

Title of Report	Stamford Hill Area Action Plan Proposed Submission Version	
Key Decision No	CHE S246	
For Consideration By	Cabinet and Council	
Meeting Date	26 February 2024 And 28 February 2024	
Cabinet Member	Councillor Nicholson, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Supply, Planning, Culture and Inclusive Economy	
Classification	Open	
Ward(s) Affected	Stamford Hill West, Springfield, Woodberry Down and Cazenove	
Key Decision & Reason	Yes	It affects more than two or more wards
Implementation Date if Not Called In	N/A	
Group Director	Rickardo Hyatt Group Director, Climate, Homes and Economy	

1. Cabinet Member's introduction

- 1.1. The Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (AAP) describes a community led vision for future development in the Stamford Hill neighbourhood and the Planning policies to realise this vision. It is the culmination of extensive community engagement undertaken with thousands of local residents and community organisations over the course of the last seven years which has included the development of and the formal consultation on 'Towards a Stamford Hill Plan' in 2017 and a 'Draft Stamford Hill Area Action Plan' in 2021. To achieve these milestones of the plan making process there has been extensive community engagement informed by evidence gathering and intensive policy development work which has taken place over a sustained period of time.
- 1.2. The objective of this extensive engagement was to bring together the wide range of stakeholders living in the Stamford Hill neighbourhood and better understand the range of social needs and ambitions for the built environment

and the future of the neighbourhood alongside a range of concerns. These conversations have been used to arrive at a collective vision and set of objectives for the future of Stamford Hill. The area plan goes beyond planning bricks and mortar development, to thoughtfully considering the need to support the wellbeing and different needs of the diverse communities living in Stamford Hill and the Council's objectives to help realise strong cohesive communities in Hackney.

- 1.3. This extensive participatory consultation confirmed the need for a range of bespoke planning policies for Stamford Hill to respond to the neighbourhoods unique challenges. The area plan aims to strike the right balance between enabling growth to address the intense need for family housing and social and community infrastructure while maintaining the built character and design quality of the neighbourhood. The associated Stamford Hill Design Guide provides further detailed planning guidance to inform and guide implementation.
- 1.4. The area plan will help maintain and enhance those characteristics that residents value, including enhancing the well used local shopping centres to help diversify and strengthen the service offer available to residents. It also advocates enhancing the important green infrastructure and connecting corridors that cross the area. The Plan also seeks to maximise and direct the opportunities for expanding the provision of community infrastructure and commercial spaces that provide employment and business opportunities.
- 1.5. The area plan will help make sure that the planning processes effectively deliver high quality development that enhances the rich heritage and special character of the neighbourhood. However, the extensive consultation has also highlighted the need for an ongoing effort from the Council and its partners to not only ensure the area plan itself is effectively delivered but a clear implementation framework is included to ensure the appropriate action is taken to curate the neighbourhood going forward and realise the vision and objectives of the area plan.
- 1.6. Approval is sought from Cabinet and Council to publish the Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (Regulation 19 Publication Version) and to take this next procedural step towards the examination in public led by the Planning Inspectorate and the formal adoption of the Area Action Plan.
- 1.7. I commend this report to the Cabinet and to Full Council.

2. Group Director's introduction

- 2.1. This report seeks Cabinet and full Council's approval to publish the proposed submission version of the Stamford Hill Area Action Plan under Regulation 19 of the Local Plan Regulations (2012) for consultation prior to submission to the Government for an independent examination in public. This follows

consultation on a Draft Stamford Hill Area Action Plan, approved by Cabinet in November 2021.

- 2.2. Building on the Local Plan (LP33), the strategic planning document used to direct and guide future growth and development across the borough, the AAP identifies specific planning policies for Stamford Hill. Once adopted, the AAP will form part of the Development Plan for Hackney. It will be used, along with the Local Plan 2033 (LP33, 2020) to determine planning applications in Stamford Hill.
- 2.3. The Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (Regulation 19 Publication Version) has been prepared in line with relevant national planning policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 and the process of preparation has met the requirements for relevant planning and other legislation. It is an important document that responds to the challenges and opportunities in this part of Hackney, identified through extensive consultation and evidence gathering over the last few years development of the AAP with the community.
- 2.4. Before development plan documents like Area Action Plans can be adopted, they must be published for consultation and then submitted to the Government for an independent examination in public. Cabinet and Council approval is therefore sought to publish the Proposed Publication Version of the Stamford Hill AAP for public consultation and submission to Government for examination.

3. Recommendations

3.1. Cabinet is asked to:

- 1. Recommend to Full Council to approve the proposed submission Stamford Hill Area Action Plan at appendix 1 for publication and subsequent submission to Government for an independent examination in public.**
- 2. Recommend to Full Council to delegate authority to the Group Director, Climate, Homes and Economy to approve administrative alterations, graphical, typographical amendments, to improve cross referencing (e.g. para numbering, page numbering) ahead of consultation or ahead of submission to Government for examination in public.**

3.2. Council is asked to:

- 1. Approve the proposed submission Stamford Hill Area Action Plan at appendix 1 for publication and subsequent submission to Government for an independent examination in public.**

2. Delegate authority to the Group Director, Climate, Homes and Economy to approve administrative alterations, graphical, typographical amendments, to improve cross referencing (e.g. para numbering, page numbering) ahead of consultation or ahead of submission to Government for examination in public.

4. Reason(s) for decision

- 4.1. Following consultation on a draft Stamford Hill AAP, the Council has now produced the proposed submission version of the Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (Stamford Hill Area Action Plan, 2024 Regulation 19 Publication Version). The Council is to publish this for comment before submitting it to the Secretary of State for independent examination in public. The AAP will manage existing development pressures and shape future growth in a sustainable manner.

5. Details of alternative options considered and rejected

- 5.1. The alternative is not to produce an Area Action Plan for the Stamford Hill area and rely on the adopted borough-wide Local Plan policies. This has been rejected as the AAP is considered necessary to provide an essential framework for growth which responds to the specific needs of the Stamford Hill community and safeguards the area's unique character.
- 5.2. The AAP will ensure that development delivers real benefits to the community, particularly in terms of maximising the supply of larger family homes, improving open space and the public realm more broadly, and enabling the provision of new education and community facilities and improving local shopping centres in Stamford Hill. In producing the Stamford Hill AAP, the Council has engaged positively with the community and different groups and organisations within it to shape the vision for the future of Stamford Hill and inform the objectives and detailed planning policies.

6. Background

- 6.1. In November 2021, the Cabinet approved a Draft Stamford Hill AAP for public consultation. This took place from December 2021 to February 2022. Following this consultation on a draft, and an extended period of consultation and engagement prior to this, the Stamford Hill AAP is now ready to be submitted to the Government for an independent examination. In line with legal requirements the Council needs to publish the 'Publication Version' AAP for comment first.
- 6.2. Cabinet is now asked to recommend approval to full Council and full Council is asked to approve publication of Stamford Hill AAP (Publication Version, Regulation 19) for submission for an examination.

Policy Context

- 6.3. Stamford Hill AAP, like the Local Plan (LP33) is a development plan document (identified in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) is part of the Council's policy framework defined in the constitution.
- 6.4. The Stamford Hill AAP must be consistent with and complement the Hackney Local Plan LP33 adopted in 2020. It also addresses the commitment in Hackney's Strategic Plan 2022 - 2023 to finalise and adopt a Stamford Hill Area Action Plan.

The scope and content of the AAP

- 6.5. The Stamford Hill AAP (Publication 19, Publication Version) is included as Appendix 1 to this report. LP33 sets out the strategic policies and will be used to assess the amount of affordable housing and affordable workspace that must be provided amongst other matters. These policies are not repeated. Instead the role of the Stamford Hill AAP (Publication Version) is to provide additional detailed planning policies.
- 6.6. The Stamford Hill AAP (Publication Version) sets out a vision and objectives for development. It includes development management policies across seven themes which are: Housing, Local Enterprise and the Economy, Community Wellbeing, Design & Historic Environment, Public Realm and Green Infrastructure. The AAP identifies 9 sites within the Plan boundary as Site Allocations. These are individual sites of strategic importance where preferred land uses and mix, indicative capacity, building heights and development principles are indicated. The AAP also includes an Implementation Strategy, highlighting specific actions that will support effective delivery of the AAP vision.
- 6.7. The policy approaches identified respond to the specific issues in Stamford Hill. These issues are derived from consultation and a review of evidence and are summarised, along with the policy response in the AAP, below.
- 6.8. **Housing:** There is a significant need for genuinely affordable housing, in common with other parts of the borough. Stamford Hill is subject to the affordable housing requirements established in LP33 and the AAP will contribute to the delivery of the 3,000 homes in Woodberry Down/ Stamford Hill LP33 identifies. There is a particular need for larger family homes, particularly for Stamford Hill's Orthodox Jewish communities to reduce overcrowding.
- 6.9. A more enabling approach towards housing extensions to alleviate overcrowding and create more space was advocated by a large number of respondents to consultation. However, some respondents raised significant concerns about two storey roof extensions on the grounds of design, loss of amenity and impact on the street. More broadly concerns around the effect

of incremental and uncoordinated development on character and identity of the area were also highlighted.

6.10. The AAP sets out policies which will:

- Maximise the provision of 4+ beds across all tenures in new development to address both affordability and overcrowding issues while also providing a mix of smaller units for smaller households and to encourage residents to 'downsize' unoccupied larger family homes. This is supported by local viability evidence.
- Ensure a mix of housing is provided by ensuring that the conversion of larger homes in Stamford Hill provides a family unit (4+ bedroom).
- Further maximise the delivery of larger family sized housing by enabling larger extensions where these are of a high design quality and are appropriate to the street, balancing the need for larger homes with the effect on the character of the area. A Stamford Hill Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document is also being prepared to support the effective implementation of this policy.

6.11. **Local Enterprise and Economy:** Full time employment in Stamford Hill is lower than the rest of Hackney. There is a range of commercial and light industrial uses, but the dominant employment source is retail. The Town Centre is popular and well used. Consultation responses reflected a desire to support a more diverse shopping offer and avoid any decline or narrowing of the range of goods available.

6.12. The AAP sets out policies which will:

- Reinforce the town centre as the main destinations for shops alongside commercial, leisure and cultural uses in order to protect their vitality and viability in line with LP33.
- Use planning powers to manage the change of use to retain a diverse retail offer, while recognising that national changes to planning 'use classes' limit planning controls that can be exercised on changes between different town centre uses.
- Amalgamation of retail units to provide larger floorspace where appropriate.
- 4 of the 9 site allocations require the inclusion of commercial uses on site

6.13. **Social and Community Infrastructure:** Stamford Hill has a diverse and growing population, with the ONS data alone indicating that the birth rate and growth of 0-5 year olds is higher than the rest of Hackney. One of the biggest challenges facing the AAP is to address social infrastructure that is currently under pressure, especially community space and faith-based school places in the independent sector.

6.14. The AAP sets out policies which will:

- Encourage co-location of different community uses and make better use of existing underutilised facilities and guide new social and community uses to the most sustainable and appropriate locations.
- Provide a flexible and enabling policy framework that supports the provision of new social and community facilities, including schools, to accommodate the different and unique needs of the community in Stamford Hill.
- Through actions defined in the implementation strategy, continuously assess social and other infrastructure needs of communities living in the area.

6.15. **Design & Heritage:** Stamford Hill has a more suburban character than other parts of the borough with relatively low density and almost 40% of the area made up of terraced housing. Community engagement highlighted concerns that the built heritage and character of the area is being incrementally eroded. By contrast many respondents felt that there was an overfocus on conservation and character issues at the expense of meeting housing needs.

6.16. The AAP sets out policies which will:

- Includes policies to ensure that any new development responds positively to the defined qualities which includes respecting the prevailing scale, form and grain of development and making appropriate use of building materials.
- Defines 16 Character Areas that are important to conserving and enhancing the area.
- Sets out (in part 4, chapter 1 on housing) an enabling framework for the delivery of housing, taking a design led approach.

6.17. **Public Realm:** Improving the walking and cycling environment is a corporate objective reflecting in the Council's Transport Strategy and Climate Action Plan. The consultation responses suggested a general consensus about improving pedestrian safety and introducing better cycling and walking routes in the area along with general support for improving the public realm more broadly. However, there were some concerns about implementation issues including impacts on parking provision, especially on Dunsmore Road.

6.18. The AAP sets out policies which will:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the public realm in Stamford Hill and addresses issues concerning pedestrian & cyclist safety.
- Support the opening up of access to the River Lea and related improvements to the pedestrian environment.

- Support the delivery of a range of public interventions that aim to improve connectivity, accessibility, urban greening and create child-friendly environments in five cluster areas identified as: Stamford Hill District centre, Dunsmure Road, Stamford Hill Boulevard, Ravensdale Road to the River Lea and Oldhill Street. The AAP will also highlight that these will be the subject of separate consultation.

6.19. **Green Infrastructure:** The evidence identifies deficiencies in open space and play space in Stamford Hill. There was general support, in consultation responses, for improving green infrastructure. However, this also revealed differences over the relative priority to be given to open space compared to demand for community facilities and housing.

6.20. The AAP sets out policies which will:

- Require development to support key green infrastructure, with a focus on key links and opening up access to open space
- Support enhancement of the natural environment including Wetlands to Wetlands Greenway

7. Main changes to the Draft Stamford Hill AAP, 2021

7.1. The issues raised through consultation are complex interlinked and many go well beyond the scope of planning. All responses have been carefully considered. There is a high degree of continuity between overall policy direction in the 2021 Draft SPD and this Publication Version. However, there have been some significant revisions. These include:

- Revising the vision text to better reflect the range of ambitions for the area and to include a focus on community cohesion. Linked to this, a more nuanced presentation of the main challenges and opportunities is included to better reflect the diversity of communities in the area and the positive contribution of the Charedi community.
- Clarifying the housing mix for new development in Stamford Hill based on updated assessment of housing need.
- New site allocations were added to the five in the 2021 draft which will contribute to delivering the housing and commercial space envisaged in LP33.
- While specific sites for education or community facilities are not identified in site allocation, an enabling policy for their provision is provided. A criteria based approach provides the flexibility needed to respond to changes in demand for social infrastructure and clear planning criteria to manage associated impact.
- Incorporation of a more detailed, action focused implementation plan to ensure effective engagement with stakeholders continues into the implementation phase and to monitor the impact of the AAP, including

the delivery of key infrastructure, including schools, site allocations and public realm projects.

- 7.2. In addition to these changes, minor revisions were made to ensure stronger alignment with more recently produced corporate strategies, for example the Hackney Climate Action Plan, 2023 and Hackney Local Nature Recovery Plan, 2023. Ensuring policies are clear and unambiguous is a requirement of national policy and helps save time and money for all parties at the planning application stage. Therefore drafting revisions were made to provide a more precise expression of design and other criteria and to avoid repetition or ambiguity.

Equality impact assessment

- 7.3. The Stamford Hill AAP has been informed by an Integrated Impact Assessment which includes an Equalities Impact Assessment and the conclusions have been considered. The Equalities Impact Assessment did not find that there were any significant negative impacts from the AAP policies on those with Protected Characteristics.
- 7.4. This discharges the Council's public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 by having due regard to:
- eliminating discrimination; harassment and victimisation;
 - advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Sustainability and climate change

- 7.5. A Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken as part of the Integrated Impact Assessment to ensure that the plan meets agreed sustainability objectives. Assessment of significant effects of policies and site allocations on climate change was included in the Integrated Impact Assessment.

Consultations

- 7.6. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that development plans documents like Local Plans and AAPs are subject to consultation. Plan making authorities must:
- Notify key stakeholders that the plan is being prepared and the scope of the plan (Regulation 18) and
 - Publish the plan for comments before it is submitted for independent examination and make it available (Regulation 19)
 - Ensure all consultation aligns with any adopted Statement of Community Involvement

- 7.7. The approach to developing the Stamford Hill AAP has gone well beyond these minimum statutory requirements and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, 2014 and temporary amendments in response to coronavirus (Covid-19) for Plan-Making, June 2020.
- 7.8. The decision to prepare the Stamford Hill AAP evolved from discussions relating to Neighbourhood Planning during 2013 and 2014. Two local groups with distinct visions for the area applied to establish a Neighbourhood Forum in Stamford Hill. Both groups had local support, but very different approaches in relation to planning. Working with both local groups, the Council has proposed an alternative approach which was to develop an AAP for Stamford Hill. Meetings were held with both groups and a strategy agreed which resulted in the refusal of both applications for Neighbourhood Forums and the commitment from the Council to resource an AAP for Stamford Hill and to develop this in an inclusive way.
- 7.9. A Cross Party Steering Group was established at the end of 2014 to manage the production of the Plan. Membership of the Steering Group includes senior officers from the planning team and Councillors from the Stamford Hill West, Springfield, Woodberry Down and Cazenove wards. The Steering Group is responsible for making all major decisions in respect of the consultation process as well as ensuring overall quality of output in accordance with relevant Council standards and statutory processes.
- 7.10. The Council also set up a Community Panel in 2015. The Community Panel, aided by an independent facilitator, meets up to 4 times a year. The Community Panel includes community representatives and local organisations. The primary purpose of the Community Panel is to ensure that a range of local views are taken into account in the policies developed in the AAP and to help ensure that consultation reaches a wide audience. The make up of this group aims to reflect the demographic, faith and ethnic profile of the diverse community in Stamford Hill. Members are all volunteers who have given their time to shape the Area Action Plan.

Towards a Stamford Hill Plan', December 2016

- 7.11. An 18-month engagement programme including drop-in events, questionnaires, sessions with local schools and workshops covering different themes informed the key issues set out in the 'Towards a Stamford Hill Plan'. Public consultation on the 'was undertaken in Spring 2017. More than 2,000 responses over an eight week period.

Draft Stamford Area Action Plan, 2021 (Extended Regulation 18 Consultation

- 7.12. The Draft Stamford Area Action Plan, 2021 (Extended Regulation 18 Consultation) was consulted on from December 2021 to February 2022. The consultation provided an opportunity for people to comment on more detailed policies. Extensive efforts were made to disseminate information about the consultation. Advertisements were placed in the December 2021 edition of Hackney Today, which is distributed to 108,000 homes and businesses in Hackney. Council e-newsletters were sent to over 9,000 subscribers and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were utilised to promote the consultation. In addition, an email was sent to each of the over 1300 contacts on the Strategic Planning Consultee list, ensuring that key stakeholders were informed and invited to participate.
- 7.13. To further facilitate access to the consultation materials, hard copies of the plan, summary documents, evidence base and questionnaires were made available for viewing at prominent locations such as Stamford Hill, Stoke Newington and Hackney Central libraries. An additional hard copy questionnaire designed in consultation with the Interlink Foundation to encourage responses from Charedi residents. The Council also organised two outdoor in-person events and officers attended two virtual ward forums to provide an overview of the plan and address questions from residents. These efforts were undertaken to ensure that the consultation process was comprehensive, inclusive and accessible to all members of the Stamford Hill community.
- 7.14. In response:
- The Council received feedback from 1488 respondents
 - Through 'Common Place', an online engagement portal, 298 completed 'Quick Feedback' and a further 341 completed the full online questionnaire
 - 531 'Quick Feedback' forms and 204 full questionnaires were received in hard copy
 - 114 representations were received via emails.
- 7.15. The established approach of going beyond minimum legal requirements will be continued for consultation on Stamford Hill AAP (Publication Version, Regulation 19). The approach to dissemination set out in paragraphs 7.10 to 7.13 above will be replicated. In addition, all respondents to the consultation will also be invited to express an interest in taking part in the independent examination in line with requirements. These requests along with comments will be submitted to the Government and reviewed by the independent Planning Inspector.

Risk assessment

- 7.16. A full risk assessment has been carried out as part of the project plan produced for the AAP. The outcome of this has informed the 'reasons for decision' set out above.

Next Steps

7.17. If Cabinet recommends approval and Council approves publication and consultation on the Stamford Hill AAP (Regulation 19 Publication Version), the document will be consulted on in Spring 2024. It will then be submitted along with all comments received on it and evidence documents to the government for an independent examination. Subject to the conclusions of this Inspector's report, the AAP can then be formally adopted by the Council. A Planning Inspector will be appointed to test the plan to establish whether it is 'sound'. To be sound, a Plan needs to:

- meet the objectively assessed needs of an area
- be justified by evidence
- be able to be effectively implemented and
- should be consistent with national planning policies.

7.18. If during the course of the examination it is identified changes are needed for soundness, these will be the subject of further consultation and will be reported back to Cabinet and Council for approval. The Inspector will then produce a report on findings and decide on whether the plan is 'sound'. Subject to the conclusions of this Inspector's report, the AAP can then be formally adopted by the Council. The key milestones are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Stamford Hill AAP key milestones for plan production

AAP Milestone	Dates
Cabinet & Council consideration of the Proposed Submission	February 2024
Consultation on the Stamford Hill (Regulation 19 Publication version)	Spring 2024
Submission of the AAP to Government for examination	Spring 2024
Examination of the AAP and potentially consultation on proposed modifications required for soundness	Summer 2024*
Adoption	Winter 2025*

8. Comments of the Interim Group Director, Finance

8.1. This report seeks Cabinet approval for the release of the planned submission version of the Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (AAP) in accordance with Local Plan Regulations (2012), an important step towards formalising the plan's inclusion into the local planning framework.

8.2. This detailed plan lays out the goals, principles, and strategies for the development of Stamford Hill in the future. It underlines the need to strike a

fine balance between meeting particular issues and preserving and strengthening the area's individual characteristics.

- 8.3. The AAP was created as a result of intensive consultation with neighbourhood residents and community organisations. This is consistent with the Council's commitment to involving the community and making sure that policies are sensitive to their needs and aspirations. The Council's objective of fostering community welfare is directly supported by the plan's emphasis on upgrading social infrastructure, community amenities, and schools.
- 8.4. The process of developing the AAP, conducting consultations, and preparing associated documentation have costs related to staffing, administration, public engagement activities, and materials which have been covered by existing resources.

9. Comments of the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services

- 9.1 The recommendations sought in Section 3 of this report are Key Decisions as they concern decision making that is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the Council.
- 9.2 Pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 before submitting a local plan to the Secretary of State, the Local Planning authority must (a) make a copy of the proposed submission document and a statement of the representations procedure available in accordance with the regulations and (b) ensure that a statement of the representations procedure and a statement of the fact that the proposed submission document is available for inspection and the of the places and times at which they can be inspected, is sent to each of the general consultations bodies and each of the specific consultation bodies invited invited to make presentations under regulation 18(1).

Cabinets authority to approve the recommendations

- 9.3 Cabinet is authorised to approve the recommendation in Section 3 of this report pursuant to the Mayor's Scheme of Delegation (See Note 3 and the section on 'Policy Framework' which grants Cabinet the responsibility for making recommendations to the Council on the Local Development Framework (now known as the Local Plan) and Local Area Action Plans).

Council's authority to approve the recommendations

- 9.4 The Council is authorised to approve the recommendations in Section 3 of this report pursuant to:

i) Part 2, Article 4.7(b) of the Constitution which states that the Full Council will among other things exercise functions on approving or adopting the policy framework. Articles 4.8 and 4.9 of the Constitution define the policy framework, which includes 'the Local Development Framework' prepared pursuant to section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Section 15 of this Act has been amended and now refers to 'development plan documents' instead and includes strategic planning policies such as the Stamford Hill (AAP); and

ii) Part 2, Article 4.8(a) (and Article 4.7(b)) of the Constitution which authorises Full Council to approve or adopt plans including the Local Development Framework (which includes the Stamford Hill (AAP)).

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Stamford Hill Area Action Plan (AAP) Proposed Submission Version

Background documents

None

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