

# Stamford Hill AAP

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*Community Workshop on  
the needs of Local Business*

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06th July, 2015

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## Workshop report

### Event details

Title: The Needs of Local Business

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Time: 6-8pm

Venue: Stamford Hill Community Centre

### Activities

The needs of local business workshop took place on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The purpose of the event was to gain a clearer understanding of the issues facing the business community in Stamford Hill and gather data to enrich the evidence base for the Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (AAP). This was done through the delivery of a series of events,

1. Group activity to produce a '**SWOT**' (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of Stamford Hill as a place to operate a business
2. A **mapping activity** to identify specific opportunities for improvement
3. An **individual reflection** activity, asking people to note down their personal priorities for change, followed by a general discussion.

### Participants

The workshop was attended by 15 residents, in addition to Sue Cooke (Hackney Council project manager) and Ivan Tennant, Iain Glover and Giorgio Wetzl (the Plan Projects team); the event was successful in attracting both men and women (5 participants were women), with a good representation from the Jewish community (11 people).

Overall, the degree of diversity at the workshop was however low, not only were women below 50%, almost all the participants were of white ethnicity (this group accounts for 60% of the Study Area's population) and there were no disabled people present.

It is important for future workshops to try to increase participant diversity, and this will be raised with the Community Panel.

### Headline issues

- The need for more **commercial and work spaces** (B1) for micro and small enterprises
- Development sites should **yield a mix of uses** including B1 commercial space
- The protection of **existing work spaces** – not allowing conversion to resi
- Providing access to **affordable workspace**
- The weakness of **transport infrastructure across town**, preventing people from coming to Stamford Hill
- The weakness of the **identity of Stamford Hill** – hollowed out, boring, the lack of any discernible 'centre'
- Use of public spaces for **temporary commercial activity** such as markets
- A bold **vision for intensification** around Stamford Hill Broadway

- **Parking** for customers
- Businesses struggling to **make deliveries** due to narrowness of streets and parking issues
- Concern about **anti-social behaviour blackspots**, such as Broadway Mews
- An appetite for more **collective working** to promote the interests of business
- Sites to be **identified for civic amenities** (D1 and D2 uses), for example integration into new development schemes

Findings

i. SWOT analysis

The comments set out are taken verbatim from feedback sheets (see Appendix 2)

SWOT Analysis	
<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe environment</li> <li>• Diverse community</li> <li>• Quality of recreation areas</li> <li>• Public transport is ok</li> <li>• Proximity to the city and centre</li> <li>• In the Charedi community there is a lot of support and guidance</li> <li>• The existing balance between the larger retailers and small shops reflects the needs of the local community</li> <li>• Customer attraction</li> </ul>	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drunk and disorderly behaviour in Broadway Mews</li> <li>• Commercial property used for residential uses</li> <li>• More police presence</li> <li>• Parking restrictions (easier and accessible parking facilities)</li> <li>• Betting shops – 8 on the Hill</li> <li>• Families and business need more space</li> <li>• Poor transport – tube and bus in and out of town is fine, but not across town</li> <li>• Poor parking facilities around ALL shops in the zone</li> <li>• Lack of diversity in retail</li> <li>• Lack of retail facilities available</li> <li>• Not enough parking for retail</li> <li>• Not enough office space at 1000 sqft size; for 5000 sq ft there is nothing</li> <li>• People working alone are using rooms in synagogues and basements;</li> <li>• No business, town centre environment</li> <li>• Not very welcoming, grey – not creative</li> <li>• No ‘welcome to Stamford Hill’ or a focal point</li> <li>• No investment in front of shops</li> <li>• No well-being classes to have classes in (teach)</li> <li>• No art or creative expression</li> <li>• No community events/things that happen</li> <li>• Better access for lorry deliveries for larger businesses</li> <li>• Better choice and variety of shops (retail)</li> <li>• Craven Walk has difficult access for delivery vehicles</li> </ul>

<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An extra 10% retail space</li> <li>• There needs to be more office space (class B1)</li> <li>• To take existing industrial estates and create small 'villages' with residential, D1 spaces and high rise office buildings</li> <li>• Work with local development community to use public land to bring forward community housing schemes</li> <li>• Create a town centre</li> <li>• Spatial arrangement of Jewish retail (fishmongers, fresh bakeries etc) offers USP</li> <li>• To do what they did to transform Lea Bridge</li> <li>• Create branding and community identity and celebration</li> <li>• Stamford Hill Carnival/festival</li> <li>• More opportunities to work more closely together</li> <li>• Invest in fronts of shops and streets</li> <li>• More café would promote community – independent ones! Funding them so they can stay open even if they're not selling much</li> <li>• Festival lights</li> <li>• Oxford Circus style shared crossing at Stamford Hill crossroads</li> <li>• Local leisure centre, cinemas, cafes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House prices uncontrollably going up</li> <li>• Businesses will move elsewhere; commercial space will become unaffordable</li> <li>• Segregation and separation; some people feel unwelcome in Jewish shops</li> <li>• Lack of diversity – bookies</li> </ul>

ii. Ideas

Attendees put forward the following ideas during the 'personal reflection' activity. These have been divided into items that may be addressed/supported by planning policy, and other project ideas:

**Planning policy**

- Invest in creative and independent businesses across all the different cultures and communities of the area **creating exciting new space** for people to work, desk hire, cafes, rooms for different functions – office as well as therapeutic and wellbeing classes
- **Renew and refresh streets** – especially shop fronts and all businesses and public buildings eg, synagogues, investment in presentation
- **Restrict loading** to out of hours, and increase parking time
- Section 106 to include **business spaces** rather than just residential
- Prioritise and encourage more **office development**

- Introduce and enforce more one hour (20 min) customer parking
- Clear **access, mapping and signage** of existing premises, both shops and warehouses
- Increase the variety of offerings by **filling in empty spaces** (vacant shops and open spaces)
- More office space, leisure centre, social space, cinema, communal areas for community activities
- A **specific form or structure** to denote arrival in Stamford Hill

### ***Other project ideas***

- **Workshops and classes** that would create more connection, integration, skill sharing and shopping in the area etc – how to make Cholla (Jewish Bread), how to grow vegetables, make your own tea as well as yoga classes, Alexander Technique classes etc
- Produce a pan-community **Stamford Hill festival** and carnival
- Professionals who can be accessed by people looking for work experience

### Event Aims

The event was largely successful in delivering the aims described in the planning worksheet; in summary,

1. Develop a deeper understanding of local economy in Stamford Hill
  - From a range of independent voices, patterns and shared concerns started to emerge; these are set out under the 'headline issues' section of this study
  - The quality and range of attendees, coming from a number of different business backgrounds from construction to retail and property development meant some major strategic issues were raised, such as the need for a clearer identity for Stamford Hill as a business destination and the lack of workspace which could lead to businesses leaving the area, or hamper the ability of the neighbourhood to generate employment for local people.
2. To understand what are the key factors (both macro and micro) that impact on business life in Stamford Hill
  - The format of the SWOT analysis was effective in revealing some key concerns on the part of businesses in Stamford Hill; attendees were less conscious of the 'macro' forces that might be shaping the business environment in the area. Their perception was, on the whole, individual and 'micro' in scale.
3. Communicate how spatial planning relates to economic issues; develop a sense of how the spatial characteristics of Stamford Hill support or frustrate business activity
  - Participants' clear sense of the purpose of the AAP was well reflected in their comments, the majority of which relate to topics of relevance to planning policy; in addition, the mapping activity (task 2) produced a range of place-specific improvements and objectives for policy that reinforced the value of the workshop from this perspective.

#### 4. Introduction to 'town team' concept; people's prescription for Stamford Hill

- No specific vision was generated, but the concept of the 'town team' was aired as a grass roots initiative that the local business community could use to develop their ideas and generate change in the neighbourhood
- Taken as a whole, the feedback generated provides a valuable contribution to the process of developing planning policy that supports business and community development in Stamford Hill.

## Appendix 1: Workshop photos



## Appendix 2: Mapping places in need of improvement - General map



- 1. Braydon works - large ex-garage has been empty for nearly 30 years
- 2. Timber Wharf - Potential for better use of space - conversion?
- 3. Manor Road - Several empty units for potential conversion?
- 4. Broadway Mews - must be changed and is used as a drinking and alcohol spot; rubbish dumped and used as a toilet
- 5. Old BT exchange - What's happening here? No application but empty for a long time
- 6. Amhurst Park - remove green landscape sections and have either markets or stalls occasionally
- 7. The main junction need for more dense/higher development to create a 'town centre' atmosphere
- 8/9. Bridge over part of the railway at Manor Road (and elsewhere) with an eye to delivery more commercial space
- 10. Grosvenor Way and Theydon Road - suggestion to include this commercial area into boundary, this would add opportunity for future commercial development
- 11. Bus station - convert the bus area to a commercial enabled area so we can have work and local commercial units
- 12. Derelict WC facility not used
- 13. Disused toilet facility
- 14. Parade needs some investment and parking facility
- 15. Shortage of parking for customers and delivery (1)
- 16. Shortage of parking for customers and delivery (2)
- 17. Shopping parade has opportunity for investment/possibility to create communal facilities
- 18. Huge unused forecourt - could be a market!
- 19. More shopping area big storage in the whole area
- 20. Invest to redo the whole 'centre' - crossroads to create more of an identity, a buzz, a nice place to go and work together or shared workspace, but also communities to mix - cinemas, leisure centres, fun fresh late cafes, market place - to celebrate all the local trades etc
- 21. More shopping spaces in the Lordship area
- 22. Support business facilities along Lordship Road/Manor Road and St. Kildas
- 23. Improve pedestrian facility management on the junction
- 24. More shops on the canal - boat shops?
- 25. Difficult to make deliveries on Dunsmure Road
- 26. Craven Walk has difficult access for delivery vehicles



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