

Fitzrovia Village

DRAFT
NOVEMBER 2022

Public Realm and Placemaking Strategy

The
Fitzrovia
Partnership
Business Improvement District

PLACEMAKING
LONDON

ARUP



Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the consultation draft Fitzrovia Village strategy and action plan.

These ambitious proposals to improve Fitzrovia's public spaces and routes, and the action plan, will make a direct contribution to realising the objectives of The Fitzrovia Partnership's business plan – a sustainable environment for everyone who works, lives and visits Fitzrovia.

Delivery of these proposals will make Fitzrovia a more attractive and safer place to walk and cycle. It will also support active and healthy lifestyles and create new spaces for everyone to work in, enjoy and relax.

Our draft plans will, when achieved, help Fitzrovia be more resilient to climate change.

The priority projects will also contribute to attracting visitors and generate inward investment, so Fitzrovia remains a thriving economy and great place to work, live and visit.

We look forward to working in partnership with Camden Council, TfL, businesses and residents to translate the Fitzrovia Village plans into action.



Lee Lyons
COO, The Fitzrovia Partnership

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1 Introduction

Creating a
healthier and
more sustainable
neighbourhood

Introduction

The Fitzrovia Partnership commissioned Arup to undertake a **Place and Public Realm Strategy**, and a concept design for the **Business Improvement District (BID)**, shown as the red line boundary on the adjacent image.

This strategy is an update to the predecessor **Fitzrovia Village report from January 2020**, recognising the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and the climate crisis on the public realm. In addition, since 2020 two initiatives have been delivered; the West End Project and The Fitzrovia Partnership's zero carbon initiatives.

This report re-examines and re-defines the role of the public realm in Fitzrovia and its contribution to economic recovery and the climate crisis by identifying opportunities- within the public realm to make Fitzrovia a healthier, resilient and liveable neighbourhood. It looks at ways to maximise the role of the public realm to make Fitzrovia a healthier and liveable neighbourhood.

The report is organised into three main areas **that are split into nine chapters and an appendix**. Firstly context and site understanding, then Fitzrovia's public realm vision, and lastly pilot projects and next steps.

We would like to thank Placemaking London for their contribution to the development of this report.

----- Study boundary
Plan illustrating the Fitzrovia Partnership Context



A phased approach

This report is part of a phased approach; including phases 1–3 outlined below.

PHASE	
	<p>This phase focuses on feasibility and begins to understand the opportunities in Fitzrovia’s public realm. It culminates in the Fitzrovia Village Feasibility and Concept Design Report, which was a feasibility study completed in Jan 2020. Additionally this phase included the Green Infrastructure Audit (GIA) and the Fitzpark Report.</p>
	<p>This phase is focused on defining the public realm vision and design strategy. The current report sits and is the result of a design process and methodology. After a thorough understanding of the site, workshops and surveys were conducted that lead to our defining vision. This then translated spatially into the concept design and the priority projects. Refer to chapter 8.</p>
	<p>This phase will develop ideas and the concept designs into reality by undertaking stakeholder engagement, generating funding and delivering the projects.</p>



A phased approach

WE ARE HERE



1. Consultation
2. Planning
3. Funding
4. Delivery

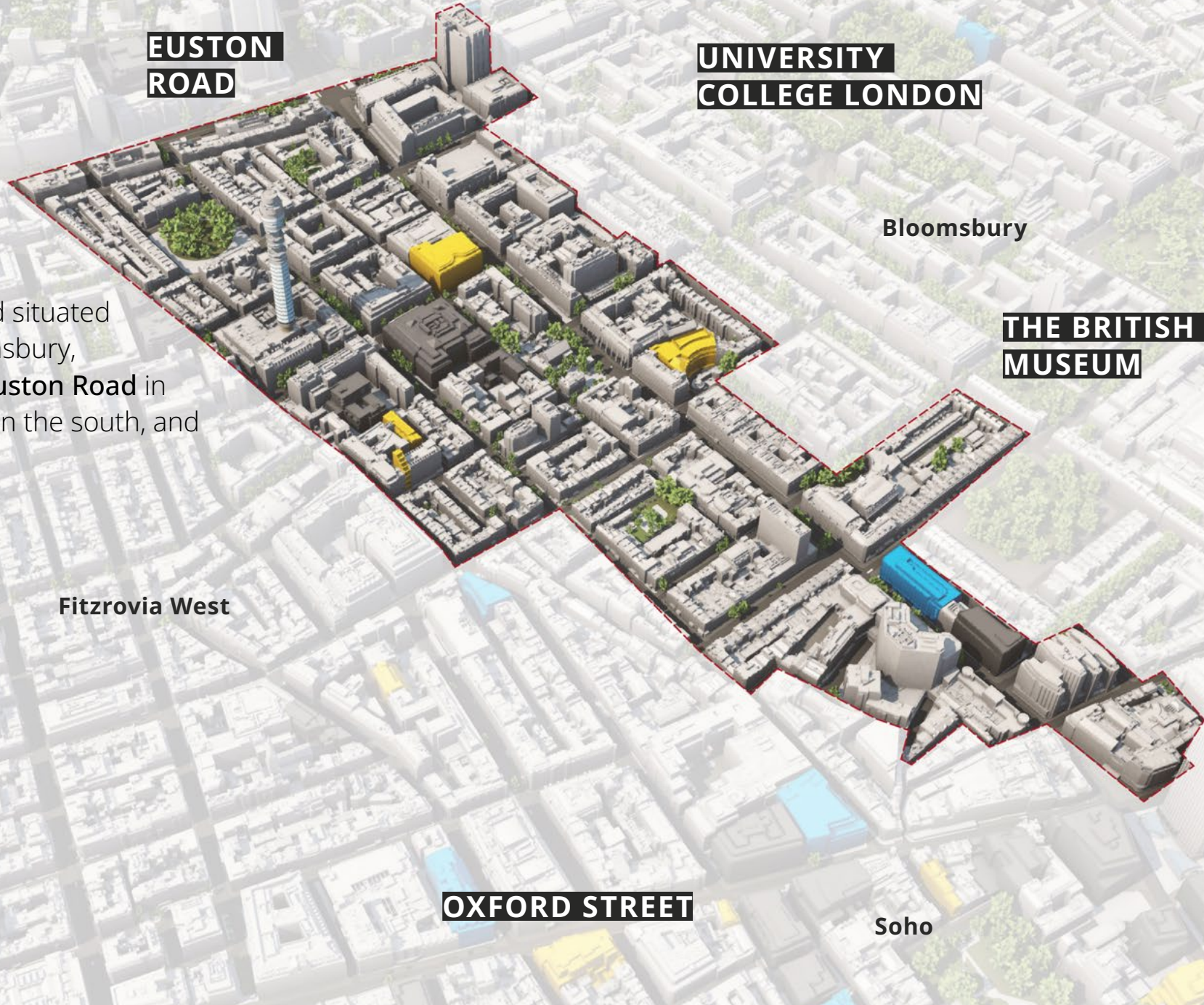
2 Context

Fitzrovia Village,
a Central London
neighbourhood full
of history

Site

The site and study area is based on **The Fitzrovia Partnership's** boundary.

Fitzrovia is a neighbourhood situated between Marylebone, Bloomsbury, and Soho. It extends from **Euston Road** in the north, to **Oxford Street** in the south, and Huntley Street in the east.



History

The planning and street layout of **Bloomsbury** and wider **Fitzrovia** can be seen through the lens of archive maps and photographs. These maps, and further information, is available in various city archives. The area retains a **robust urban character**. Historic maps provide an accurate record and provide a glimpse into life if the neighbourhood at various points in time.

Cleveland Street – East side falls within the Fitzroy and Charlotte Street Conservation Areas

Chitty Street – Falls within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area

Cleveland Street and Chitty Street are quiet commercial streets and characterised by a greater proportion of 20th century development and larger scale plots and buildings, with few surviving from the Georgian period. The nature of the uses and limited levels of traffic make these streets quieter and less populated than other streets in the conservation area. They have a strong sense of enclosure deriving from the relatively narrow street width, continuous frontages of generally four or five storeys and a largely consistent, strong parapet line. A variety of materials: red brick, yellow brick and render is evident on all streets. Along Cleveland Street there are a variety of building types, although the majority contribute to the character of the street.

Warren Street – Some parts of the street fall within the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area

Warren Street (and Cleveland Street) define the northern (and western boundaries) of the Fitzroy Conservation Area, respectively. All are busy routes with the buildings occupied by a wide range of small-scale retail, service, restaurant, office, community and residential uses; one of the defining characteristics of these streets. The mix of small scale uses and independent shops, often within a single building, make an important contribution to the character and vitality of this part of the conservation area.

Hidden histories of people and places...



'Morgan's Map of the Whole of London in 1682', in Morgan's Map of the Whole of London in 1682 ([s.l.], 1682), British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/london-map-morgan/1682/map> [accessed 1 October 2022].

Timeline

The historic maps illustrate clearly the influence of the **Georgian, Victorian** and **Edwardian** town planning, establishing a grid of principal, secondary streets, mews, courts and alleys and fine gardens squares.

The historic street plan has largely remained as originally envisaged. The character and ambience of the area is derived from the variety of architectural styles to be discovered on each individual streets. Mews are a particular feature of the area and provide characterful intimate space often with a single access point.

Most of the building are of low to mid rise scale but there are larger more contemporary buildings clustered around Fitzroy Street and Howland Street. The tallest landmark building in the area is the 1960's BT tower on Cleveland Street designed by the Ministry of Works architects for the General Post Office. The cylindrical tower opened in 1966 and originally included a revolving restaurant as well as office space and telecommunications equipment. A very bold post war architectural intervention into a traditional townscape which today a much-admired and recognisable part of the Central London skyline.

Fitzrovia has a rich heritage going back to the 1600s. The timeline below highlights some of the key points in history which have led to the characterful Fitzrovia that we know today.

...The impact of both World Wars and later post modern and contemporary development has also led to changes to the street pattern. However the area retains a very legible urban morphology and one that today continues to distinguish a very characterful and charming Central London neighbourhood...



History of Fitzrovia Village



1660

Earl of Southampton lays out designs for Bloomsbury Square

1666

Great fire of London

1720

First house in Cavendish Square completed by builder John Prince for the Earl of Oxford

1740

Crabtree Fields developed by nephews of John Goadge

1756

'New Road' (later Marylebone Road and Euston Road) completed linking Paddington to Islington, proposals lead by Duke of Grafton

1768

Charles Fitzroy, 1st Baron Southampton, purchases freehold of the Tottenham demesne lands, securing 255 acres

1904

Founding members of the Bloomsbury Group take up a lease on 46 Gordon Square

1871

Slade Art School opens at UCL



1841

Census records 485 people living in 27 houses on Goadge Place

1835

Work completed on Fitzroy square (began 1792)



1790

1911

Construction begins on the British Telecoms (BT) Tower



1952

Ralph Tubbs designs the Indian Young Men's Christian Association at 41 Fitzroy Square - Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru visits the following year



1961



1974

Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association and annual Fitzrovia festival founded

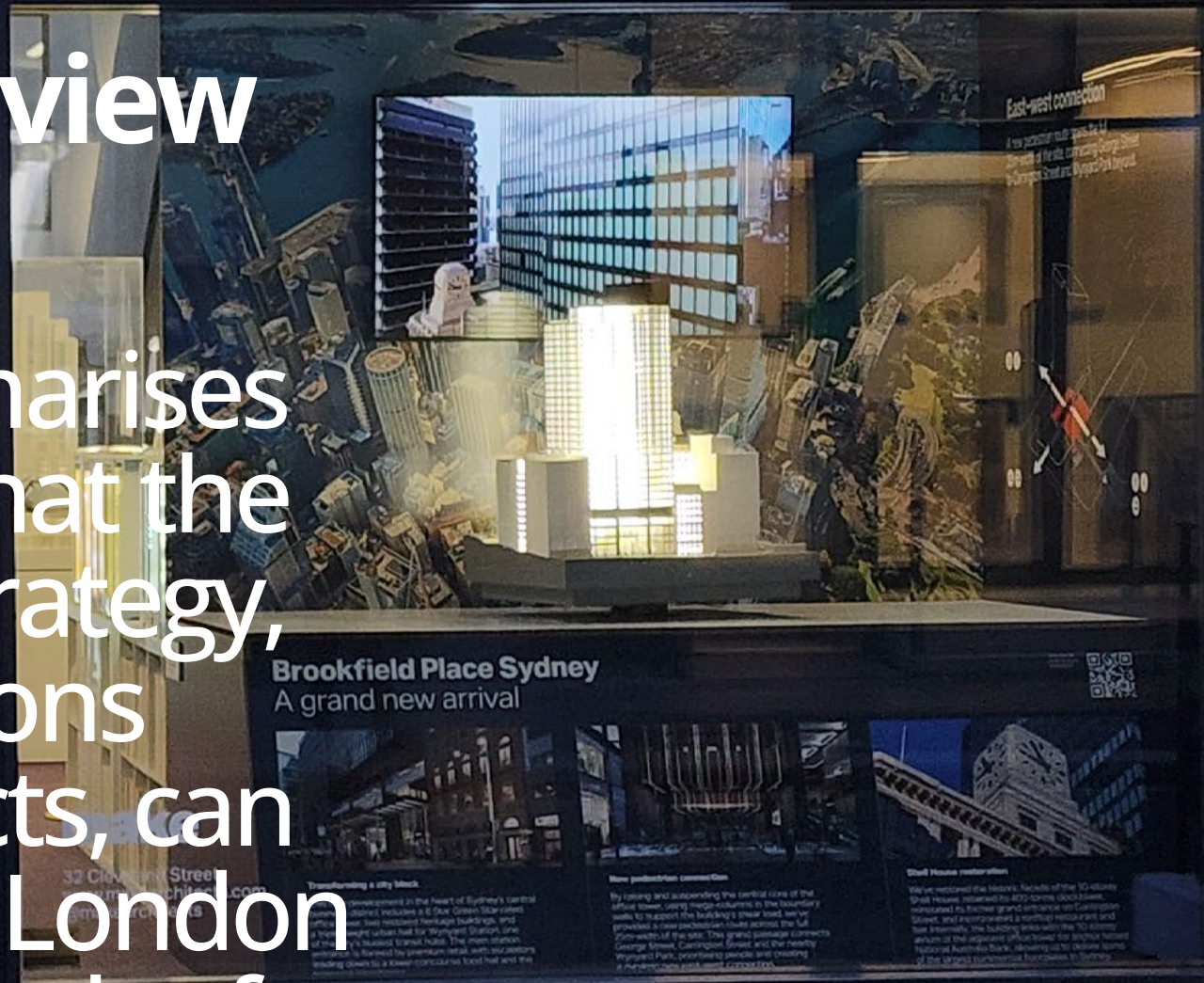


1982

Channel Four offices arrive at 60 Charlotte Street

3 Document review

This section summarises the contribution that the Fitzrovia Village Strategy, its recommendations and priority projects, can make to Mayor of London and London Borough of Camden policy priorities



The London Plan

The 2021 London Plan sets out the case for Good Growth – growth which is inclusive and its benefits shared by all Londoners. Specifically, it calls for **“streets and public spaces are consistently planned for people to move around and spend time in comfort and safety, creating places where everyone is welcome, which foster a sense of belonging, which encourage community buy-in, and where communities can develop and thrive.”** No policy better describes the aspirations of the Fitzrovia Villages strategy than this statement in the London Plan.



The Fitzrovia Villages strategy also responds positively to the designation of Tottenham Court Road in the London Plan as an Opportunity Area, with the potential to create 6000 new jobs, by setting out how to create public spaces and a neighbourhood that can attract inward investment, good growth and new jobs.

The Fitzrovia Villages aspirations and outline public realm designs for several of the area's streets, in particular Chitty Street, contribute to Policy S4, Play and Informal Recreation. By creating safer spaces and routes, free from traffic, more opportunities for informal and incidental play, and recreation, will be created.

Heritage and conservation considerations, covered in London Plan Policy HC1, are reflected in the Fitzrovia Villages strategy, which seeks to conserve the historic street

network of Fitzrovia and celebrate its architectural assets, while making the area more accessible and safe for all.

The strategy will also contribute to policy London Plan HC6.B.2:

“improve access, inclusion and safety, and make the public realm welcoming for all night-time economy users and workers”, therefore it will be supporting Fitzrovia's evening economy, jobs and as a distinctive West End after-work destination.

The Fitzrovia Villages strategy intends to create an even more diverse, inclusive and welcoming Fitzrovia, which aligns with The London Plan aims to:



...enhance the identity, legibility, permeability, and inclusivity of neighbourhoods, and... support and promote the creation of a London where all Londoners, including children and young people, older people, disabled people, and people with young children, as well as people with other protected characteristics, can move around with ease and enjoy the opportunities the city provides, creating a welcoming environment that everyone can use confidently, independently...



A core strand of the **Fitzrovia Village strategy** is introducing more **green infrastructure** as part of the delivery of public realm schemes, thereby contributing to London Plan policies G1 Green Infrastructure and G7 Trees and Woodland. The Fitzrovia Partnership recognises the important role that trees and planting can play in **promoting better well-being mental, adapting to the impacts of climate change** and the urban heat-island effect; **supporting food growing and providing habitats for wildlife**, therefore it will champion the inclusion of trees, planting and green spaces in projects as they are brought forward through their design stages.

Responding to the need for **more publicly accessible open space** in Fitzrovia, which currently is limited, the Fitzrovia Village document can deliver the intentions of London Plan Policy G4 Open Spaces, in particular on Chitty Street, but also the linear green route plan for Cleveland Street.

The Fitzrovia Village strategy can make a significant contribution to Local Plan Section 9 Sustainable Infrastructure, in particular: SI 1 Improving Air Quality, SI 2 Minimising Greenhouse Gas Emissions and SI 13 Sustainable Drainage.

By creating public spaces **free from vehicles**, exposure to poor air quality can be minimised, in particular for older and young people, who are particularly vulnerable to its impacts on health. By building routes that **prioritise, support and encourage cycling and walking**, the Fitzrovia Village strategy can reduce car use, positively impact on local air quality and contribute to **reduce carbon emissions**.

The design and delivery of the projects in this strategy will seek to provide **permeable surfaces, rain gardens and sustainable urban drainage** to better manage rain water run-off and help Fitzrovia adapt to more extreme weather conditions, contributing to Policy SI 13.

Sustainable modes are space use efficient, therefore reducing car use will **create more space for people** and also help reduce congestion, which can affect parts of Fitzrovia and the operation of its businesses. In parallel to Fitzrovia Village, the Fitzrovia Partnership is delivering a strategy to **reduce freight and commercial traffic** in the area, including a comprehensive preferred supplier scheme and supporting the trial of micro-consolidation in Fitzrovia.

The Fitzrovia Village strategy will make a direct contribution to the London Plan Chapter 10, Transport and the 2041 target of 80% (95% for central London) of all trips being made by walking, cycling or bus.

2041 target of

95%

for central London of all trips being made by walking, cycling or bus



Mayor's Transport Strategy

The Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS), published in 2018, sets out to:

- Create Healthy Streets and People, reflecting the fact that London's roads account for 80% of public spaces, therefore how they are designed and space is allocated, can affect the lives of residents, workers and visitors to London

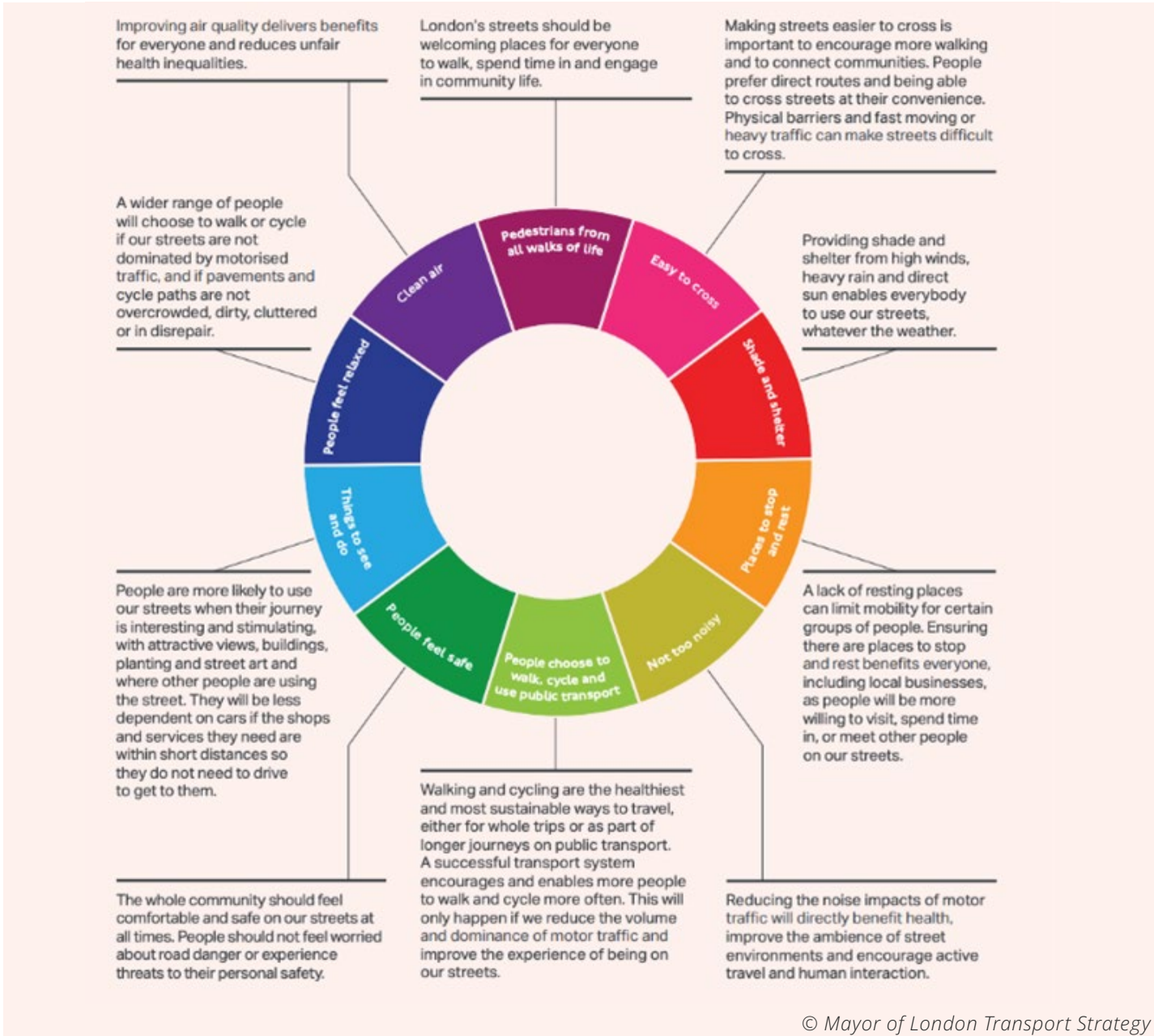


- Deliver high quality public transport; and
- Facilitate the development of 65,000 new homes and over one million new jobs.

Importantly for Fitzrovia, the MTS aims to support 'Good Growth' of areas (MTS, Chapter 5, p211), defined as:

- Good access to public transport
- High-density, mixed-use developments
- People choose to walk and cycle
- Car-free and car-light places
- Inclusive, accessible design
- Carbon-free travel
- Efficient freight

...The MTS adopts the Healthy Streets approach (MTS, p36), which aims to reduce casualties to Zero by 2041 (Vision Zero), increase levels of cycling, walking and public transport (to 95% of all trips in Central London), improve air quality and contribute to better physical and mental well-being...



Healthy Streets Framework

...The Healthy Streets Approach provides the framework for putting human health and experience at the heart of planning places and routes. In developing the Fitzrovia Village strategy, the Healthy Street indicators have been used as a framework to planning the improvements Fitzrovia public spaces and routes need. Healthy Streets Framework...

Camden Local Plan

The Camden Local Plan, which covers the period 2016-2031, sets out policies for growth, economy and jobs, health and well-being, protecting amenity, design and heritage, sustainability and climate change, town centres and transport, which this Fitzrovia Village strategy directly contributes towards.

By improving the design and experience of Fitzrovia's public spaces, inward investment and therefore growth of the Tottenham Court Road area is more likely to be realised, thereby contributing to Policy G1e. Fitzrovia Village contributes to delivering the transport and open space infrastructure that are vital to support growth of Fitzrovia, which takes place in a way that conserves the distinctive character of Fitzrovia as a place.



The majority of jobs in Camden are located in the south of the borough, so by creating a Fitzrovia that can support positive physical and mental health, both residents and workers will benefit. New public spaces and quiet tree-lined walking routes, such as Chitty Street and Cleveland Street, can contribute to better mental health and encourage active travel. Re-designing places, routes and gateways, in particular Warren Street, will make Fitzrovia more inviting, inclusive and accessible, all of which contribute to better health equality.

Section 6 of Camden's Local Plan focuses on protecting amenity, including existing and new open spaces. The Fitzrovia Village strategy will enhance the fine grain of streets nestled between Tottenham Court Road and Cleveland Street, in particular amplifying the greening of the area, which is part of its current character, that has been community, resident and business-led (see policy A.2.h).

The strategy will also contribute to improving the health and well-being of Camden residents and workers, specifically Camden Plan Policy C1



...improve and promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities through ensuring a high quality environment with local services to support health, social and cultural well-being and reduce inequalities...



The Fitzrovia Village strategy proposes much needed new public spaces, such as Chitty Street, thereby making a direct contribution to policy A2 and continuing the example set by the creation of a new public space on Alfred Place. It will address the issue of Fitzrovia identified as an area deficient in open public space (Map 2, p199, Camden Local Plan). The Fitzrovia Village strategy will also contribute to enhancing nature conservation value (p204), increasing opportunities to enjoy nature (p205) and also support wildlife bio-diversity.

Turning to design, importantly because of the historic character of Fitzrovia, the strategy will contribute to Local Plan policies on design, specifically D.1a and b, relating to local context and character and historic assets. Moreover, design of priority schemes will seek to be inclusive and promote accessibility, promote health and design out crime and anti-social behaviour. The strategy and design stages for each scheme will be guided by Local Plan policy to preserve what is distinctive and valued (paragraph 7.4, p225).

The Fitzrovia Village strategy projects and recommendations responds to and seeks to celebrate the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings of Fitzrovia, thereby contributing to Local Plan policies D2.

Local Plan policy D3 recognises the impact shop fronts can have on character areas and historic buildings. The Fitzrovia Village place strategy recognises there are both good and poor examples of active frontages, so it aims to encourage a high level of design that is appropriate for Listed Buildings and the Conservation areas. The Fitzrovia Village strategy also seeks to retain and even restore heritage features, recognising these contribute to the visitor enjoyment of exploring Fitzrovia.

The Fitzrovia Village strategy also makes a direct contribution to Local Plan policies on street furniture in the public realm (paragraph 7.84, page 247), seeking to de-clutter and rationalise street furniture (see Appendix on Cleveland Street declutter audit).



Turning to Section 8 of Camden's Local Plan, on Sustainability and Climate Change, this is an area where delivery of the Fitzrovia Village strategy can make a significant contribution (see also section on London Plan and sustainability). These include planting trees to mitigate the heat island effect (paragraph 8.40, p260), providing habitats to support biodiversity (paragraph 8.38, p259), contributing to Policy CC3.3 on sustainable urban drainage and improving air quality (Policy CC4), in particular impact of transport to and from developments (paragraph 8.83).

Chapter 9 of the Camden Local Plan (Town Centres and Shops) recognises Tottenham Court Road as a 'Central London Frontage' area and Fitzrovia as a 'Specialist Shopping Area'. Fitzrovia's retail functions both as a local high street, serving the needs of local residents and to an extent workers, and also as part of the West End, with a world class offer to attract visitors. Fitzrovia's retail mix ranges from local DIY stores to independent art galleries, while its food and beverage offer extends from fish and chips to Michelin star restaurants, in all case distinguished by being independent and unique to Fitzrovia.

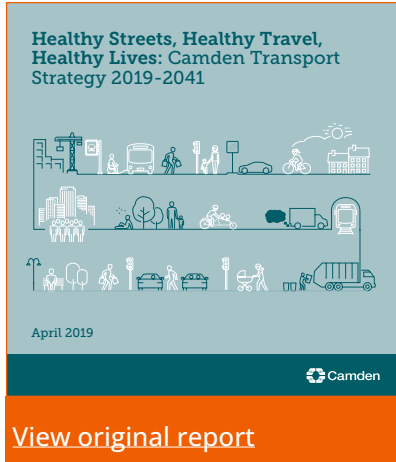
The Fitzrovia Village place strategy can contribute to Local Plan Town Centre policies TC2.a.b.c and d (protecting character, providing variety, vibrancy and choice, protecting residents from noise and harmful impacts and support and protect areas of specialist interest) by re-imagining spaces so they attract footfall and can ensure the on-going success of independent businesses in Fitzrovia.

The holistic 'place' approach of the Fitzrovia Village strategy will not only seek to improve highway surfaces, but work with property owners and occupiers to curate better design of shop fronts and also the retail and food beverage offer for consumers.



Camden Transport Strategy

Camden's Transport Strategy, 'Healthy Streets, Healthy Travel, Healthy Lives: Camden Transport Strategy', covers the period 2019–2041. Since publishing the strategy, the West End Project has transformed much of Fitzrovia, primarily Tottenham Court Road and streets to its east, delivering a 28% increase in cycling and approximate 32% fall in traffic across the wider area.



The West End Project goes a considerable towards transforming Fitzrovia, while the Fitzrovia Village sets out the vision and proposals to improve Fitzrovia's other streets, for pedestrians and cyclists in particular.

The Fitzrovia Village strategy acknowledges the importance of the TLRN (Euston Road) and the Strategic Road Network (Tottenham Court Road) for safe movement of people and vehicles; and Camden's designation of other routes, including Warren Street, Fitzroy and Charlotte Street as 'Emergency Services Strategic Roads'. As such proposals for these streets will maintain, seek to enhance their access and improve response times for emergency vehicles.

It will also contribute to the identified challenges in Camden's Transport Strategy, specifically population growth (paragraph 2.71), congestion (paragraph 2.61), noise (paragraph 2.63), poor air quality (paragraph 2.57), the climate emergency (paragraph 2.58), mental (paragraph 2.65) and physical health (paragraph 2.64) and road safety (paragraph 2.59).

Delivery of the Fitzrovia Village strategy can make a direct contribution of the vision of Camden's Transport Strategy, in particular:



...enabling and encouraging people to travel sustainably; nurturing healthier lifestyles; creating radically less polluted places; and upgrading the transport network to meet Camden's needs and those of London as a growing capital city...



London Borough of Camden's Transport Strategy has seven key objectives, which through the Fitzrovia Village strategy, can be delivered in Fitzrovia, making a direct contribution to improving the borough for all who live, work and visit. Specifically, the objectives are:

Objective 1: To **transform our streets** and places to enable an increase in walking and cycling – The Fitzrovia Village proposals are designed to support and encourage **active travel for all**, making the area easier to explore on foot and cycle through and delivering Healthy Streets outcomes in Fitzrovia

Objective 2: To **reduce car ownership** and use, and motor traffic levels in Camden – The Fitzrovia Village strategy discourages unnecessary car use and proposes to trial timed, **partial road closures** to create better, car free places

Objective 3: To deliver a sustainable transport system and streets that are accessible and **inclusive for all** – Fitzrovia Village will make it easier for people with physical and mental disabilities, and vulnerable people, specifically older people and children, to **explore Fitzrovia safely**.

Objective 4: To substantially **reduce all road casualties** in Camden and progress towards Zero Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) casualties – Fitzrovia Village will deliver transport and public realm schemes that slow traffic speeds, improve visibility and reduce road danger. The Fitzrovia Partnership also will **work with TfL** and London Borough of **Camden to reduce collision** and casualty hotspots; and encourages its businesses to participate in key safety initiatives, including incorporating the Freight Operators Recognition Scheme (FORS) and Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) Scheme.



Objective 5: To reduce and mitigate the impact of transport-based emissions and noise in Camden – Fitzrovia Village projects will seek to introduce **on-street electric vehicle charging points**, thereby future-proofing Fitzrovia with the essential infrastructure to support the migration by residents and businesses to electric vehicles.

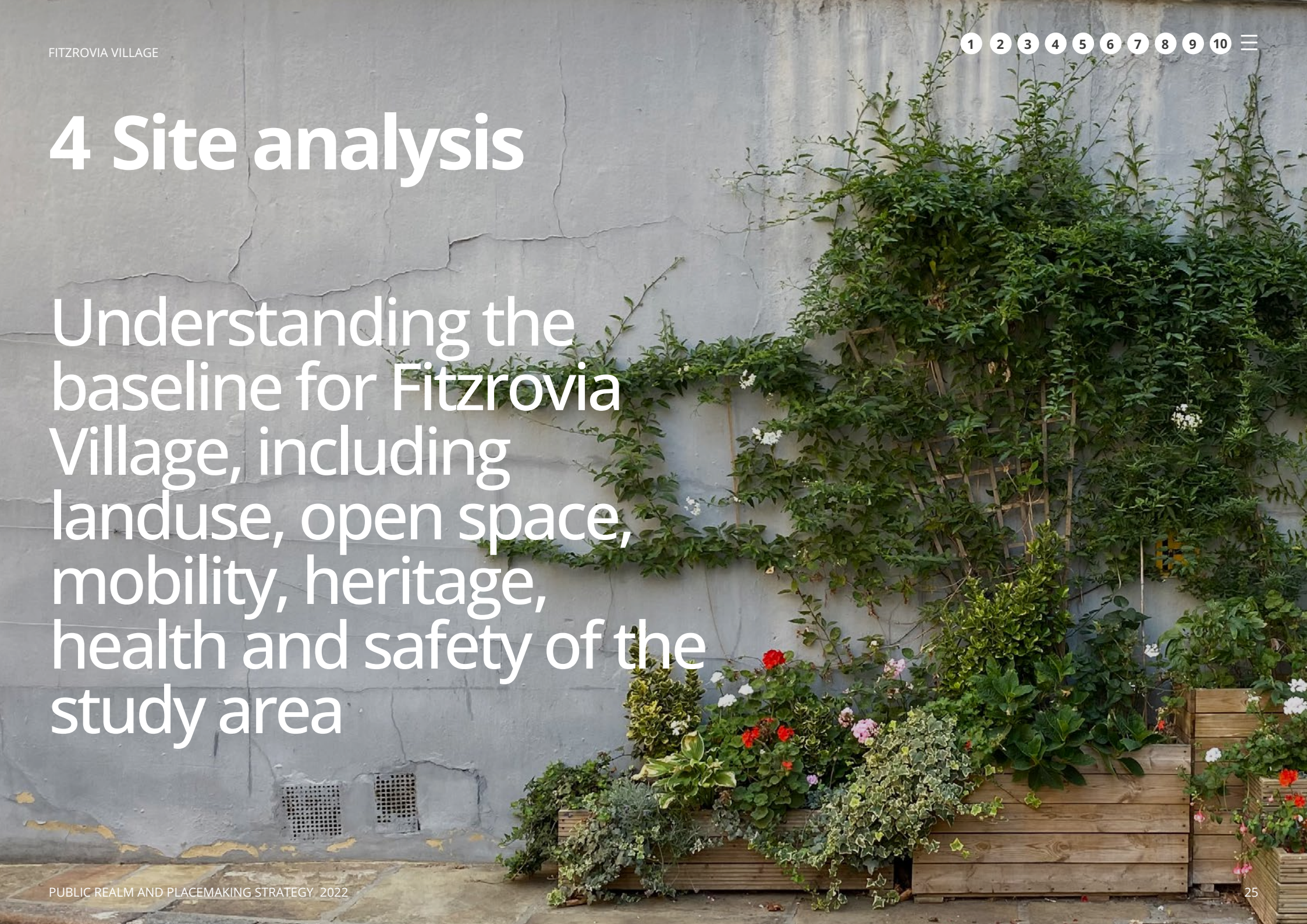
Objective 6: To deliver an efficient, well-maintained highways network and kerb-side space that prioritises the **sustainable movement of goods and people** – The Fitzrovia Partnership welcomes the Camden Transport Strategy's commitment to 'work with BIDs and major landowners to establish necessary physical and technological infrastructure to **minimise freight and servicing** motor traffic movements'. The Fitzrovia Partnership will work in partnership to deliver efficient and sustainable movement of freight.

Objective 7: To ensure **economic growth and regeneration** is supported by, and supports, a sustainable transport network – Camden's Transport Strategy notes that: "Attractive places and destinations with less traffic...can contribute to regeneration and economic uplift and unlock new areas. This will help to ensure that the borough can **attract investment** to create the new homes and jobs for a growing population, and remain successful." Fitzrovia Village sets out how this seventh objective can be achieved, by attracting and encouraging longer dwell time and **return visits** by visitors and **supporting businesses** that have struggled since 2020 due to Covid, lockdowns, supply chain disruption, staff shortages and rising inflation, to once again thrive.



4 Site analysis

Understanding the baseline for Fitzrovia Village, including landuse, open space, mobility, heritage, health and safety of the study area

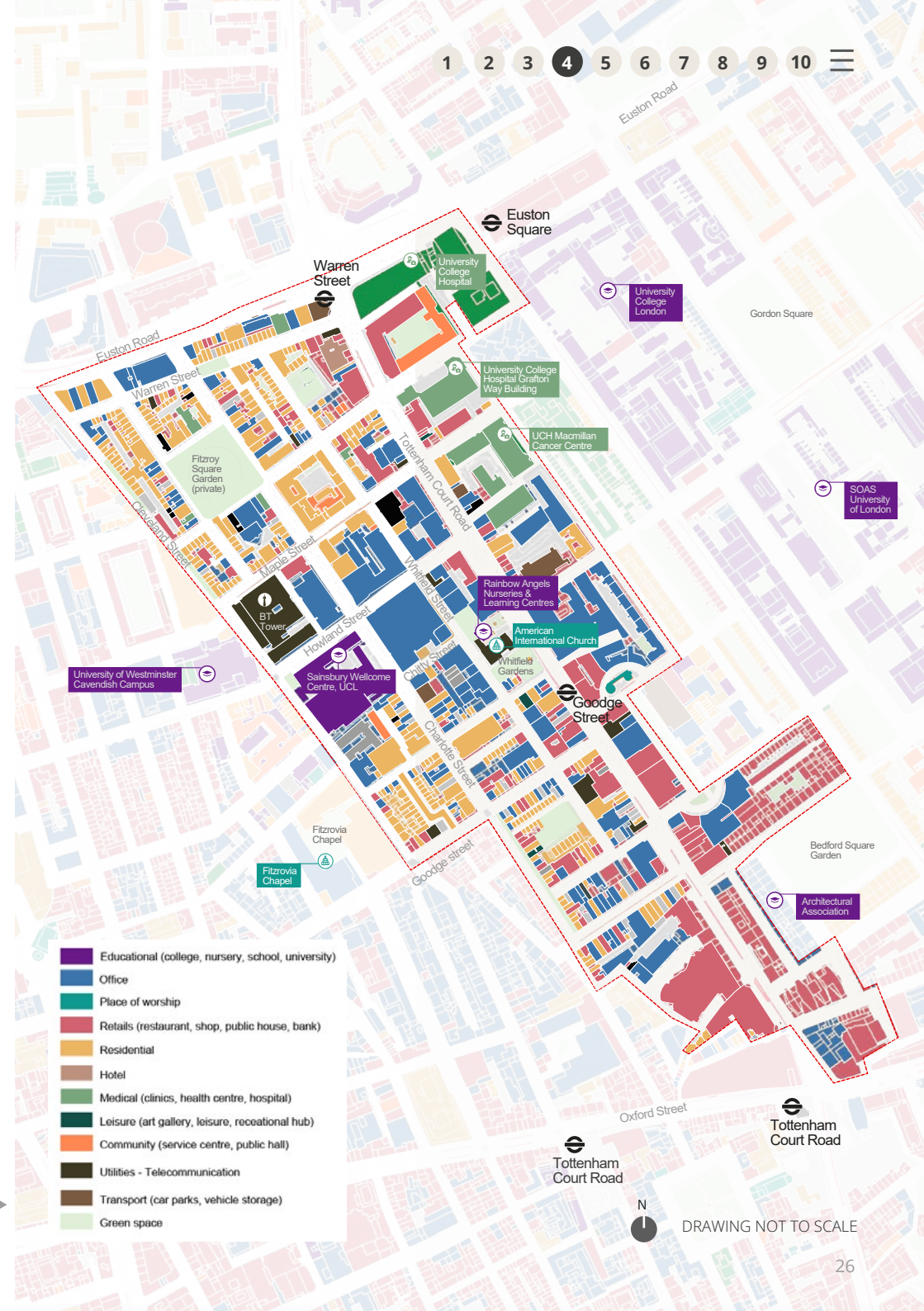


Landuse

Fitzrovia's land use indicates the area's duality as a local neighbourhood and as part of the West End. Fitzrovia is a distinctive area with a mix of land uses including offices, retail and food and drink located throughout. Residential areas can be found in the north and west of the site.

There are a number of independent galleries and museums that can be discovered by visitors. Landmarks in the area include the iconic BT tower. The area has important community facilities that serve its local communities – ie schools, library, clinic and community centres.

Plan illustrating ground floor land use. Source of information: GLA

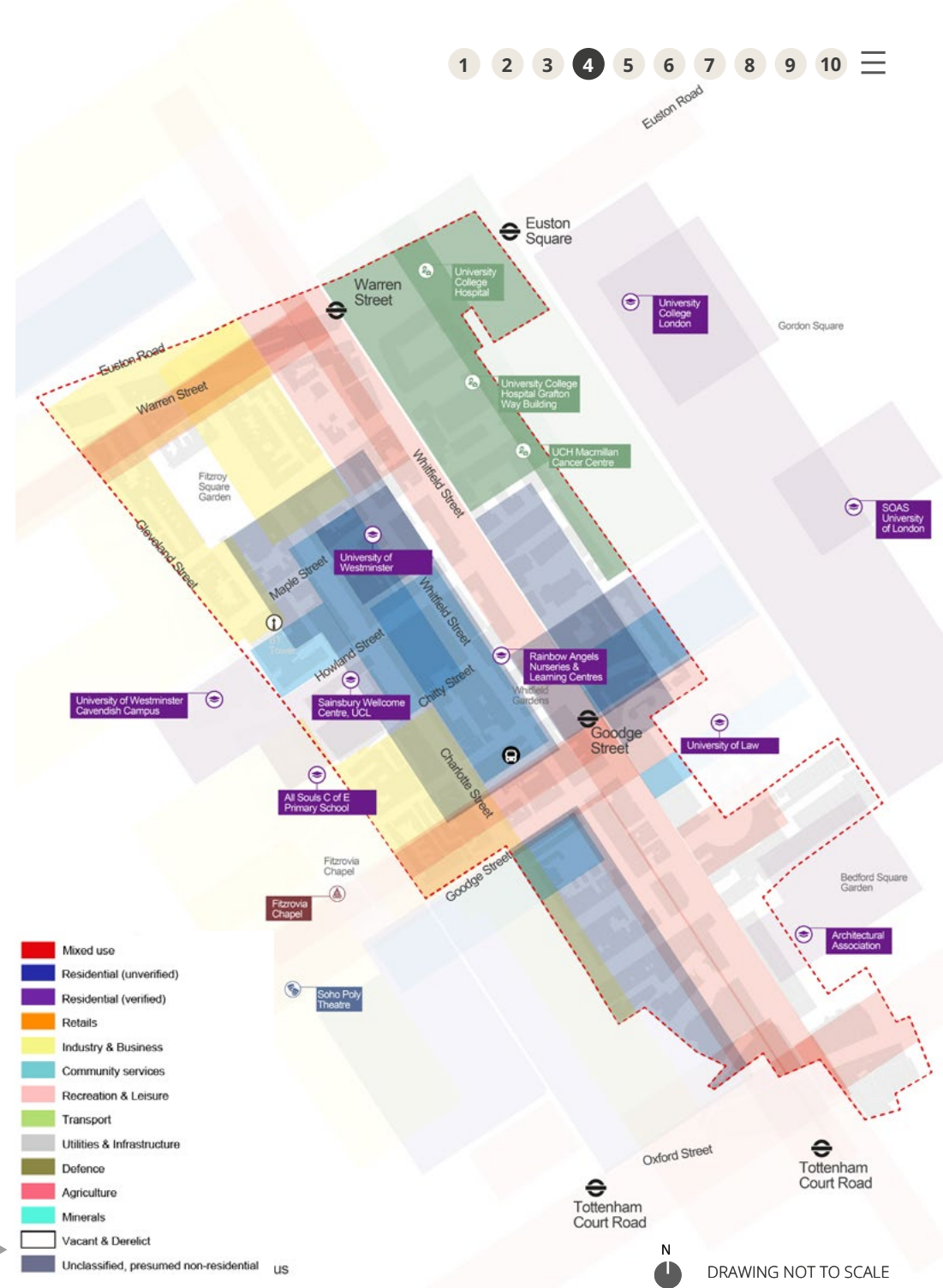


Clusters

The land use mix defines the area into five clusters.

The health services cluster is located to the north east, defined by University College Hospital. The retail, food and beverage cluster is located around Tottenham Court Road and Warren Street. Residential areas are located in the north west and western boundary mostly. The offices and educational facilities are scattered in the heart of Fitzrovia.

Each of these clusters attracts different demographics in the public realm, at different times of the day, and each with diverse needs.



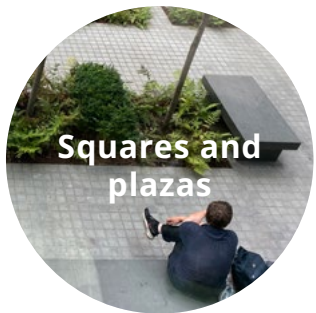
Plan illustrating land use clusters within Fitzrovia. Source of information: GLA

Open space

Fitzrovia has a variety of green spaces which cater for different users. Some of these spaces are private such as Fitzroy Square Garden, while others are open to the public, such as the recently renovated Whitfield Gardens. Management and maintenance varies among the spaces, so does the provision of seating.

New green spaces have been created for the neighbourhood, as part of the West End project, such as Alfred Place. These spaces are designed to increase the green spaces in the neighbourhood for all.

Tree-lined streets vary across the neighbourhood, with some having more than others. The trees include London plane, maple and oak trees.



Squares and plazas

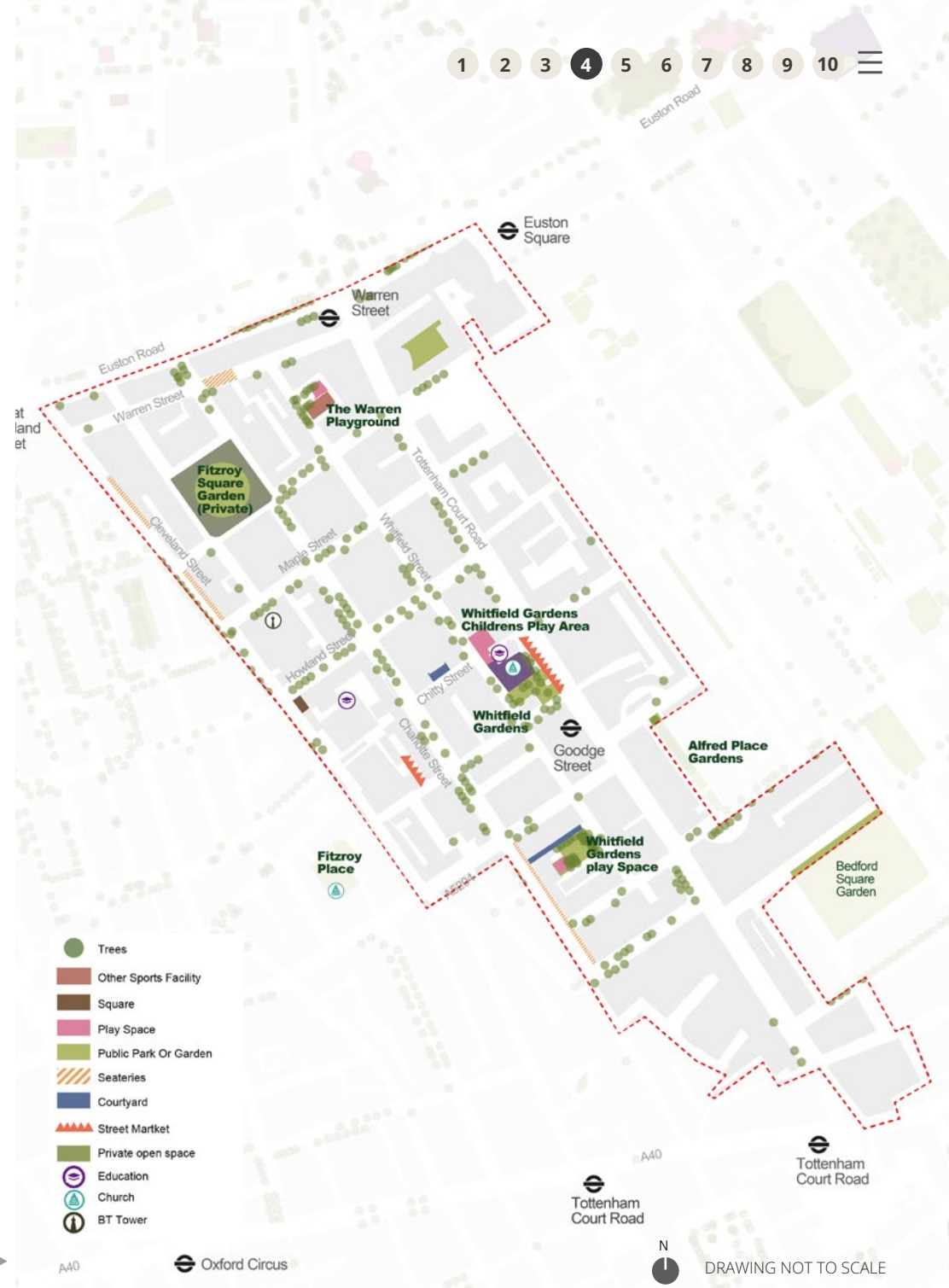


Play



Streeteries

Plan illustrating types of open space within Fitzrovia.



Mobility

Fitzrovia's streets have been changing over the past years to reflect evolving travel behaviours which prioritise walking, cycling and improved health, in line with the **Healthy Streets** approach. Windmill Street has seen the re-purposing of some car parking spaces into pocket landscape interventions, new fixed and dockless cycle parking spaces to cater for the increasing cycle demand. The level of flexibility along these streets has also allowed for the installation of mode-filters and temporary uses, such as outdoor eating in Warren Street and the TCR food market at Tottenham Court Road. As Active Travel (walking and cycling) continue to rise, streets will continue to evolve with more pedestrian and cycling infrastructure being required.



Cycle hire



Public transport



Parking

Plan illustrating types road users. ▶



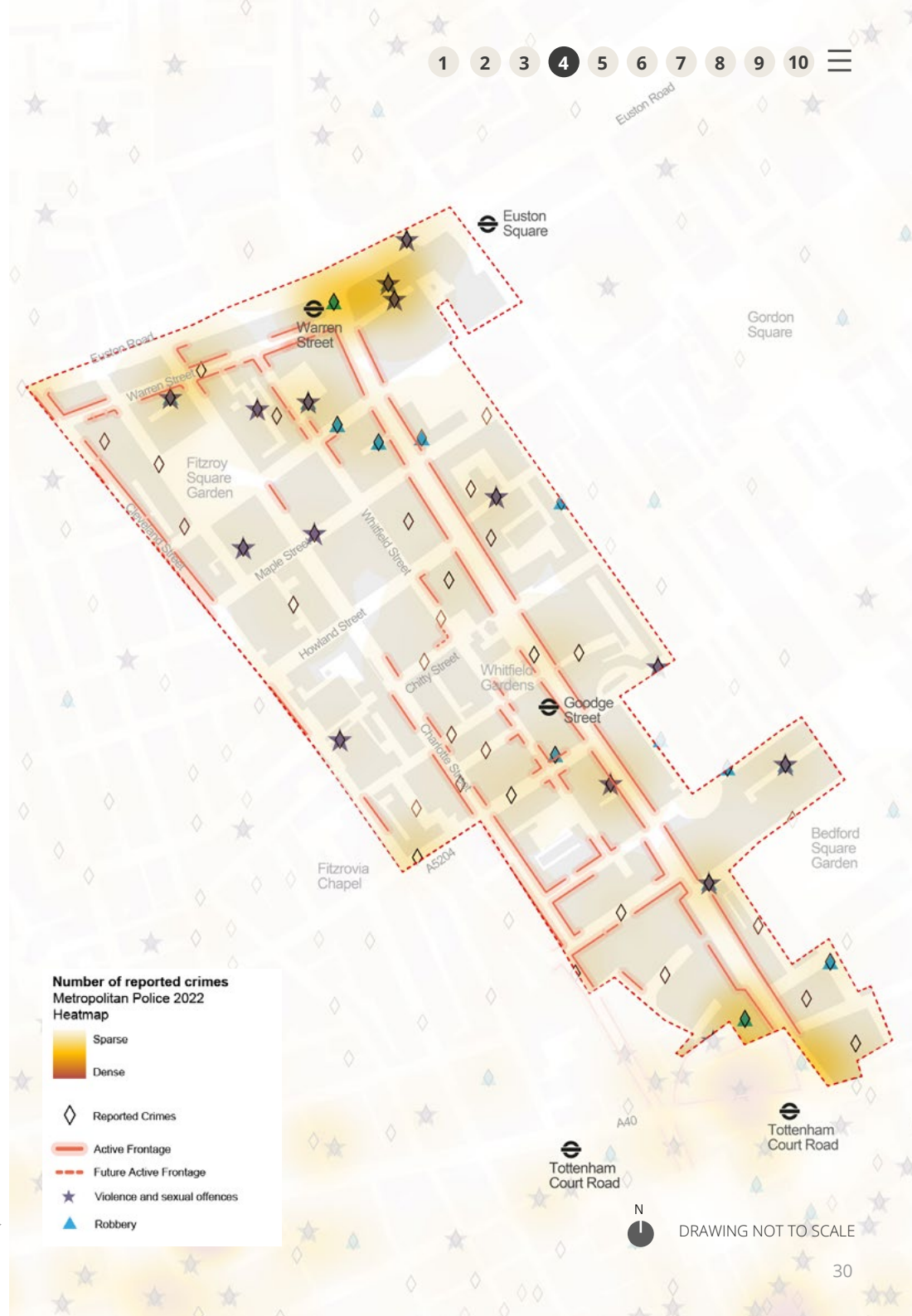
Safety

Within the Fitzrovia area, there are hotspots for anti-social behaviour and crime, mainly concentrated around Warren Street and Tottenham Court Road underground station.

During 2022, other reported crimes occurred in areas with minimal or absence of active frontages at ground floor level. The adjacent map illustrates the numbers of reported crimes within Fitzrovia, type of crime and location.



Plan illustrating location of reported crimes in Fitzrovia.



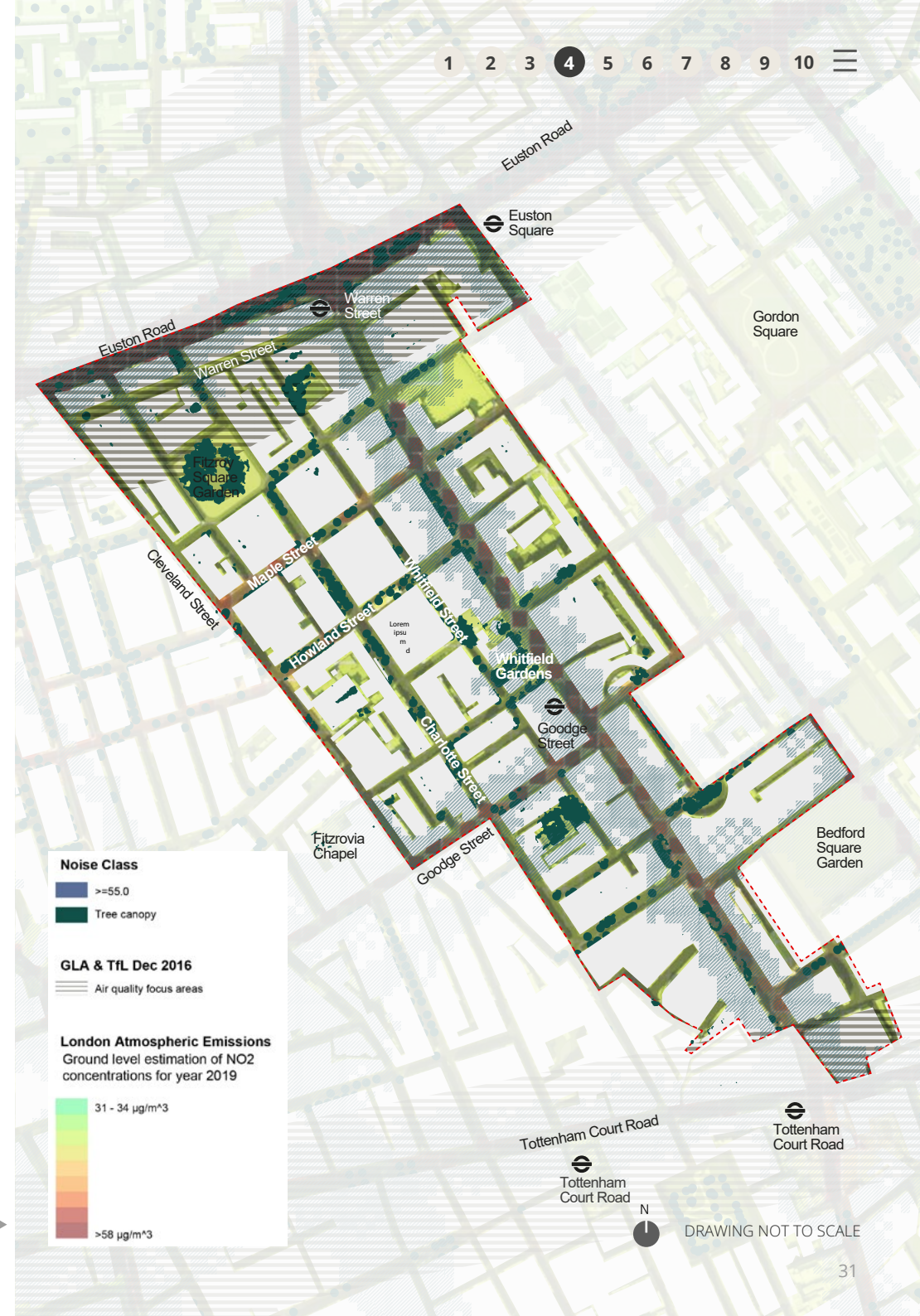
Health/wellbeing

Public realm plays an important role in its contribution to the health and wellbeing of citizens. Fitzrovia's noise and atmospheric emissions levels are generally low, with the exception of the areas adjacent to Tottenham Court Road and Euston Road.

The presence of shade from trees provides cooler respite spaces during hot summers, however there is a lack of drinking water fountains which would support vulnerable communities during extreme heat waves.



Plan illustrating current environmental factors. Source of information: GLA, TFL and DEFRA



Heritage

Today a large part of the Fitzrovia Partnership BID footprint is situated within designated Conservation Areas, ensuring the past legacy of urban planning is preserved and further enhanced in the years to come. Those covering the BID footprint are Bloomsbury, Fitzroy Square and Charlotte Street.

Bloomsbury – The largest of the three Conservation Areas covers a part of Fitzrovia and wider Bloomsbury, as consequentially is split to 14 sub areas including Alfred Place and Tottenham Court Road. The area was designated in 1968.

Charlotte Street – Charlotte Street Conservation Area covers an area extending from Tottenham Court Road in the east to Cleveland Street – the boundary with Westminster in the west – and from Chitty Street in the north to Gresse Street in the south. The area was designated in 1974, with subsequent extensions in 1981, 1985 and 1999.

Fitzroy Square – was part of the original 1968 designation covering the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. In 1990 the streets surrounding Fitzroy Square were designated and included in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The 2010 Appraisal is applicable. Within these three Conservation Areas are numerous statutory listed buildings, unlisted buildings of merit in addition to some unrecorded place marks that give the area a unique sense of place.

Plan illustrating conservation areas and important buildings



Water and climate

Surface water flooding and ponding is an issue in some locations in Fitzrovia. This map illustrates the potential surface water flood risks. Courtyards, mews and smaller streets have an increased risk due to the surface levels and drainage provision.



Flooding from surface water on Store Street

Plan illustrating current areas prone to localised flooding. Source of information: DEFRA





FITZROVIA'S CHARACTER

The public realm, open spaces, and heritage of Fitzrovia create a unique destination within Central London. Key characteristics of the area are:

- Large trees and shaded pocket parks forming the existing green infrastructure.
- A variety of planters, window boxes and flower beds added, managed and maintained by residents, the local community and businesses.



- Scale and layout of the buildings creates a number of mews. Residential mews have become quite green oases peppered throughout the area.
- Variety of ground floor land uses fronted with iconic shop frontages and signage.
- Electric cargo bikes are used throughout the area as a zero-carbon solution to logistics.





- Reduce high noise levels and improve air quality emission produced by delivery trucks (ensure electric cargo bikes are used were possible).
- Increase existing greenery and number of street trees key pedestrian focused areas.
- Improve wayfinding near tube stations.



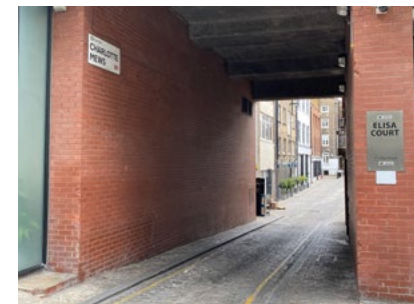
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Fitzrovia unique character and public realm creates a network of spaces and routes. There are opportunities to improve the public realm to create a greener, more connected, liveable, and safe neighbourhood, these are:

- De-cluttered street corners including bollards, bins, bike racks and signs (refer to [Appendix A](#))



- Increase shade and seating near transport nodes.
- Addition of drinking water fountains.
- Poor maintenance and management of some pocket parks.



Eveningeconomy

Fitzrovia is a vibrant place during the day and into the evening. Fitzrovia, however, has a limited night time economy, in contrast to other parts of the West End. To an extent, this reflects the area's residential land uses and the need to protect residents from noise at night time. With a mix of working, living and leisure the different lighting layers create a complex experience for visitors after the sun sets.

Some places work well during the daytime but become drastically less inviting during the night, such as parts of Cleveland Street. Others, such as southern part of Charlotte Street offer an inviting and balanced lighting in the evening.

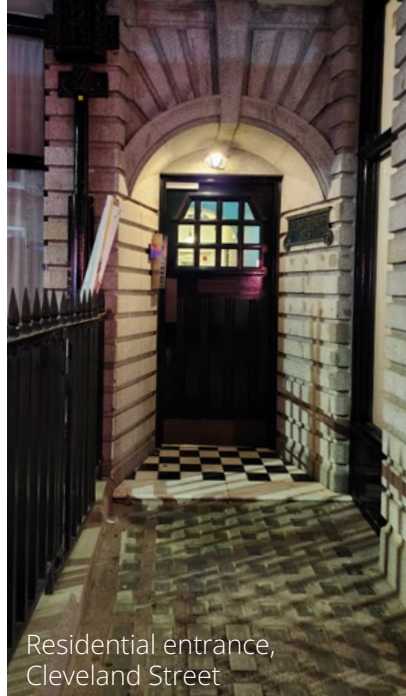
The following pages present an overview of the lighting assessment, with typical examples of successes and challenges.

Plan illustrating evening ground floor uses ▶



LIGHTING SUCCESSES

Fitzrovia is characterised by a number of notable lighting moments. This is due to the variety of lighting typologies and characters installed by multiple stakeholders over time, using different technologies.



Residential entrance, Cleveland Street

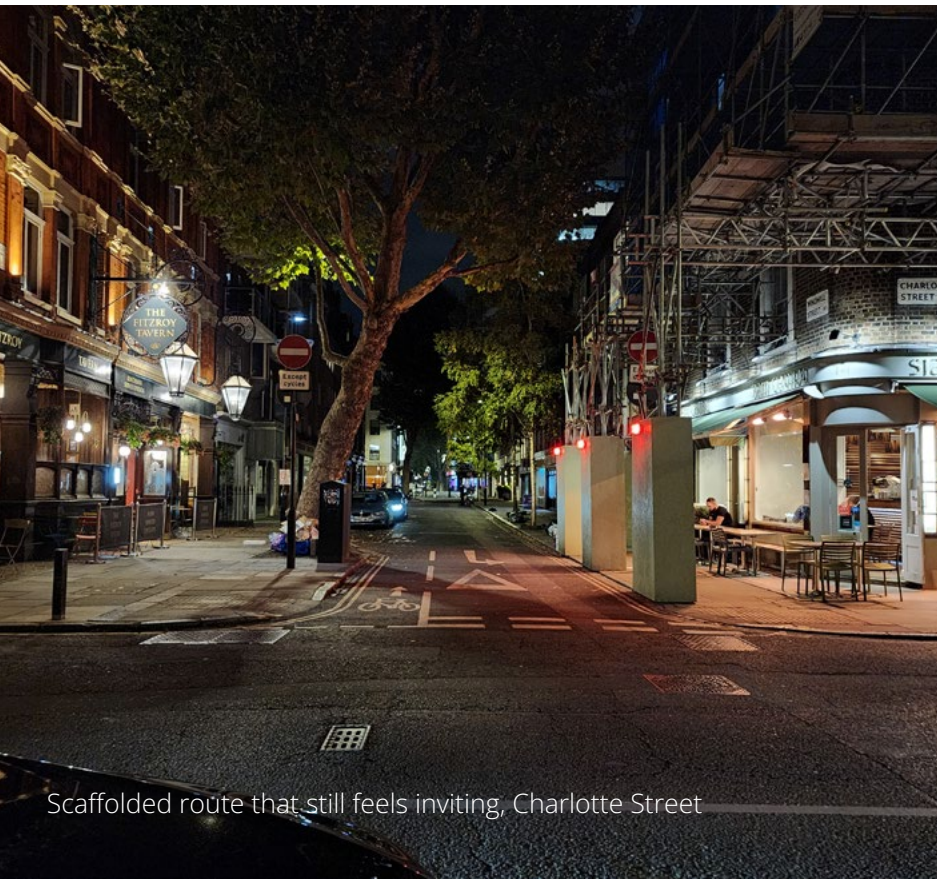


Terrace shadow effects, 101 Cleveland St

The streets of Fitzrovia feature many businesses with lighting elements that positively influence experience of place after dark and contribute to the Fitzrovia unique character.



The George and Dragon, Cleveland Street

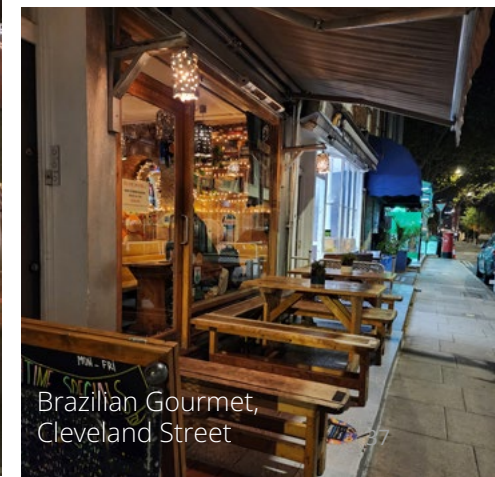


Scaffolded route that still feels inviting, Charlotte Street



Flambeaux of Charlotte Street Hotel

There are notable examples of the interfaces between street lighting and venues lighting that blend into an attractive illuminated tapestry.



Brazilian Gourmet, Cleveland Street



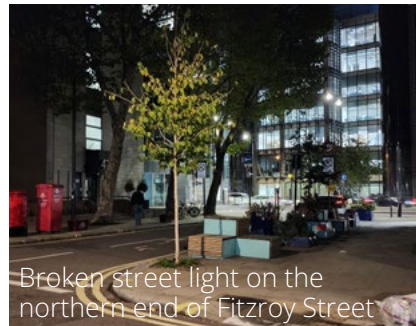
Low-quality floodlight above entrance creates disabling glare, Warren Street

CHALLENGES

The richness and diversity of the area presents some challenges too.

These are failing and poorly maintained lighting equipment, poor lighting design and standards and mismatched scale of lighting.

The lighting faults lie in a variety of stakeholder responsibilities, so the improvements have to be a collaborative effort.



Broken street light on the northern end of Fitzroy Street



Broken street light on Goodge Street

The facade lighting of this restaurant looks in keeping with the surroundings in daylight.

However, at night the white render of the facade and stark white illumination cuts it out from the surroundings.

Additionally, the white bright patch of the facade makes the surrounding areas appear dark in comparison. This has an effect on the sense of safety and how inviting the surrounding streets feel.



Nazuki Garden, Whitfield Street - at twilight and after dark



Chitty Street - uneven and mismatched street lighting provision

Lighting of Chitty Street is a particular example of failed coordination:

The street is illuminated with 3 column-mounted luminaires, all 3 in different styles, spaced at uneven distances and with different colour of lighting. Even though the street is illuminated, combined with lack of active facades on the street this creates an unwelcoming experience.

To add to the impression, the only space on the street that is craftfully illuminated is the Poet's park which is locked off at night. Lighting to the Poet's park hedges was turned off or not working at the time of the visit.

5 Engagement

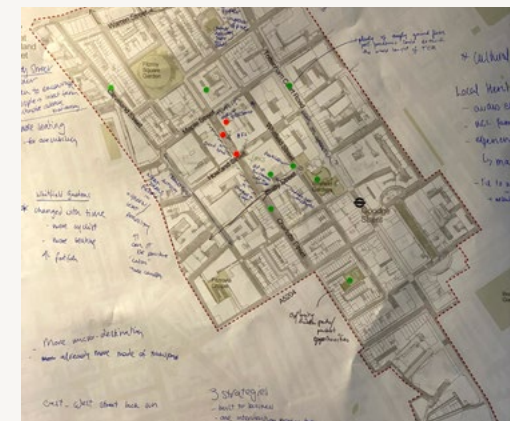
Surveys and workshops were held within the community to gather feedback on the perception of place

Workshops

The workshops aimed to explore challenges, opportunities and invitation for ideas for improvement of the public realm of Fitzrovia.

Questions that were explored:

- How can we make Fitzrovia greener and more connected (ecological connections)?
- How can we rebalance quality and accessibility?
- How can open space in Fitzrovia be flexible to cater for different age groups, interests and demographics? Seasonal flexibility?
- With recurrent changes in climate and recent urban heat challenges, how can we design a 'cooler' and more comfortable Fitzrovia?
- How can open space continue to make Fitzrovia healthier?
- How can the public realm help create a more thriving business community in Fitzrovia?



Markups and sketches from workshop

Perception of place survey

The perception of place survey invited the local community in Fitzrovia for their views on the neighbourhood. There was a total of **131 responses** received. The majority of which are people that solely work in the area, followed by residents and people visiting, working, and living in the Fitzrovia.

Respondents were encouraged to **express their top priorities** for improving Fitzrovia's public realm. The majority of responses chose to **increase trees and greenery**, have better street cleaning increase number benches and seating areas **along the busier streets** of Warren Street, Charlotte Street and Tottenham Court Road.

Respondents expressed their interest in seeing more **pedestrian-friendly streets**, outdoor dining areas and public seating within Fitzrovia.

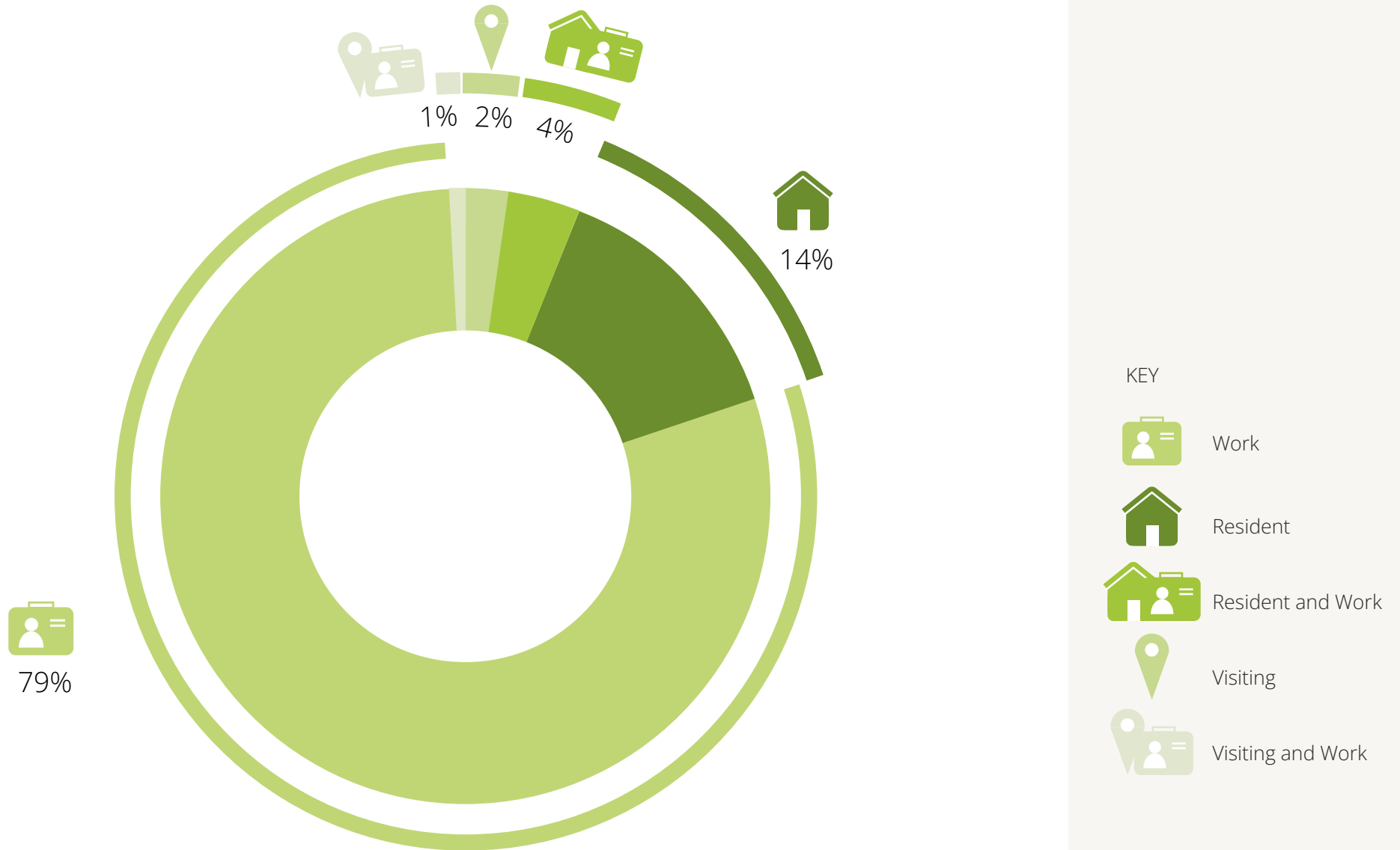
Respondent profile

131

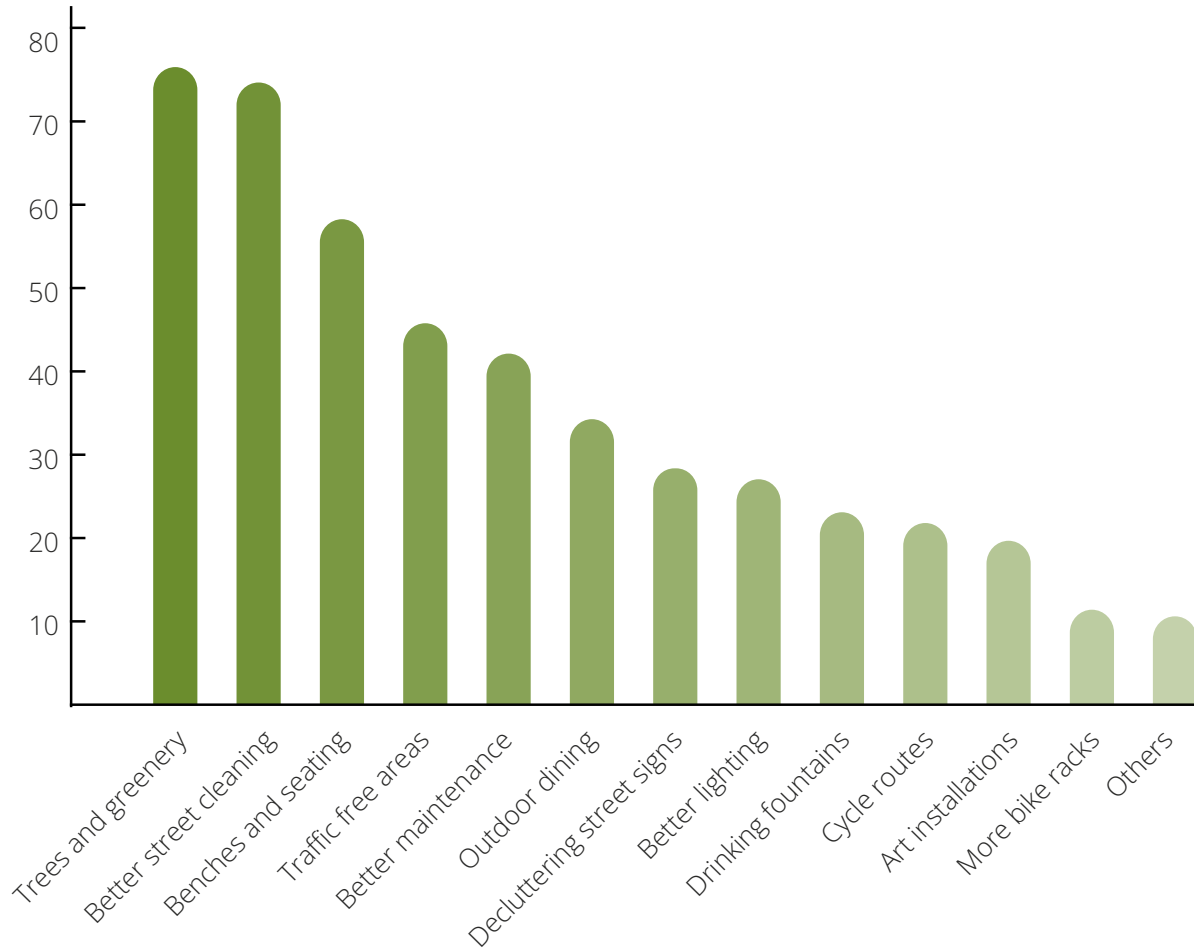
Total responses



Reasons to be in Fitzrovia



What are your top priorities for improving the public realm in Fitzrovia?



If so, where would you suggest to have these improvements?



Do you have any other suggestions or ways to improve the area?

Are there any current or past initiatives in the public realm in Fitzrovia that you like and would like to see more of in the neighbourhood?
In Fitzrovia that you like and would like to see more of in the neighbourhood?

Top three answers

14

PEDESTRIAN & CYCLING FRIENDLY STREETS

9

CLEANER STREETS

PARKLETS / POKCET PARKS

6

10

OUTDOOR DINING AREAS

3

COMMUNITY LIVE EVENTS

INTEGRATING PUBLIC GREEN SPACES

5

3

ART INSTALLATIONS AND UPLIFTING THE STREETS

6

SECURITY IN THE AREA

10

PUBLIC SEATING AREAS

3

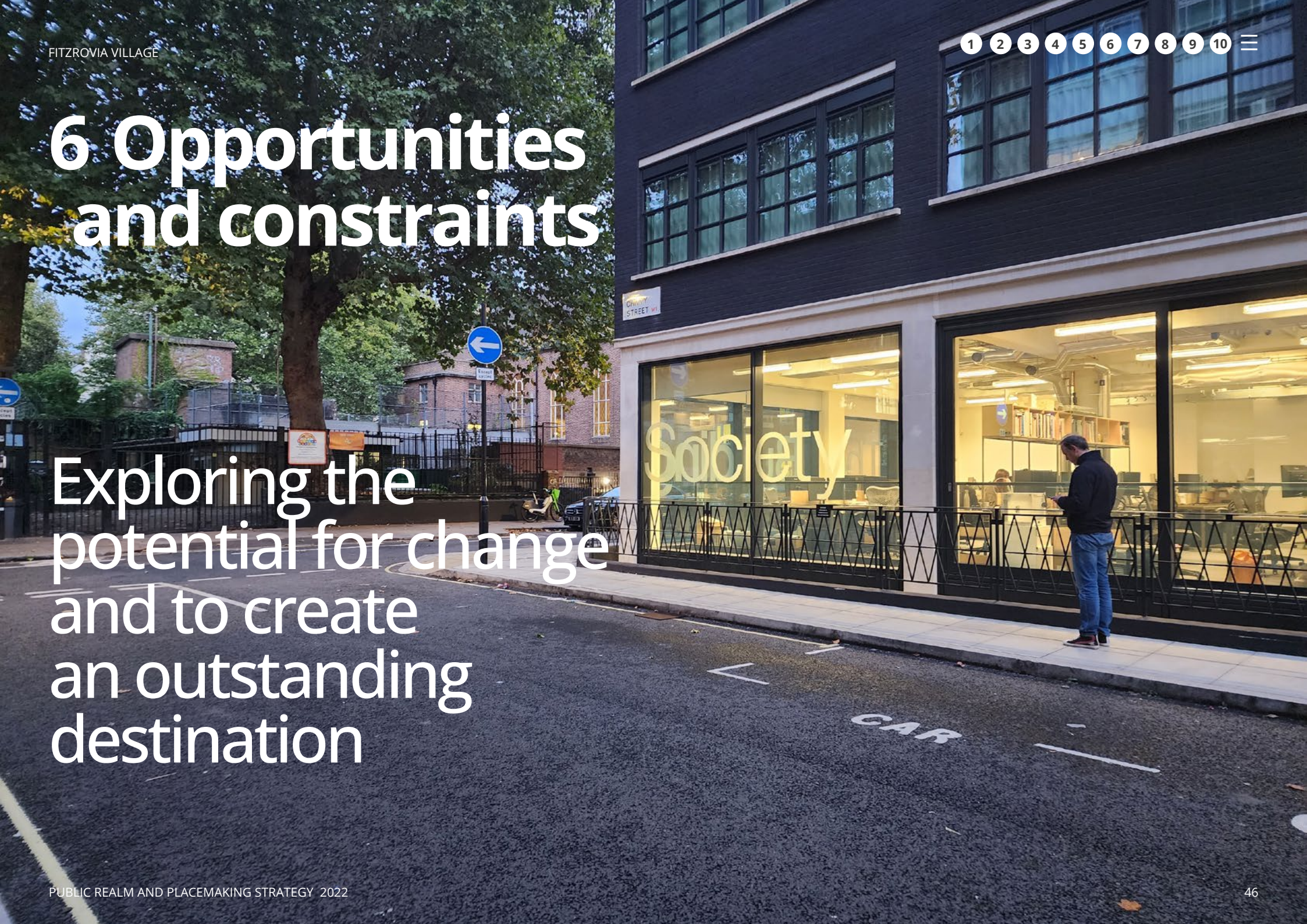
CELEBRATING LOCAL HISTORY AND CHARACTER

3

REDUCING HOMELESSNESS

6 Opportunities and constraints

Exploring the potential for change and to create an outstanding destination



Opportunities and constraints

The opportunities and constraints identified during the surveys, workshops and the assessment process, help to define the concept proposals for the next stages.

The table below defines the key opportunity and constraints, whilst the map shows their exact location. Detailed opportunity and constraint information can be found on the in The Fitzrovia Village Report, 2020.

Plan illustrating the opportunities and constraints



OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

EXISTING CONDITION	OPPORTUNITY	PROJECT DELIVERY CONSTRAINT
Dark street	Lighting improvements	Limited planting options
Sun exposure	Canopies / shade / trees / drinking water / benches	Land ownership, utility corridors
Lack of wayfinding	Better and accessible wayfinding	Improve wayfinding without adding clutter
Crime	Safer, well lit spaces	Challenge for placemaking
Risk of flooding	SuDS	Space availability / utilities
Key routes for traffic	Calming traffic, people-oriented streets	Business opposition, servicing
Listed buildings	Enhancing heritage and improving public realm around it	Might challenge planning approvals
Hidden gems and open space	Improving quality and routes towards destinations	Sensitivities around visitors traffic
Streateries	Expanding and improving these	Reducing parking
Street market	Improve space around them, add seating, improve servicing	Requires higher waste management

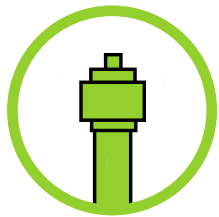
Table of Fitzrovia's opportunities and constraints



7 Our Vision

Fitzrovia's Public Realm and Placemaking Vision

Fitzrovia will be a greener, more connected, liveable and safe neighbourhood that;



celebrates its **identity** and **heritage**



empowers its diverse **community** and **stakeholders**



enables a thriving **daytime** and **evening economy**



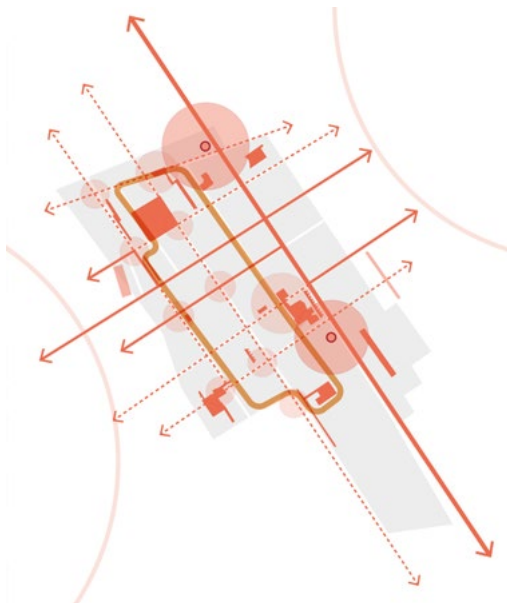
contributes to climate resilience and **net zero**



Principles

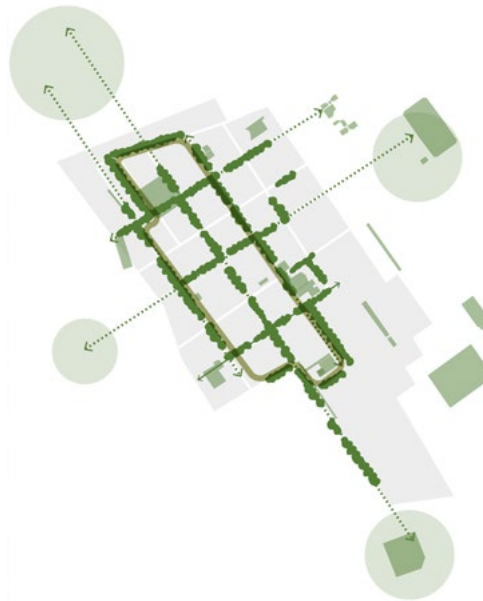
Three design principles underpin the vision statement. Each design principle is supported by a list of potential interventions that aim to address the existing site constraints.

1. STITCH



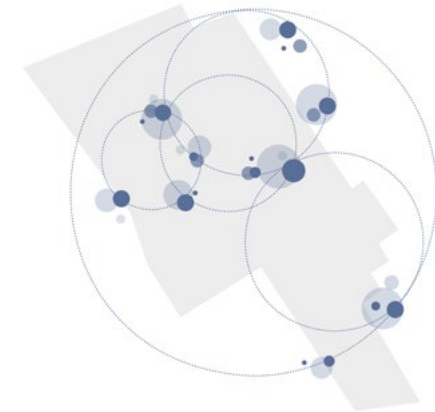
Improving connectivity and wayfinding, and creating a network of destinations within the neighbourhood that connects its hidden gems.

2. REWILD



Developing a network of green, biodiverse and connected open spaces that contribute to a greener and climate-resilient neighbourhood..

3. EMPOWER



Empowering local communities to become champions of the public realm through governance, maintenance and placemaking initiatives.

Design strategy

The design strategy shows a variety of interventions and projects that together bring forward the design vision for Fitzrovia Village. The diagram illustrates key strategic moves and interventions that underpin the design principles. These strategic moves will celebrate Fitzrovia's identity and heritage, facilitate the communities' engagement, and be a catalyst for a day-time and night-time economy.

Some of the interventions and projects are localised on specific streets, where others are extended across networks and corridors.

Plan showing the public realm vision for Fitzrovia Village



List of projects

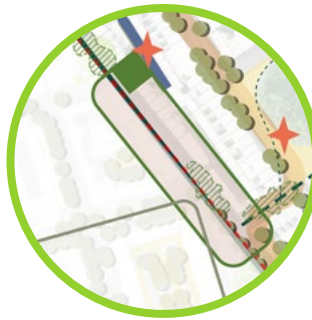
Outlined in this page is a list of projects that can enable Fitzrovia to achieve its public realm and placemaking vision. Four projects have been identified as priority, these have been further illustrated in the subsequent pages.



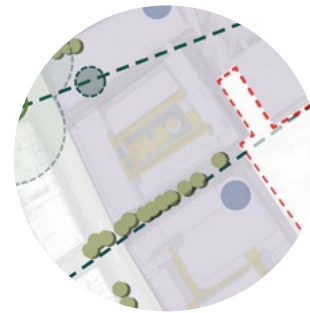
PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT OUTSIDE THE SQUARE



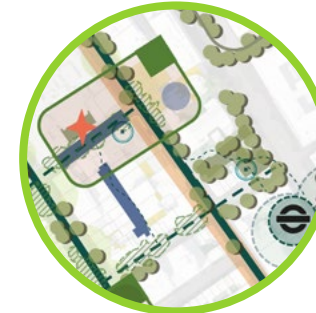
URBAN ORCHARDS



A GREEN LINK AT CLEVELAND STREET



HEALTH CAMPUS



A GREEN CONNECTION LINKING CHITTY STREET TO GOODGE STREET



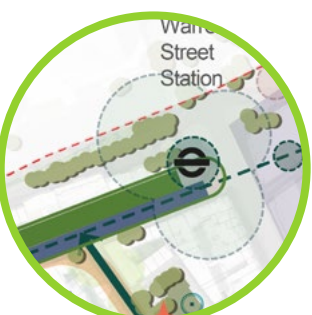
FITZROVIA GARDENING CLUB



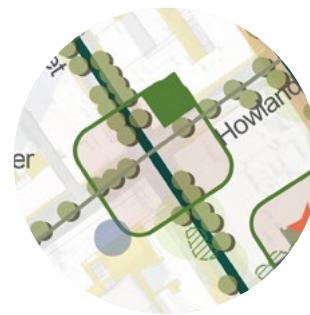
FITZROVIA'S GREEN MILE



WHITFIELD STREET ALFRESCO DINING AREA



WARREN STREET AND GATEWAY



FITZROVIA AND HOWLAND JUNCTION



REVISIONING CHARLOTTE STREET



BETTER MAINTENANCE AND CLEANSING

Environmental Benefits



130 KG
OF POLLUTION
REMOVED

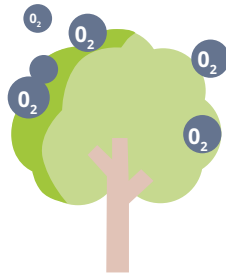


70%
INCREASE IN
TREES



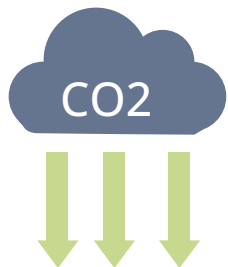
0.25+ HA
OF SuDS AND RAIN
GARDENS

10+ TONS
OF OXYGEN
PRODUCTION



CONNECTING 7
LOCAL HIDDEN
GEMS

1 MILE
RUNNING
ROUTE



3.9 TONS
OF CARBON
SEQUESTERED



230 TONS
OF CARBON STORED

Understanding an urban forest's structure, function, and value can promote management decisions that will improve human health and environmental quality. An assessment of the vegetation structure, function, and value of the Fitzrovia urban forest was conducted during 2045. Data from 225 trees located throughout Fitzrovia were analysed using the i-Tree Eco model developed by the U.S. Forest Service, North Research Station. The analysis was based on a few assumptions about tree size, estimated mature sizes and using a list of species recommended by the ecology team. The impact is estimated to be achieved after 25 years of planting.

8 Priority Projects

To deliver the long term public realm vision for Fitzrovia Village



Charlotte Street

The proposed concept design celebrates Charlotte Street as a vibrant and safe place for people through public realm and street interventions, including:

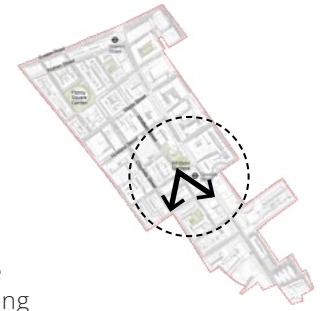
- Engagement with local community groups (such as Fitzrovia Youth) to form a collaboration.
- Apply for temporary road closure on Charlotte Street between Rathbone Place and Windmill Street in June/ July 2020 for four days (one per week over a one month period) for the Charlotte Street Festival.
- Create a theme for each day of the Charlotte Street Festival.
- Create physical markers along the Green Mile route with temporary planters, seating, pavement paint and lighting to link the existing green spaces.

Refer to [Fitzrovia Village Feasibility and Concept report](#), Jan 2020, for further analysis and inspiration information.



Concept plan of Charlotte Street proposal ►

Charlotte Street



- Place to dwell
- Pavement extension
- Re-surface carriageway
- Street trees
- Wifi hotspot
- Improved crossing
- Cycle parking



Aspiration for Charlotte Street

Chitty Street

Chitty Street sits in the northern boundary of Charlotte Street Conservation Area. It is a quiet, overlooked east-west connection between Charlotte Street and Whitfield Gardens.

The street is enclosed by large urban building blocks, with light wells on both sides of the street for basement floors. The frontage of the street is broken up by two breakout spaces, Charlotte Mews and Poet's Park. There are no other activated frontages, thus Chitty Street can like it's a back of house street. There is a restaurant space and building society on the eastern end of the street with active frontages to the small section of the street.

Charlotte Mews was a set scene in the Beatles film, "A hard days night".

The street currently lacks character as there are no street trees and a mix of uncoordinated lighting fixtures.

The street is in close proximity to Goodge Street Underground Station and community facilities (a private play park, nursery and church).



Chitty Street/ Goodge Street

The proposed concept design connects Chitty Street to Goodge Street underground station through public realm upgrades and activation including; planting and improved shared surfaces.

The proposal seeks to create a pedestrian friendly street with a public pocket park in close proximity to the community buildings and as a quieter extension to Whitfield Gardens. New planting, trees and seating will activated this quiet street and create a stepping stone between Warren Street and Charlotte Street. Upgrades include and are not limited to;

- improved pedestrian connection between Goodge Street and Chitty Street
- new public pocket park with integrated seating, incidental play, planting, art and lighting,
- a space for pop-up community events (for example for the nursery and church)
- a partially closed road to minimise vehicular use and promote active transport.



 Learning centre

 Church

Concept plan of Chitty Street



DRAWING NOT TO SCALE



PUBLIC ART

Activate blank facades/
walls with public art
extending across vertical
and horizontal surfaces



PLANTERS AND SEATING

Integrated seating and planters providing
improved amenity and comfort



INTEGRATED WAYFINDING

To decrease visual and
spatial clutter



LANDSCAPE BUFFERS

As a SuDS feature
providing a visual and
physical buffer to Euston
Road



PERMEABLE PAVING

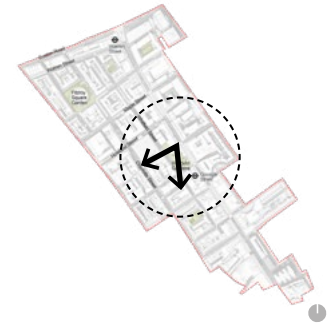
Change in paving assists in
differentiating between spaces
whilst reducing the urban heat
island effect and localised
flooding



PAVING

Paving to highlight Warren
St Station as a gateway to
Fitzrovia. Opportunities to
integrate historical narratives
or wayfinding

Chitty Street



Aspiration for the green link between Chitty Street and Goodge Street

Warren Street

Warren Street is partly located within the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area. The street is layered with historical narratives of past and more recent events.

Warren Street features a mix of fine grain blocks activated by terrace housing, small food and beverages and retail frontages creating a lively village-like environment. The street connects to Fitzroy Park and several mews, creating an iconic and vibrant destination, which has identified an opportunity in the strategy to link these hidden gems.

Warren Street underground station is located on the east. This is one of the areas experiencing higher crime rates. The area immediately adjacent to the busy gateway has narrow cluttered footpaths, unsuitable for the high footfall levels experienced during rush hour.

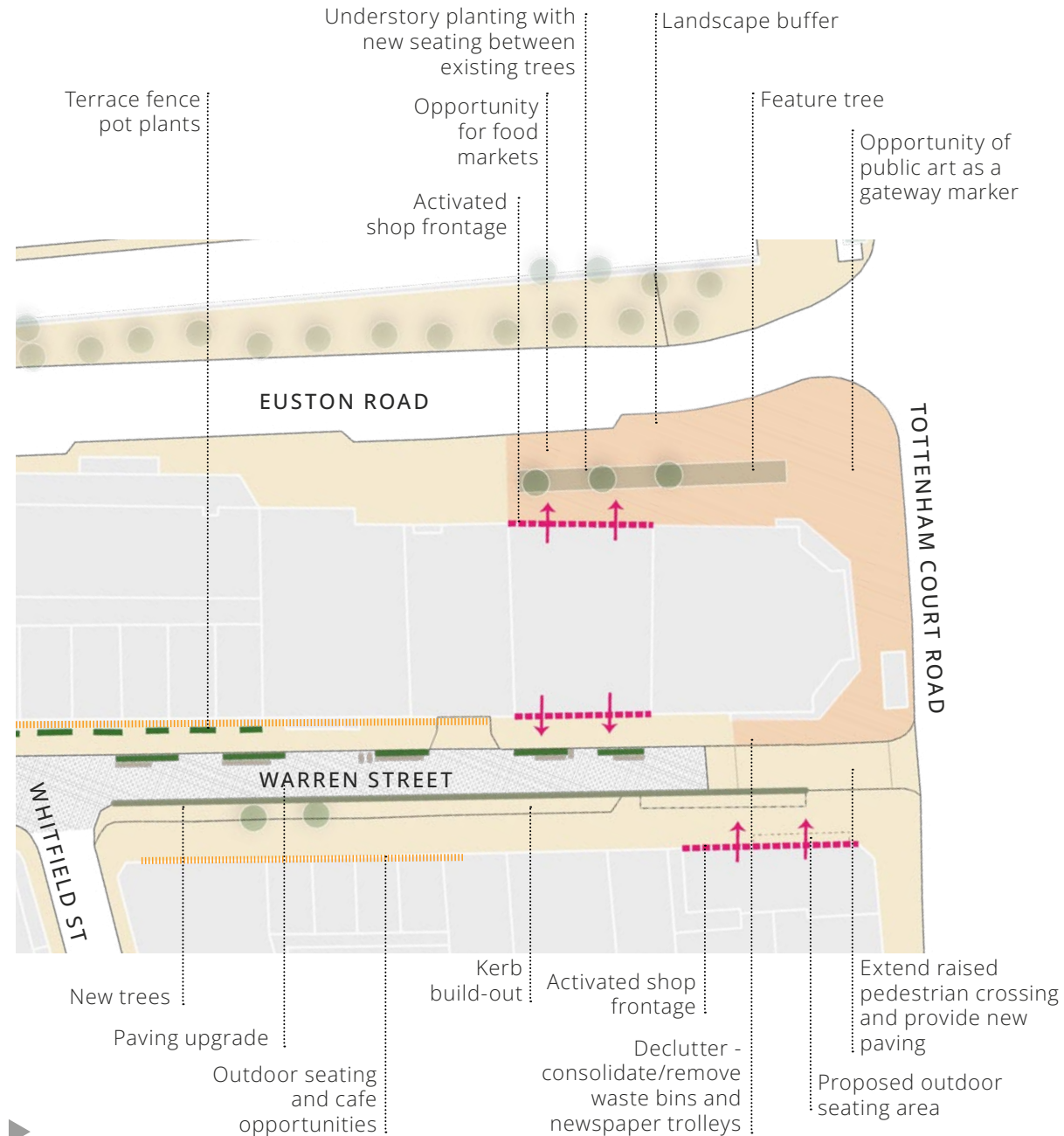
Tottenham Court Road also creates an abrupt, noisy, eastern edge to the street and blocks off any connection to the educational quarter.



Fitzrovia Gateway East

The proposed concept design promotes Warren Street as a safe place for people through public realm upgrades and activation including:

- increasing landscape and seating opportunities
- promoting street activation (shop frontages and outdoor dining)
- providing spaces for community events such as food markets and festivals
- improved pedestrian amenity such as paving upgrades lighting and of footpaths
- celebrating community and heritage through public art and storytelling
- restricted vehicular access to key times

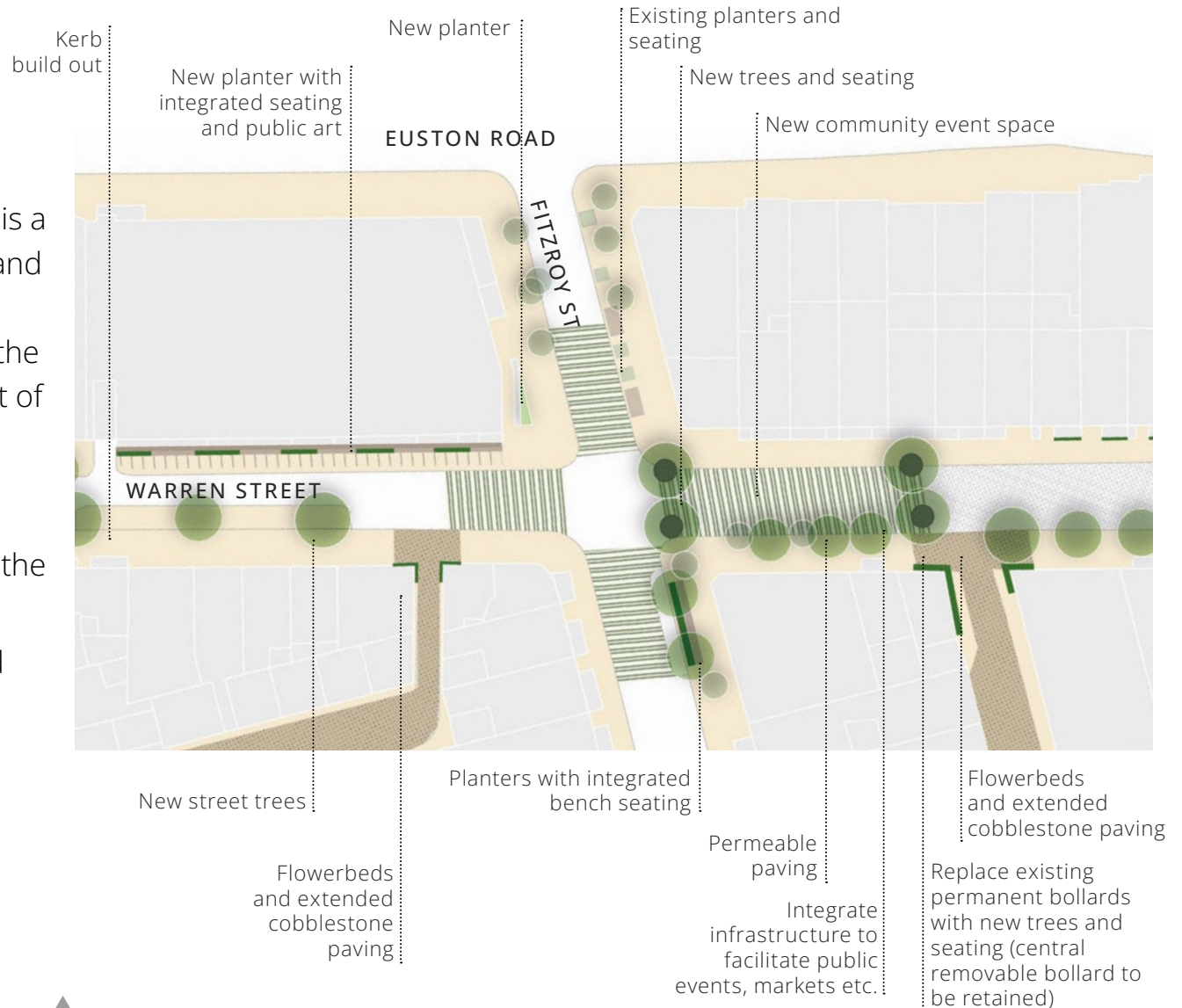


Concept plan of Warren Street East proposal ►

West Warren Street

The proposed concept design promotes Warren Street as a safe place for people through public realm upgrades and activation. The western side, is a quieter pedestrian street with cafes, restaurants and pubs and associated outdoor space. The concept design seeks to build on the identity provided by the parklets and new public spaces formed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The proposal includes;

- increasing landscape space and seating opportunities which complement the history of the street
- promoting street activation (shop frontages and outdoor dining)
- providing spaces for community events such as food markets and festivals
- improved pedestrian amenity such as paving upgrades, lighting and of footpaths
- celebrating community and heritage through public art and storytelling



▲ Concept plan of Warren Street West proposal



WAYFINDING MAP

Fitzrovia map to highlight the features across the precinct



GATEWAY CORNER



INTEGRATED SEATING

Planters providing improved amenity and comfort



PLANTING



TEMPORARY CANOPIES

Integrated infrastructure allowing for the installation of canopies as public art or shelter



INTEGRATED LIGHTING

To decrease clutter and improve safety



FEATURE LIGHTING

Lighting as a feature contributing to the gateway experience



PUBLIC ART

Contributing to the gateway experience

Warren Street



Tree lined street

De-clutter and consolidate street furniture

Wayfinding

Event space

Art installation/shade canopy

Upgrade paving

Planters

Road to still be used for timed access and emergency

Cleveland Street

Cleveland Street forms the boundary between Westminster City Council and the London Borough of Camden.

It is a long, quite street with busy nodes at the north and south end of the street. There is a high footfall moving east to west across the various cross points of the street. It comprises many land uses, including; residential, offices and educations.

The northern section of the street, closer to Euston Road, is activated at ground level by cafes and restaurants with some outdoor seating, this section is located in Fitzroy Square Conservation Area.

The southern section of the street, starts from Goodge Street, is within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area. This area is also aligned with residential retail, food and beverage premises.

The street has a reduced footfall in the centre, where there are less active frontages, but also University of Central London buildings and the back of house to the iconic BT Tower.

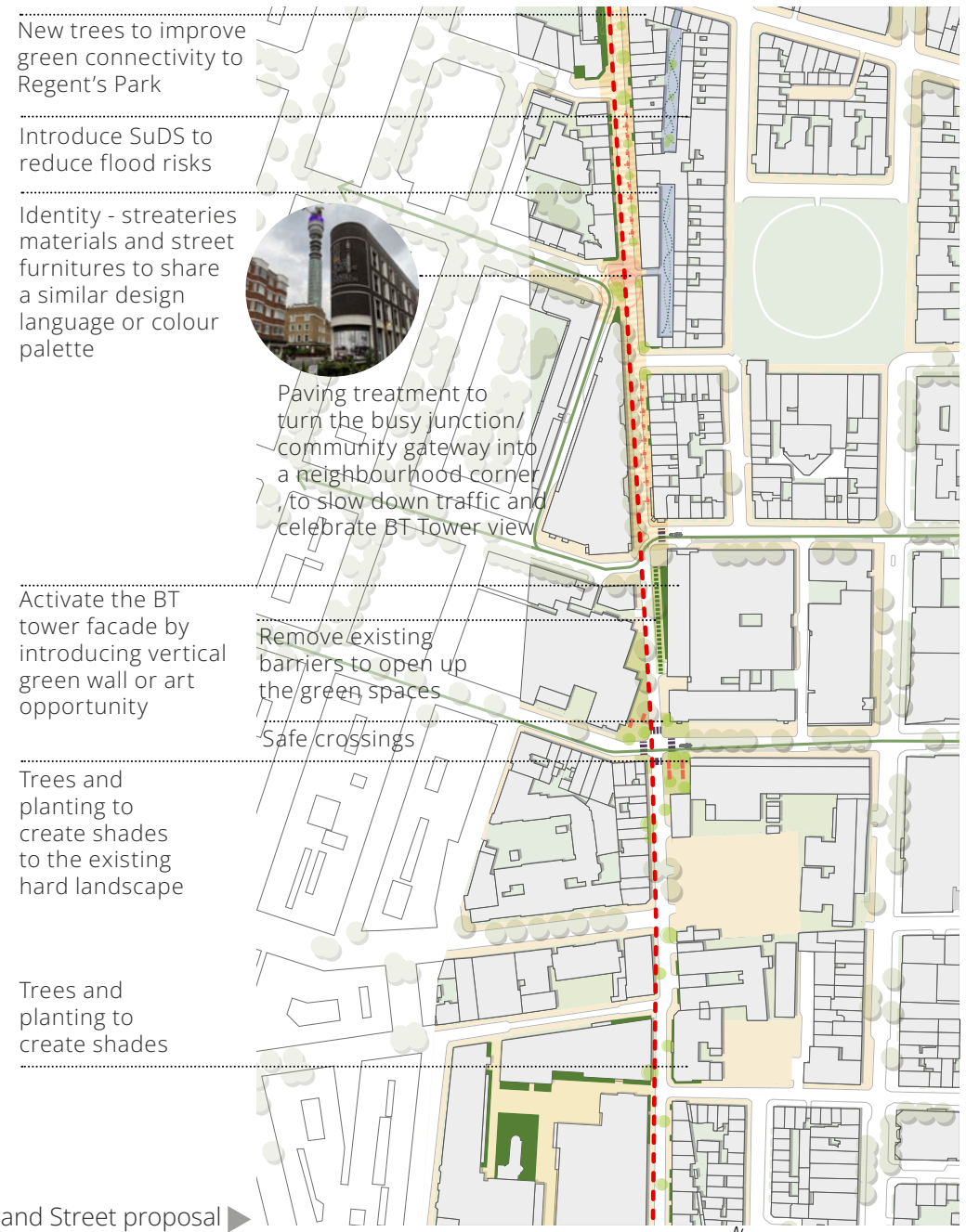
The change of land uses and urban fabric divide the street into two separate sections. Refer to the [appendix A](#) for the Declutter audit of Cleveland Street and the site audit report, which provide further detailed information.



The proposed design aims to increase the footfall on Cleveland Street and enhance its identity as a green, social and thriving street. Cleveland Street will become an exemplar neighbourhood street with a mix of food and beverage offerings as well outdoor dining areas. The design will not compete against Charlotte Street, but enhance Fitzrovia Village as a destination.

Upgrades include and are not limited to;

- Improved connection throughout the length of the street
- Wayfinding indicators to attract passers-bys from Euston Road
- Widening of pavements at key locations to provide opportunity for outdoor dining
- Introduction of trees and planting, to create year round interest
- Improve the visibility of the iconic BT tower and its facade
- Introduce Sustainable Urban drainage systems and permeable paving to mitigate floods, in particular in the Mews



New trees to improve green connectivity to Regent's Park

Introduce SuDS to reduce flood risks

Identity - streetlights materials and street furnitures to share a similar design language or colour palette



Paving treatment to turn the busy junction/ community gateway into a neighbourhood corner to slow down traffic and celebrate BT Tower view

Activate the BT tower facade by introducing vertical green wall or art opportunity

Remove existing barriers to open up the green spaces

Safe crossings

Trees and planting to create shades to the existing hard landscape

Trees and planting to create shades

Concept plan of Cleveland Street proposal ▶



PLANTING



PERMEABLE PAVING



FACADE TREATMENT



SAFE CROSSING



COMMUNITY CORNER



VIEWS AND HERITAGE



SUDS

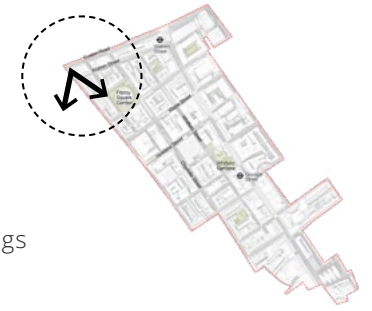


STREATERY



GREEN GATEWAY

Cleveland Street



Safe crossing and enhancing green connectivity to Regent's Park

Clear wayfinding to mark the gateway to Cleveland Street from Euston Road

Activate ground floor for night time uses to create a safe pedestrian environment

De-cluttering and improving streateries

Lighting elements to positively influence experience of place after dark

Upgrade paving and introduce permeable materials/SuDS in areas of flood risks

Trees and plantings to improve green connectivity to Regent's park

Community green



9 Next steps

Delivering the ambition



Next steps

The priority schemes and gateway improvements are part of an ambitious public realm strategy that once delivered, will create a greater sense of place and can be used as a catalyst to secure further funding to develop and deliver the other projects within the wider Concept Masterplan set out in Chapter 8.

Throughout the process of developing this document, concerns were raised on multiple occasions regarding the condition of the public realm, particularly regarding the waste and litter on the pavements. In direct response to this concern, The Fitzrovia Partnership have already taken steps to deal with this issue, and at the time of completion of this document, are in the process of agreeing terms to rent an electric waste vehicle and operative to remove waste bags and sanitize the streets. The delivery of the West End project has seen several public spaces, seating and green spaces added to the area. The Fitzrovia Partnership are continuing to work with the London Borough of Camden to support the maintenance, cleanliness and additional public realm enhancement opportunities. The next steps below outline the next key stages to deliver the public realm vision.



Next steps

PHASE	
1	Build a public-private partnership to steer and delivers the projects following via consultation
2	Develop the business case for investment
3	Assemble joint funding mechanisms for the priority projects
4	Progress through the design stages to construction
5	Deliver the priority projects
6	Monitor and report performance – more footfall and cycling, better air quality, healthier people, thriving businesses and vibrant places
7	Harness partnerships and emerging technologies to revolutionise maintenance, cleansing and security
8	Celebrate success



Funding

To build a portfolio of funding that is responsive to the design and the benefits it will bring, the project recognises that there are a wide range of beneficiaries. We recommend a funding assessment to understand who will benefit so we can structure who will pay for this.

The next step in bringing this vision and design into fruition is determining the most appropriate delivery approach. This requires proper consideration of translating the design benefits and how they accrue to businesses, residents and Camden Council, among others. Articulating and quantifying those benefits will inform a funding and delivery model. This approach should be responsive to the various elements of the design, those which can yield a private return and would be attractive to businesses versus those which yield a wider social and economic return and are best-placed for public funding.

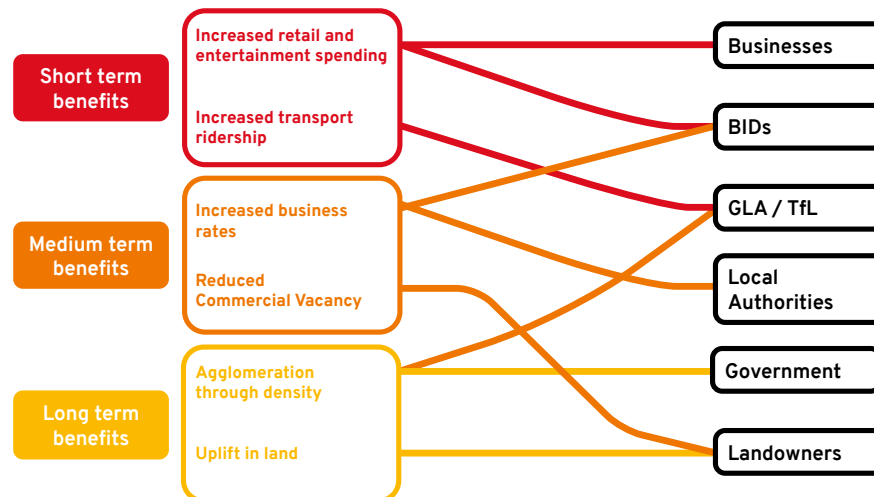
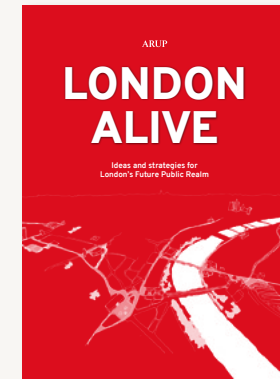


Diagram illustrating The value of public realm investment

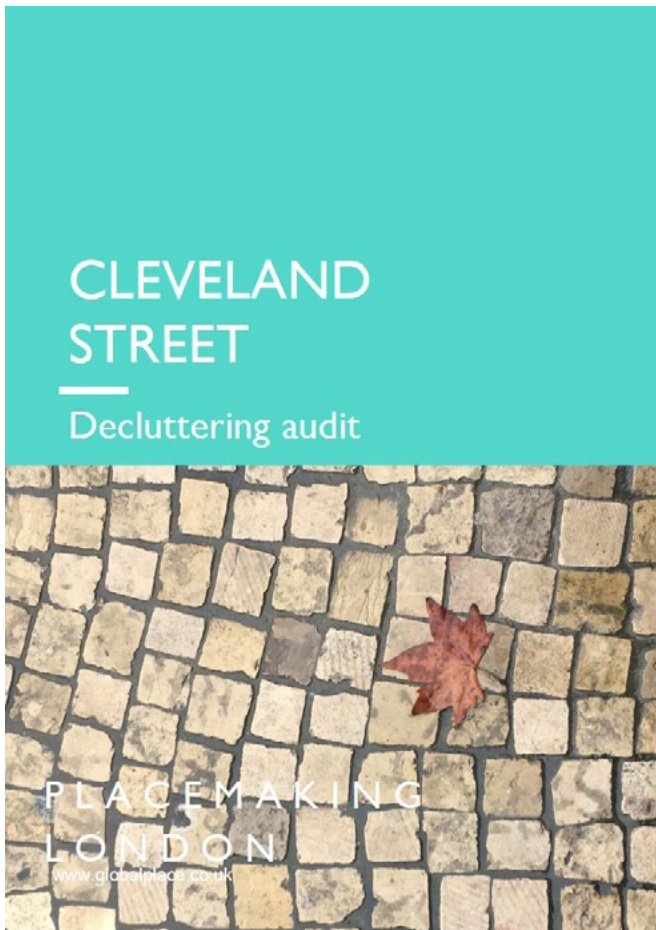
© Arup



London Alive is a collection of Arup's ideas for the future of public realm in central London - through recovery from Covid-19 and beyond.

10 Appendix

A. Cleveland Street Decluttering Audit



B. Fitzrovia Place Audit

