, culture, history, and ensures integration of old and new into the area's growth. This is a major element of Brent's Inclusive Growth Strategy.

To maintain Neasden's unique character and community amidst new developments, it is crucial to give priority to bolstering local enterprises and safeguard its multicultural legacy. Maintaining this equilibrium will be key to ensure that growth in this area is comprehensive and beneficial to all members of the community, preserving and enhancing its distinct identity, whilst capitalising on the future

Neasden Lane, Neasden. vs Other Areas - Mastercard Transactions, Retail
 30/10/2021 to 30/10/2023, Weekdays (Mon-Fri), Spend Amount Index (Index Values)

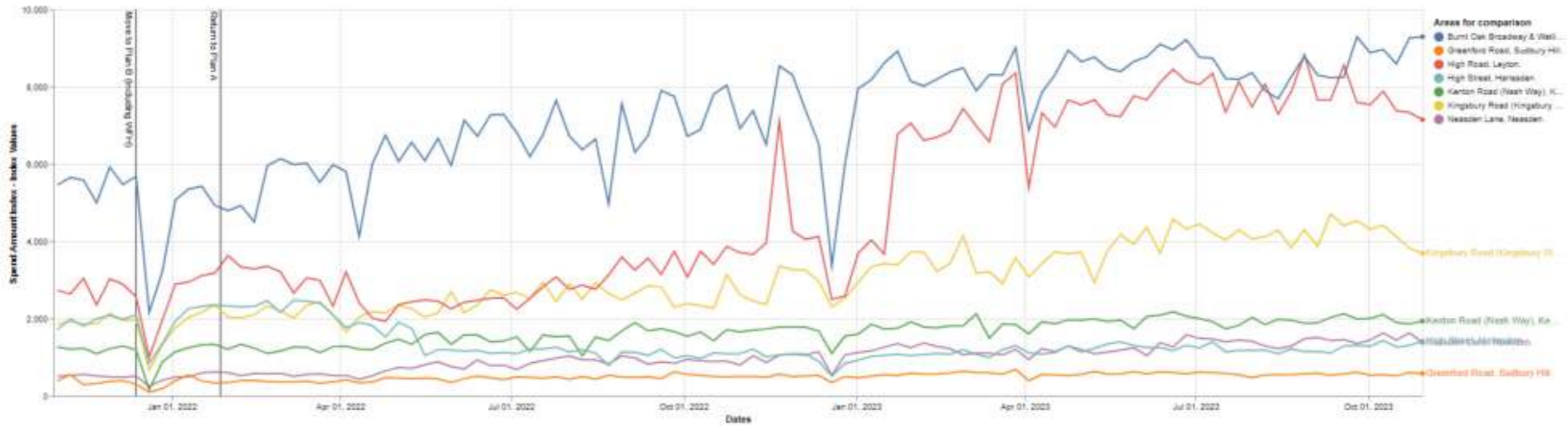


Neasden Lane, Neasden. - Retail Spend By Hour
 7 Day Rolling Average Spend (Retail) in Focus Area, by selected times of day (Hours), (30/09/2022 - 30/09/2023)



Neasden Lane, Neasden. vs Other Areas - Mastercard Transactions, Retail

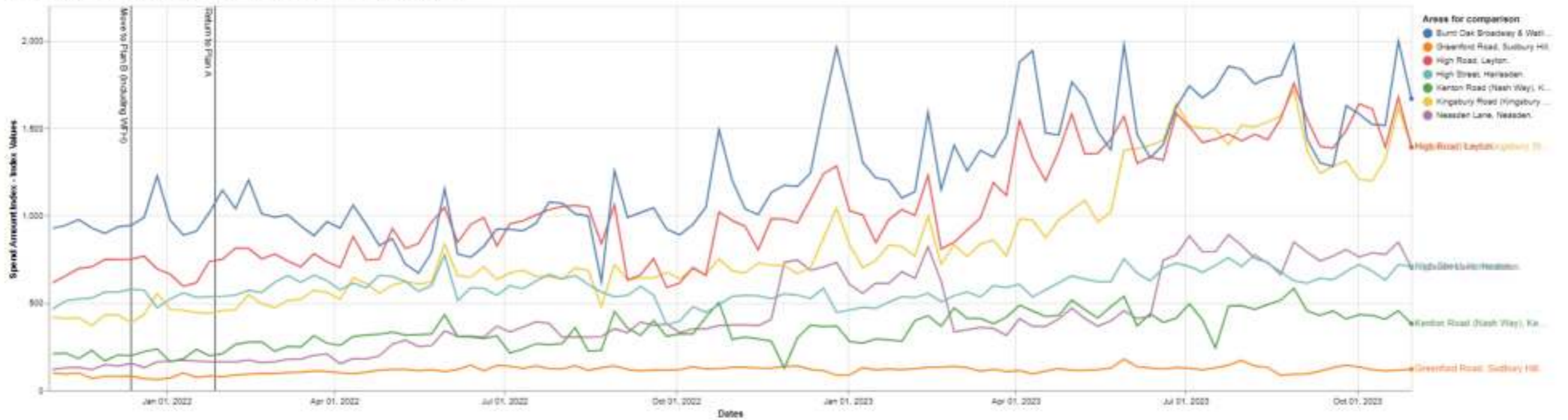
30/10/2021 to 30/10/2023, Weekend (Sat-Sun), Spend Amount Index (Index Values)



Source: Anonymous and aggregated data by Mastercard
Chart: High Streets Data Partnership

Neasden Lane, Neasden. vs Other Areas - Mastercard Transactions, Eating

30/10/2021 to 30/10/2023, Weekdays (Mon-Fri), Spend Amount Index (Index Values)



Source: Anonymous and aggregated data by Mastercard
Chart: High Streets Data Partnership

4.5

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4. EVIDENCE

Brent Local Plan 2019-2041

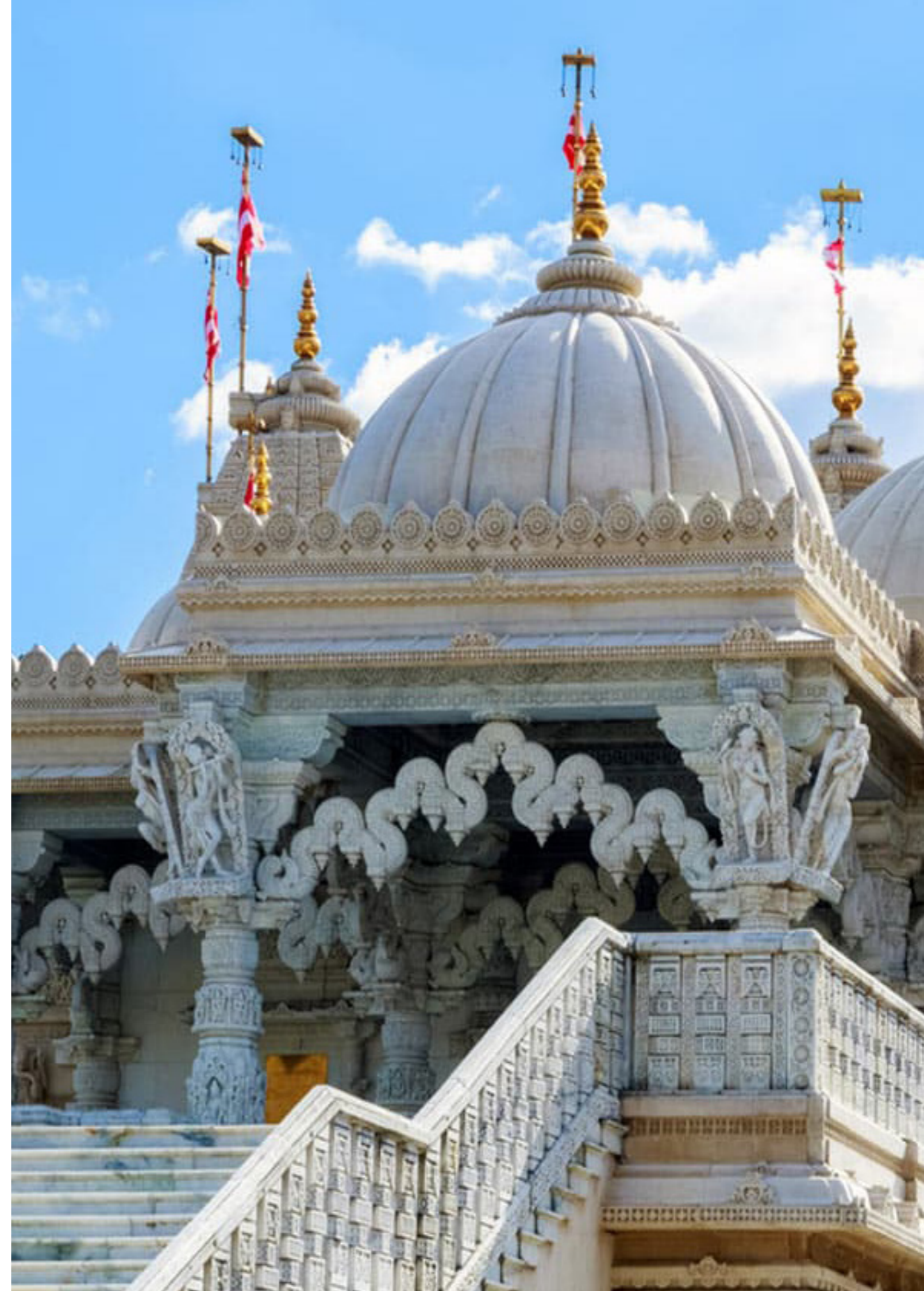
Vision For Neasden

The local plan sets out a high level vision for Neasden, as:

- maintaining its role as a local centre, providing a range of independent retail and services
- aspirations for a new street market
- a mix of community and cultural facilities to cater to the needs and reflect the diversity of its communities
- Neasden Stations Growth Area: a key focus for new housing and employment provided in tall buildings and a new West London Orbital railway station
- improved townscape and public realm on/around the A406 and Neasden junction.

Policy BP2 EAST outlines that any proposals should align with the place vision by contributing to:

- The potential at various locations in the town centre to support its vitality and viability.
- Co-location/ intensification and a wide range of new business premises fit for modern day occupiers in association with a new mixed use community.
- Tree planting and associated landscaping around North Circular Road and other transport corridors.





Policy BEGA 1a Neasden Stations Growth Area(NSGA)

The Brent Local Plan identifies the area around Neasden Station as a growth area. This is largely down to large areas of underutilised land and the potential to increase transport capacity and improved connectivity via the existing Neasden station and proposed West London Orbital station.

NSGA Masterplan SPD

Growth will accommodate new homes and jobs to meet future demands through industrial intensification and co-location with residential uses. The aim for the NSGA is to deliver at least 2,000 new and affordable homes with new job opportunities, new and affordable workspace.

Redevelopment will be complemented by public spaces and open spaces and enhanced, high quality public realm. A robust local movement network of walking and cycling routes and social infrastructure will connect surrounding neighbourhoods and communities.

Brent Council has adopted the NSGA Masterplan SPD to provide a sustainable development framework to guide the physical and social-economic regeneration of the growth area.

4.6

OTHER STUDIES

Neasden Town Centre Study (Regeneris & We Made That 2015)

The study was commissioned in 2015 by Brent council to understand character and town centre performance. The purpose of the study was to provide a robust evidence base to inform future policy and intervention. Nine years on, much of the challenges, opportunities and recommendations are relevant. The Brent Local Plan 2019-41, earmarks Neasden as a growth area with the opportunity to intensify with up to 2000 new homes.

The study identifies the key challenges in Neasden town centre as:

- Quality Breadth of Retail Offer
- Anti-social Behaviour, crime and safety
- Cleanliness
- Labour market issues (below average economic activity, high unemployment and a low skills/income base)
- High churn of residents/absentee landlords - engagement/enforcement

Four recommendations came out of this study:

- **Form/Function**
To intensify development and diversify the town centre offer.
- **Enforcement**
To tackle daily issues like anti-social behaviour, litter, fly tipping, commercial waste management and illegal parking through stricter enforcement measures.
- **Empowerment**
Giving residents and business communities a stronger voice.
- **Place/Identity**
Improving the sense of arrival, wayfinding and gateways.

Strengths

- A number of long-standing businesses are willing to engage in town centre issues with a general appetite for partnership working
- A number of potential development sites within the town centre providing potential to intensify and diversify uses, (concept proposals for three of these are explored later in this document)

The presence of The Grange a successful and well-

- established business centre

Opportunity to test a street market via the planned temporary relocation of the Church End market

Opportunities

Building on the existing engaged business groups, there is strong potential to galvanise a wider community of people in a more structured format, and looking forward, opportunities for the future of Neasden Lane to be more citizen-led, with an action group or Community Improvement District. Whilst in the study the demand for SMEs workspace was not identified, there is a strong likelihood that market conditions will have changed, with remote working being prevalent since the pandemic. Since the study, the Launch-It enterprise centre has established at 60 Neasden Lane, offering affordable private and co-working spaces for young entrepreneurs and the local community.

Neasden Town centre Regeneration Options (Jan Kattein Architects, 2020)

This is the most recent commissioned study of Neasden town Centre, completed in 2020. The study covers off economic, planning policy, ownership and green infrastructure contexts of Neasden before looking at public realm improvements and a set of high-level development options for sites within the town centre and its fringes.

A number of salient points are addressed within a future vision Improved and greened pedestrian routes, generous planting to create a buffer between intensified fringe development 'meanwhile' interventions and incubator space, and enhancing the town's Art Deco architecture. In the context of a major and longer-term road infrastructure reconfiguration interim steps are noted to create a welcoming pedestrian environment with mitigation of pollution through urban greening and a new market. Improvement to the underpass by way of lighting and direct access are highlighted as an opportunity to connect the core town centre to the northwest.

Short-term proposals listed in the study are:

- Building frontage improvements - to restore historic Art Deco buildings, to positively address the high street
- Neasden Market Lane - public realm improvements to trial full pedestrianisation of the high street and trial a new town centre market
- Reactivating the Ritz Bringing the former (library and Ritz Cinema) as the centrepiece of Neasden through meanwhile cultural and entrepreneurial activity
- Neasden Parade - framing the entry into the Town Centre via one of Neasden's prominent Art Deco heritage assets
- Reconnecting the Grange - expanding the offer at The Grange business centre through temporary affordable workspace development

Action Plan Response:

- Invest in the fit out and activation of The Ritz kitchen or diversify the high street offer, create a community hub and support local entrepreneurs
- Neasden Market provides an opportunity to trial a specialised market, to complement the current retail offer, create a destination and draw a new pattern of footfall
- Creating a town centre gateway and wayfinding beacon at 'The Lighthouse'
- Reconnect The Grange, peninsularising the gyratory, creating a new town green bounded by a civic cluster: The Lighthouse, The Grange Business Centre, St. Catharine's Church and former Montessori School

A406 Cycle Crossing at Neasden – Initial Options Review (Urban Movement, 2016)

There are two TfL Quietway proposals being developed that traverse Neasden. Quietway 3 runs between Regents park and terminates at Gladstone Park to the southeast. The other runs from Harrow and terminates at Wembley Park to the northwest. Currently, there is no quiet cycling route connecting these two Quietways. The existing subway is substandard for cycling and not ideal either for walking. The challenge is to develop a cost effective, feasible and attractive means for cyclists and pedestrians to cross the A406.

The study explores following five basic options for the crossing:

1. a surface-level crossing aligned with Neasden Lane
2. a bi-directional cycle track in the central reservation of the A4088 underpass
3. a walk/cycle path along the A4088, above the central reservation and below the A406 bridge
4. a new bridge link over the A406
5. an improved subway crossing

The study concludes that the preferred solution is a 'replacement of the two existing footbridges across the A4088 with new pedestrian and cycle bridges that better respond to the traditional street pattern. These bridges are connected by a third bridge that spans the North Circular, running above the central reservation of the A4088. This dumbbell arrangement reconnects all four 'quadrants' of Neasden, currently disconnected by the A406 and A4088'

Action Plan Response:

- Creating a town centre gateway and wayfinding beacon at 'The Lighthouse'
- Reconnect The Grange, peninsularing the gyratory, creating a new town green bounded by a civic cluster: The Lighthouse, The Grange Business Centre, St. Catharine's Church and former Montessori School

Neasden Lane Options Study (Wyg, 2017)

Wyg carried out this feasibility study to identify traffic management and public transport issues for the Council's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) process. Key challenges include a high level of road accidents, poor air quality, poor public realm, connectivity and limited accessibility for active travel. The proposed options focused primarily on the Eastern and Western Gyratory, the A4088 and the subway beneath the North Circular. A number of options were considered and preferred options identified.

Western Gyratory Preferred Option – removing the gyratory system, realigning the eastbound A4088 along the westbound carriageway, replaced with a signalised junction. Adding a merge at the westbound Neasden Lane North approach onto northbound A406 is also proposed as well as the creation of 5500 sqm of new public space east and north of the junction for development, released following the gyratory realignment.

- **Eastern Gyratory Option 1** – signalisation of the A4088 / Neasden High Street and A4088 / B453 junctions, with the gyratory system remaining in place. A new bus facility is also proposed adjacent to Neasden Lane to replace the bus loop via the High Street and Birse Crescent. It also proposes an enhanced pedestrian route along Birse Crescent and the removal of the existing footbridge between the High Street and the Grange Business Hub.
- **Subway Preferred Option 2** – creation of a sunken garden landscaped with sloping garden terraces, planted with mixed grasses and flowering plants to create colour and interest. A retaining wall and an 'avenue' of tall trees further strengthens the linear connection between the two sides of Neasden Lane. Trees are also grouped close to the A406 to act as a screen and noise buffer

Action Plan Response:

- Sunken Garden at Underpass to rationalise convoluted approach, improve greening and strengthen the linear connection between the two sides of Neasden Lane.



5

ABOUT THIS ACTION PLAN



NEASDEN
TOWN
CENTRE

This document is The Neasden Town Centre Placemaking and Sustainability Action Plan ("Action Plan"). It is a strategic pipeline partnership programme for Neasden Town Centre, with costed and deliverable projects at a mixture of scales giving scope for community authorship and capacity building.

Project Team: Valerie Beirne, Casper Bhalerao, Poppy Boadle, Rumi Bose, Anu Dheri, Gustav Hedberg, Tanisha Raffiuddin, Carlos Sanchez and James Taylor.

The report was prepared by Sanchez Benton Architects with Rumi Bose, Where Pathways Meet & Concept Culture.

Sanchez Benton is an architecture practice committed to working within the earth's ecological boundaries. We design landscapes, buildings and public spaces, applying the same approach and ethos to all. This demands a paradigm shift in architects outlook and behaviour that starts with Transform and Repair: Don't Demolish! Our award-winning work is civic, generous, and joyful. Our approach is always to combine technical expertise with a community-led approach, ensuring real life knowledge informs design and investment decisions. The studio is featured in the Architect's Journal's '40 under 40' and the Architecture Foundation's book - 'New Architects 4' showcasing 'the best British architecture practices of the last 10 years.'

Where Pathways Meet is a creative consultancy that works at the meeting point of cities, nature, and communities across the fields of strategic placemaking, green infrastructure, landscape strategy, urbanism, active travel, healthy streets, regeneration and economic development.

Rumi Bose is an urban design and placeshaping consultant with 15 years of regeneration, engagement and delivery experience. Leading by listening, Rumi brings together the best people to create insightful and creative projects, weaving social, cultural and environmental challenges into designs that speak of hope and community. An award-winning place-shaping expert, Rumi approaches design intuitively, and her projects have won RIBA, Civic Trust, New London Architecture and Festival of Place awards.

Concept Culture is a boutique creative agency, dedicated to the built environment. We help developers, architects and placemakers tell their story, champion the value of their work, and actively engage with their audience through the power of storytelling. Through our adventures around the world, we have seen how the power of good architecture and urban design has a positive cultural, social, and environmental impact on people's lives. We exist to support organisations that deliver conscious places and thriving communities.

Sanchez Benton architects



Where Pathways Meet



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