

Appendix 2 – Streatham Investment and Growth Strategy

Between June and August 2019 Lambeth consulted on the Streatham Investment and Growth Strategy (SIGS) for eight weeks. The majority of respondents (82%) were broadly supportive of the Strategy. However, a number of issues and questions were raised during the consultation – these are addressed below.

1. Why are Primary Shopping Area (PSA) boundary changes being proposed?

High streets across the country are facing challenges such as increased online shopping and behaviour change leading to shifts in shopping patterns. Across the country traditional shops (described as ‘A1’ use classes for planning terms) are in decline. The A1 use class designation includes shops, hairdressers, undertakers, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, etc. It excludes cafes, restaurants, drinking establishments, hot food take away, offices, etc.

The Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan (2018) proposes that Primary Shopping Areas should have a minimum of 50% A1 retail. The 2015 Lambeth Local Plan set the minimum threshold at 60%. So, we’re proposing a reduction of 10%. This reflects the relative under-performance of A1 uses in Streatham, as elsewhere. Currently Streatham Hill Primary Shopping Area has 49% A1 retail. This means that any planning application for a non A1 use is likely to be refused planning permission even if the use is desirable, e.g. cafes, creative spaces, workspaces, gyms, etc.

Making the PSA smaller therefore allows planners greater flexibility to approve uses other than A1 retail, addressing the issue of Streatham town centre’s diversity and resilience – objective 2 in the Streatham Investment and Growth Strategy. Existing businesses will not be affected by the proposed boundary change. The proposed amendment will only be relevant if or when a planning application is made. This will also help avoid planning applications on vacant units being refused on policy grounds, even if the use is desirable. Businesses outside the PSA would remain within the town centre boundary.

2. What will happen to the area/shops that are being removed from the PSA?

Existing uses/businesses will not be affected by the proposed boundary change. The proposed amendment will only be relevant if or when a planning application is made.

3. What is the reason behind the proposed town centre boundary changes?

The London Plan categorises London’s town centres as ‘international’, ‘metropolitan’, ‘major’ or ‘district’ according to a set of criteria, including catchment area, transport connectivity, quantum and nature of uses, etc. Streatham is designated as a major town centre. The Streatham & Investment and Growth Strategy proposes only that Streatham’s town centre boundary is ‘reviewed’. This review has been progressed with the Council’s Planning Policy team, who propose that sections of the current town centre boundary are no longer fit for purpose.

Uses within a town centre are required to have an active frontage. Currently, there are locations within the town centre that do not warrant or satisfy this requirement. For example, it is proposed that the London Square development (between Blairdery Road and Streatham Hill) is de-designated, as there is no requirement for an active frontage in this residential location. Similarly, the Leigham Court Road Car park is proposed for de-designation.

It is also proposed that Gleneldon Mews be de-designated from the Town centre. This will remove the requirement for active frontages in this location, providing greater protection for the existing B1 uses in this location – MOT, panel beaters, food preparation, and so on. Removing areas inappropriate for town

centre uses and/or development provides protection for those areas and focuses development in locations where it is considered appropriate, i.e. within a redrawn ‘fit for purpose’ town centre boundary.

4. Where’s the evidence for a need for more workspace in Streatham?

Since 2013 Streatham has lost around 9,100sqm of office floorspace due to Permitted Development Rights and 30% of remaining (office) stock has prior approval. This is the third highest loss of all town centres in London, behind only Sutton and Croydon. As Sutton and Croydon are Metropolitan town centres, Streatham has actually experienced the highest loss of any major town centre in London. This is why the Strategy places emphasis on securing new office and workspace in Streatham, as set out under Objective 3.

5. There appears to be an unfair bias towards Streatham over Streatham Hill.

The consultation proposed minor amendments to the extent of the Primary Shopping Area around central Streatham. For example, to remove the Gracefield Gardens Health Centre, which does not provide a ‘shopping’ use. The consultation also only proposed very minor amendments to the town centre boundary in central Streatham. This protects Streatham central as the primary Shopping Area in Streatham. This proposal responds to feedback from the Business Improvement District (BID).

The majority of proposed amendments to the town centre boundary and the Primary Shopping Area are focused on Streatham Hill as this is the part of Streatham that research and evidence indicates requires greater flexibility to attract investment and development, particularly around the station – reflected in the Places and Neighbourhoods Policy (PN4) in the Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan. The proposed changes to the PSA around Streatham Hill does not mean that businesses will be ‘pushed out’ or ‘lost’, only that greater flexibility will be allowed in considering future uses when planning permission is applied for.

6. Streatham faces dangerous levels of traffic, causing high levels of pollution. How will Lambeth and the Strategy address this?

The Streatham Investment and Growth Strategy is not a Transport Strategy. The Council consulted on a draft Transport Strategy in 2018, which has now been updated and approved. It is available online [here](#). The Council is now developing a Transport Implementation Plan that will set out in greater detail where interventions will be delivered over the coming years, including in Streatham. The Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan (2018) which the Strategy forms part of the evidence base for, includes aspirations to support sustainable travel and the accessibility and use of public transport through improvements to public realm and public transport facilities and measures to reduce the impact and dominance of road traffic.

The A23 is designated as TLRN (Transport for London Road Network). This means it falls within the jurisdiction of Transport for London (TfL), rather than Lambeth Council. We do, of course, work closely together to develop proposals for improvement. TfL are due to consult on their Streatham Healthy Streets Programme, which includes completion of the removal of the central reservation from Sternhold Avenue to the A205 (South Circular) and the delivery of segregated cycle infrastructure along the length of the High Street.

TfL are striving for a neutral impact on buses in order to protect bus journey times. This is the focus of their work at this moment in time. TfL have undertaken a parking and loading review. This will inform the designs that they will consult on for the segregated cycle infrastructure later this year. This may include proposals for the removal of some parking and/or loading bays. To enable the segregated cycle infrastructure to work TfL will have to consider restricted access to/from some side roads and/or closing off access altogether. Full details will be consulted on in the coming months.

TfL's emerging proposals envisage one lane of vehicular traffic in each direction along the A23, plus a bus lane. There will also be two additional 'straight across' crossings, a segregated cycle track and the building out of footpaths where possible. There will be safety improvements and a 20mph speed limit. It is expected to take 21 months to develop designs with construction expected to commence in Jan 2021, subject to securing funding.

At this moment, TfL do not anticipate significant overall improvements in air quality. However, they do anticipate some improvements arising from the extension of the ULEZ down to the A205 (South Circular) in 2021. The A23 from Brixton to Streatham has been designated as an air quality focus area. This means it will be prioritised when developing and implementing actions listed in [Lambeth's Air Quality Action Plan](#).

7. What about the Climate Change Emergency?

In 2019 Lambeth Council declared a Climate Change Emergency. The council has since published its own corporate carbon reduction plan setting out how the council will ensure its operations are carbon neutral by 2030, and has announced its intention to hold a Citizens Assembly on climate change, which will bring together a group of Lambeth's residents to make recommendations on how residents, businesses, the council and other partners can work together to respond to the climate emergency. We expect the Council and partners to respond to these recommendations by developing a shared climate change action plan to be published in 2020.

The council has a number of planning and regulatory powers that it can, and does, use to help reduce carbon emissions and improve the environment, but achieving the level of change required by the climate emergency will need the participation of a far greater number of stakeholders, working together to develop solutions that work at a neighbourhood level. The final Strategy acknowledges many people, organisations and businesses in Lambeth are already exploring smarter, greener ways of working and living, and reference these (such as the BID's recent purchase of a cargo bike that businesses can use for local deliveries).

8. There is not enough parking in Streatham, can this be addressed?

The latest census (2011) showed that 58% of Lambeth residents do not own a car. Current trends in car use show a 25% decrease in London since 1990. The Greater London Authority (GLA) have recently carried out research which resulted in a report titled 'High Streets for All' showing that over 90% of visitors to London high streets use sustainable transport methods such as walking, cycling or public transport.

The emerging updated Lambeth Local Plan, which the Strategy informs, includes aspirations to support sustainable travel and the accessibility and use of public transport through improvements to public realm and public transport facilities and measures to reduce the impact and dominance of road traffic. Therefore, there are no plans to increase parking in Streatham.

9. Public transport in Streatham is poor and overcrowded. Are there plans for an Underground station and better transport links?

TfL has produced a Business Case that was submitted to Department for Transport (DfT) which considered the 'Metroisation' of South London to drive housing growth. The Business Case set out that Streatham Hill Station would become part of the London Overground Network and would connect to Clapham Junction and Crystal Palace. The DfT have not progressed this. Streatham Hill Station is challenged by capacity issues with one principal access via footbridge causing access issues at peak times. In addition, the station has a short platform. Given the strategic importance of this station and the

development potential in and around the station significant potential exists to support growth through re-development of this site – this is reflected in Objective 5 of the Strategy.

10. A food and drink market, similar to the offerings in Brixton and Tooting, would be an attractive offering for Streatham and encourage community spirit – is a market possible?

A pilot has just started for a street market on Babington Plaza (near the Green). This is run by the BID on behalf of Lambeth Council.

11. There are too many betting shops and fast food units in Streatham.

The emerging updated Lambeth Local Plan includes a policy (PN4) to allow no new betting shops or payday loan shops across the centre as a whole. This is subject to an Examination in Public (EiP) in 2020 and potential challenge from betting shop/payday loan shop owners. The community will be able to make representations supporting this policy during the EiP. The review of the Lambeth Local Plan also states that the Primary Shopping Areas should have no more than 25% in food and drink use and no more than 2 in 5 consecutive food and drink uses.

12. Is there a strategy for pulling big brands to the area to help make it more attractive to other businesses?

The majority of shop sizes are relatively small which means that attracting large brands to the area is challenging. We are however monitoring subdivision of units where an unauthorised change of use has taken place and taking enforcement action where appropriate.

13. What is happening with Streatham Hill Theatre?

Council officers have met with the Friends of Streatham Hill Theatre and have also held a meeting with the owners of the Theatre to discuss opportunities for productive use. Discussions are ongoing.

14. What next?

The Strategy will be updated and published on-line in February 2020. It includes additional information on the proposed highways works due to be consulted on, additional information around the rationale for reducing the extent of the Streatham Hill Primary Shopping Area, and information on the declared Climate Change Emergency and how it impacts the Strategy.