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WE MADE THAT
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FINCHLEY CENTRAL TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY
NOVEMBER 2017

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Aims for the Finchley Church End Town Centre Strategy

The London Borough of Barnet have commissioned a Town Centre Strategy and proposals for improvements to Finchley Church End, also known as Finchley Central.

The main aims of the project are to:

- give Finchley Church End a new sense of place and clearer identity, where businesses, residents and the wider community can come together and thrive
- support for businesses and entrepreneurs, including creating new business space and pop-up shops and delivering steps to grow the evening economy
- guide future development sites that reflect the needs of the local population
- guide infrastructure investments required along the high street to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists
- consider the role of high streets in meeting the needs of an ageing and diverse population

Finchley Church End now

Finchley Church End town centre is located within LB Barnet and is more familiarly known as 'Finchley Central' owing to the name of the tube station. This

connects the town centre to central London via the Northern Line. Finchley is well-connected and has excellent transport links, it accommodates a steady flow of commuters and travellers.

Historically the main high street, Ballards Lane, was developed to form a key connecting route between Marylebone and North Finchley. The town centre is still predominantly a linear high street which currently lacks an obvious 'centre'.

The town centre is made up of a number of distinct elements including a linear high street, significant clusters of office space, and a conservation area. Finchley Church End Conservation Area is located in the southern end of the town centre. This area has a distinct character, primarily owing to the number of heritage assets located there.

Finchley Church End town centre has an affluent local demographic, yet the town centre is currently failing to serve its local population. Neighbouring centres such as Muswell Hill, North Finchley and Temple Fortune are commonly referred to as preferred town centres over Finchley Church End.

Urban appraisal

The design team carried out a number of technical studies and on-site appraisals to identify issues and opportunities within Finchley Church End town centre. This evidence base provided key information about local demographics, community assets and local policy which affects current and future development of the area. In-depth observations revealed how people currently use the town centre including pedestrian, cycle and vehicular movement, along with other social activity on the street.

Business audits and surveys

The project team also conducted a number of surveys and audits to identify the barriers to economic growth facing businesses in Finchley Church End. The surveys included a mystery shopping report, a business survey, and a retail audit with businesses along the high street. An analysis of

Census and Cameo data provided an overview of the local demographic and an idea of local income and lifestyle. This indicated what this specific demographic would want in their local town centre.

Guiding principles

In response to the evidence base the team identified eight guiding principles which provided focus and structure for the proposals as they were developed. The guiding principles are as follows:

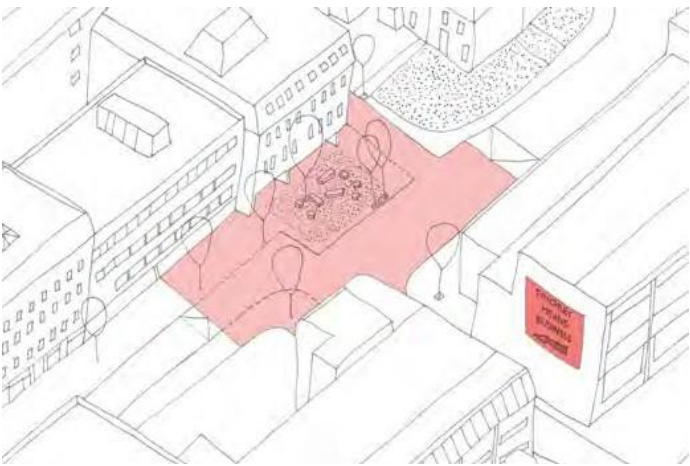
- Establish civic spaces
- Support vital employment clusters
- Ease pedestrian & cycling movement
- Identify development growth opportunities
- Improve gateways through development
- Making the most of heritage assets
- Encourage an inclusive town centre
- Promote local perception & identity

Establish civic spaces

The high street boasts significantly wide footways and is bookended by two green spaces - Church End Gardens and Victoria Park. However currently the public realm is poor and these spaces are currently under utilised. There is also an opportunity to establish public spaces at the core of the high street, introduce activities such as markets, and improve the existing green spaces, to encourage people to dwell.



Introducing a new 'public square' on the high street



Enhancing public realm in employment areas

The relocation of Church End Library offers an opportunity to re-establish it as a community hub. Conversations with local residents have identified this as a need locally.

Support vital employment clusters

Finchley Church End is a key employment hub for the borough, and should continue to perform this role. The appraisal process has revealed that a significant proportion of this floor space is being lost through permitted development conversion of office space to residential uses. The strategy will seek to protect employment space within the town centre, whilst also improving the public environment for office workers and visiting clients.

An Article 4 direction would restrict the number of future residential conversions, particularly where employment space is well used and vulnerable. The two key employment clusters, Popes Drive and Regents Office Park, are highlighted as areas where focused public realm improvements should be implemented to create pleasant spaces where office workers can spend time on their breaks.

Ease pedestrian & cycling movement

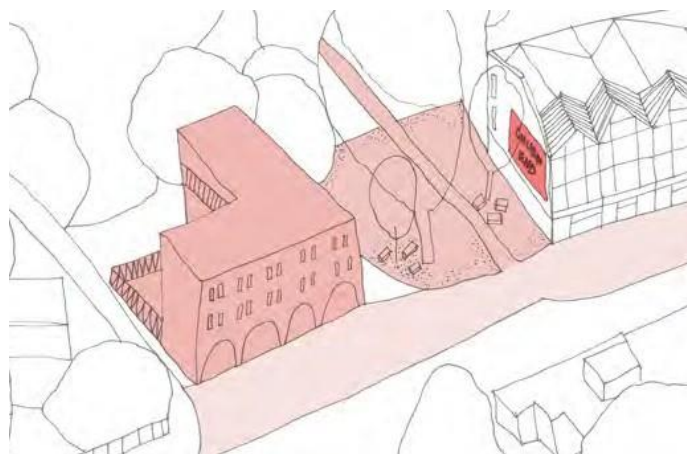
The town centre is currently traffic dominated, and often provides an unfriendly environment for

pedestrians and cyclists. The strategy recommends a review of busy junctions, and a rebalancing of the road to reduce vehicle dominance. Proposal options focus upon the junction between Ballards Lane, Nether Street and Chaville Way, and the junction between Hendon Lane and Regents Park Road. Another focus for the proposals is the railway bridge, which currently creates an awkward 'pinch point' within the town centre. The strategy presents a set of options for reconfiguring the bridge to address this issue. The introduction of cycle lanes is also considered within these options which would connect Ballards Lane to a wider cycling network including neighbouring towns such as Colindale.

Identify development growth opportunities

As part of the implementation of Barnet's Local Plan, the *Finchley Church End Town Centre Strategy* published in 2012 identified opportunity sites, of which a number have subsequently been developed. This strategy supports the previously identified opportunity sites which are awaiting development, along with further growth opportunities.

The town centre consists of a range of typologies and buildings heights. This offers up potential opportunities for infill development, something which is already underway in the town centre. The strategy identifies where this infill development may occur. A key opportunity site is Finchley Central station and its adjacent car park.



Guidance for development on library site



Guidance for station gateway improvements

Currently the location of the station which is set back from the high street is problematic for pedestrian access. The strategy provides guidance for the development of this site taking into consideration the realignment of the junction and the bridge, and potential relocation of the station building to the high street.

The services within the existing library on Hendon Lane are soon to be transferred into the new Gateway House development, providing another development opportunity within the town centre. The strategy provides guidance for the library site, taking into consideration the Conservation Area, the existing grain and density of the high street and the adjacent relationship with Church End Gardens.

Improve gateways through development

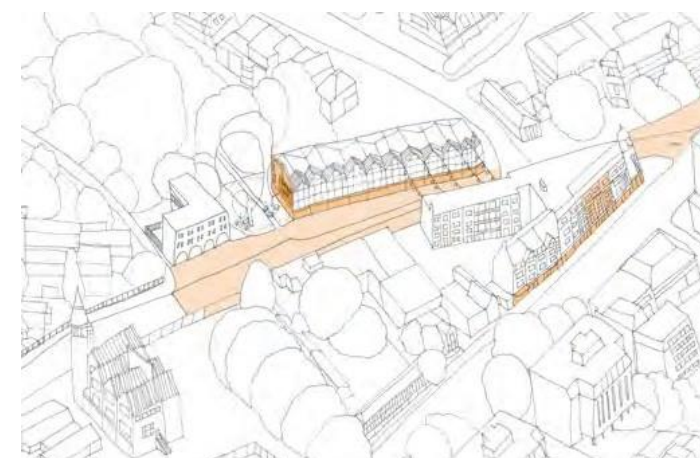
The two station gateway points into the town centre are poor, unfriendly environments for people arriving into the area. The strategy explores how forthcoming development can help to address this issue along with further public realm improvements.

The proposals take into consideration the strategy's guidance for development options of the station, along with realignments of the junction, to develop complementary public realm enhancements. These include a forecourt area for the station, gateway signage, and a continuous crossing over Chaville Way.

Making the most of heritage assets

Finchley Church End Conservation Area contains a wealth of heritage assets, concentrated within the southern part of the high street. The strategy will seek to enhance these assets, by proposing high quality public realm improvements and reaffirming the historical identity of the area.

The strategy pinpoints King Edward Hall on Hendon Lane, a Grade II Listed building, which has the potential to become a key local asset. The building is currently under utilised, therefore the strategy suggests the temporary introduction of cultural uses inside the building.



Enhancing heritage assets on Hendon Lane

Encourage an inclusive town centre

Finchley Church End is currently a successful office town that serves workers during the week. However, at the weekend the economy lacks activity. The strategy will seek to create an inclusive high street that serves both local residents and workers, throughout the week, whilst supporting the local evening and weekend economy.

Possible interventions include the use of wide pavements for markets and events to attract people to town during the weekend and the introduction of non-retail uses within vacant units to cultivate a sense of community and encourage sustainable cultural, social and leisure high street functions.

Promote local perception & identity

Within local policy the town centre is named Finchley Church End. However, public consultations revealed that a large number of local people do not identify with this name. Instead, the high street is more commonly referred to as 'Finchley Central'. However, the Conservation Area does tend to be referred to as Finchley Church End. The strategy aims to establish these two identities for the town centre by changing how policy refers to the place, along with physical interventions such as shop front improvements, and identity signage on flank wall opportunities.

Community engagement

On Saturday 17th September and Wednesday 21st September, We Made That set up a consultation base within the public area outside Tesco on Ballards Lane, for the event 'Hello, is it Finchley you are looking for?'. The team brought bean bags and balloons to invite people into the space and discuss their thoughts about the area including what they would like to see improved in their town centre.

The team also met with a number of key local stakeholders including the Finchley Society, Finchley Bowls Club and Wohl Enterprise Centre. The proposals within the strategy have encompassed the various feedback and opinions collated over this initial engagement process.

Finchley First Steps

A timeline of proposed priorities has been developed which takes into consideration current funding available, future funding opportunities and varying scale of projects. Establishing a public space within the town centre has been highlighted as a key priority for allocation of current funding available. Other short term projects include meanwhile uses in King Edward Hall and launching a town team. Longer term projects include the junction realignments which could form part of a TfL Major Scheme bid.

About the project



Entrepreneurial Barnet is the London Borough of Barnet's approach to making the borough the best place to be a small business in London and ensuring that the borough is a great place to live, work and invest. As part of the Entrepreneurial Barnet approach, the council adopts a place-based commissioning approach towards town centres and have commissioned a Town Centre Strategy for Finchley Church End, also known as Finchley Central, to highlight the scope of changes that could be made and how these changes could contribute to making Finchley Church End a great place to live, work and invest.

The main aims of the project are to:

- give Finchley Church End a new sense of place and clearer identity, where businesses, residents and the wider community can come together and thrive
- support for businesses and entrepreneurs, including creating new business space and pop-up shops and delivering steps to grow the evening economy
- guide future development sites that reflect the needs of the local population
- guide infrastructure investments required along the high street to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists
- consider the role of high streets in meeting the needs of an ageing and diverse population

About finchley central & finchley church end



Finchley Church End town centre is located within LB Barnet and is more familiarly known as 'Finchley Central' owing to the name of the tube station. This connects the town centre to central London via the Northern Line. Finchley is well-connected and accommodates a steady flow of commuters and travellers.

Historically the main high street, Ballards Lane, was developed to form a key connecting route between Marylebone and North Finchley. The town centre is still predominantly a linear high street which currently lacks a typical 'centre'.

The town centre accommodates a number of features and uses including a linear high street, significant clusters of office space and a Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is more recognisably identified as 'Finchley Church End' and is located in the southern end of the town centre. This area has a distinct character, primarily owing to the number of heritage assets located there. There are also a large number of building parades along the high street that have significant architectural and heritage value.

The town centre has an affluent local demographic, yet the town centre is currently failing to serve its local population. Neighbouring centres such as Muswell Hill, North Finchley and Temple Fortune are commonly referred to as preferred town centres over Finchley Central and Finchley Church End.

About the methodology

Urban appraisal

The methodology for developing proposals within the Finchley Church End Town Centre Strategy was to gather a comprehensive evidence base which combined meaningful and ongoing community engagement, with a thorough analysis of both the users, and the current environment of the town centre. This included the following:

- An appraisal of the town centre, investigating its historical development, alongwith what is there on the ground today, and local planning policies affecting its current and future development
- On site observational analysis of how people use the town centre ie. their movement and social interaction
- Gathering opinions of both local residents and business owners through in depth surveys and consultation events.

Business audits and surveys

The project team conducted a number of surveys and audits alongwith analysis of Census and Cameo data, to identify the barriers to economic growth facing businesses in Finchley Central and Finchley Church End. The surveys included:

- A mystery shopping report
- A business survey
- A retail audit with businesses along the high street.

Development of proposals

In response to the evidence base, the team identified eight guiding principles which the proposals of the strategy are organised around. The proposals have been sorted into a priority order which references current funding available, future funding opportunities and varying scale of projects.

A set of recommendations has also been developed for businesses along the high street, which responds to the audits and surveys carried out on site.

About the design team

The team is led by architecture and urbanism practice, We Made That, supported by Retail Revival and Maddison Graphic.

We Made That

Established in 2006, We Made That is a young, energetic architecture studio delivering projects in the public realm. All our work is public and we aim to make imaginative and considered contributions to the built environment through socially engaged design processes. The relationship between local communities, development and creative practice is a particular focus of our work and we believe that - handled correctly - it can lead to enriched, exciting and engaging environments.

Retail Revival

Retail Revival Ltd was formed in 2009 to help towns deal with social and economic issues including empty shops and low footfall. Their client base is extensive and their work remit is diverse, activities include:

- Business engagement, training, mentoring and support
- Consultation, need identification and private sector engagement
- Economic development
- Development of business networks
- Marketing and promotions
- Town centre management projects and event delivery

Maddison Graphic

Maddison Graphic is a UK based studio formed in 2006 by brothers Alfie and Edward Maddison. The studio design for print, screen, and the environment. Emphasising efficiency and clarity, their work employs a wide range of design disciplines and processes to craft original and tailored projects.

Town centre boundary

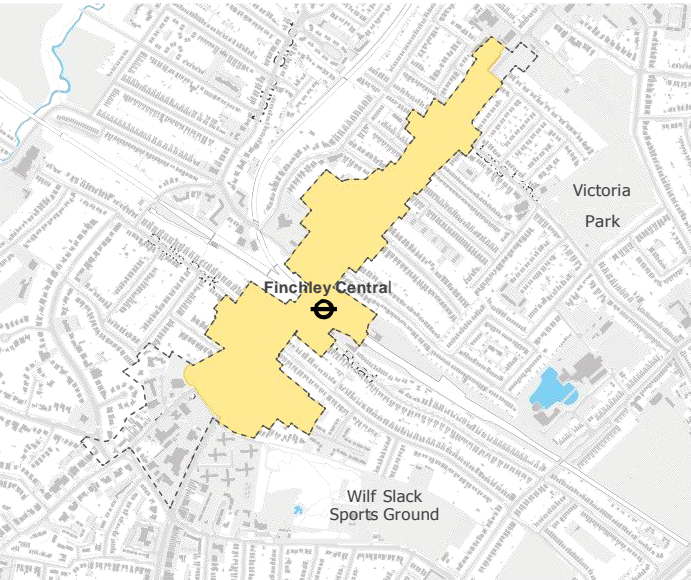
The designated boundary of Finchley Church End town centre covers a number of different features and uses including: a linear high street down Ballards Lane, two key employment clusters behind the high street, and part of a conservation area along Hendon Lane and Regents Park Road. The primary frontages on the high street are located to the north of the station in a cluster around Tesco, making this a focal point of the high street.

Study area

The study area for this strategy includes the entire designated town centre boundary, and extends to include the entrance to Victoria Park and part of the Conservation Area to the south.

Conservation Area and Listed buildings

Finchley Church End Conservation Area is located in the southern end of the town centre and includes a number of key listed buildings. King Edward Hall which is located on Hendon Lane is a key historical building, and currently both the ground floor retail unit and the events suite within the upper floor of the building is under utilised.



Town centre boundary



Ordnance Survey 1893
(Source: National Library of Scotland)

Historic development

Church End, which is highlighted on the maps, was inhabited as early as the 13th Century. It is the oldest recorded medieval village in the Finchley woodlands, and was generally more populated than other parts of Finchley. Ballards Lane was the result of an Act of Parliament in 1826 which brought about the construction of a new turnpike road between Marylebone and North Finchley. Finchley station was introduced in 1867 when the Great Northern Railway opened a line to Mill Hill.

Land use

A map illustrating the land use within the town centre reveals the location of large clusters of employment space. Two key locations are Regents Office Park and Popes Drive, both behind the high street. There are also several high street buildings with employment uses on the upper floors. The high street also has a wide ranging offer of cafes and restaurants.

Community and leisure provision

The majority of the community and leisure provision is currently located in the southern end of the town centre, clustered within the Conservation Area. There is currently a shortage of spaces within the town centre which allow local groups to gather and hold events. Key local assets include Stephen House and Gardens and Finchley Bowls Club.

Daytime and evening economy

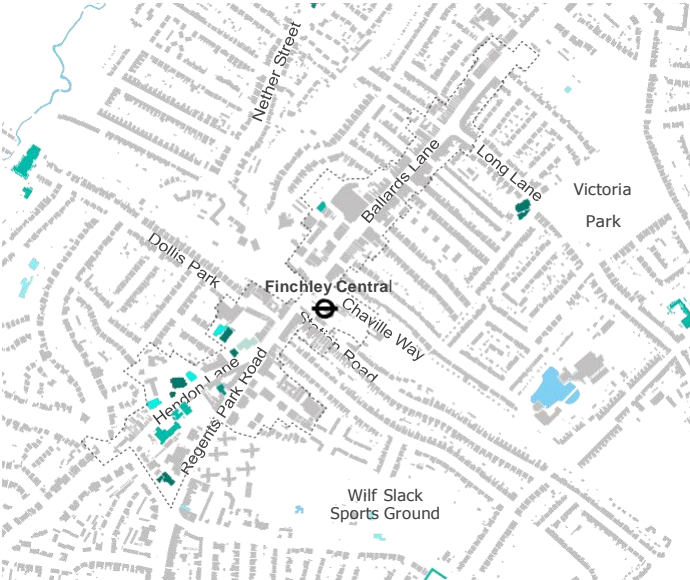
Church End has a high concentration of offices bringing a predominantly daytime workforce to the high street. However, maps illustrate that the evening economy is weaker, and there is currently a lack of cultural and social establishments within the town centre.

Live developments

There are a number of live developments that have come forward on the opportunity sites that were previously designated in the Finchley Church End Town Centre Strategy 2012. However there are still a number of these sites that are still awaiting development to come forward including the station car park site.

Office to residential conversions

Finchley Church End town centre has recently suffered a loss of a significant amount of employment space. This is owing to large scale residential conversions of existing office blocks, such as Central House on Ballards Lane. A total of 6705sqm (23%) of workspace has been lost through conversions to residential use over the past five years.



Community & leisure provision



Office to residential conversions (April 2011-2016)

Cycling routes

There are currently no designated cycle routes travelling through the town centre. However there are aspirations to introduce a clear cycle network connecting Finchley Church End to new residential developments in Colindale and other areas within Barnet.

Reported crime

A map illustrating reported crime over a period of 6 months in 2016 reveals that most offences occur on the side streets off the main high street. Particular hotspots include Tesco and the area behind the store, Station Road and Church End Gardens on Hendon Lane.

Town centre connectivity

Connectivity to the town centre from the north-western side is particularly bad owing to the severance of the railway. The railway bridge also creates a 'pinch point' for the town centre, which detaches the southern end from the north.

household income

The appraisal analysed Census and Cameo data to form an idea of Finchley Central and Finchley Church End's local demographic. In addition to the categories shown opposite, the study also looked at local employment, main languages, and lifestyle assumptions.

The local population speaks a diverse mix of languages. English is the predominant language (74%), but there is also a significant amount of people who speak Gujarati (3%), Polish (3%), Japanese (2%) and Persian/ Farsi (2%) as their first language.

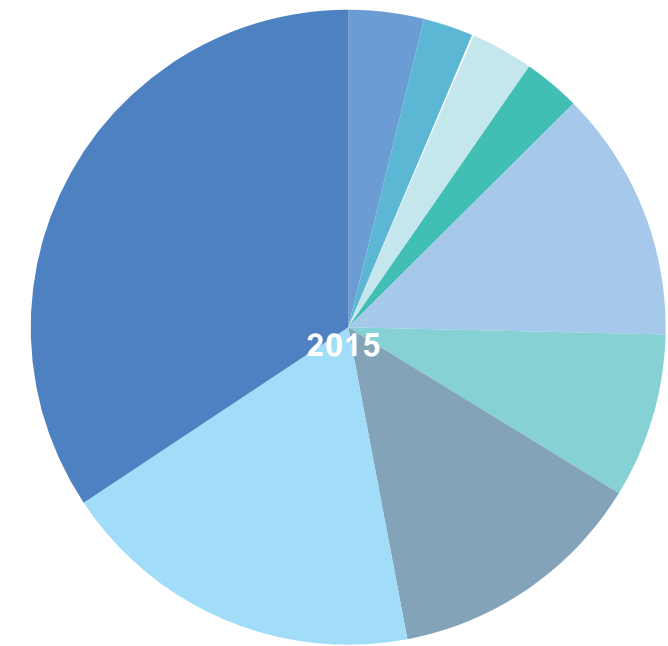
A large proportion of the local population are part of the 'City Prosperity' category within the Mosaic UK Group with a count of 17,668 representing 64.99 % of the overall distribution. The definition of this group is the following:

'High status city dwellers living in central locations and pursuing careers with high rewards'.

It is reasonably expected that the majority of the population may have the disposable income and time to seek evening and weekend entertainment without the ties of young families. They are well-educated, most are broadsheet readers, well-travelled and appreciative of the arts and culture.

Over half of the economically active population are in full time employment. However, the 2011 Census revealed a 9% decrease in full time employment within the two wards, along with a 5% increase in self employment, and increases in part time employment and unemployment.

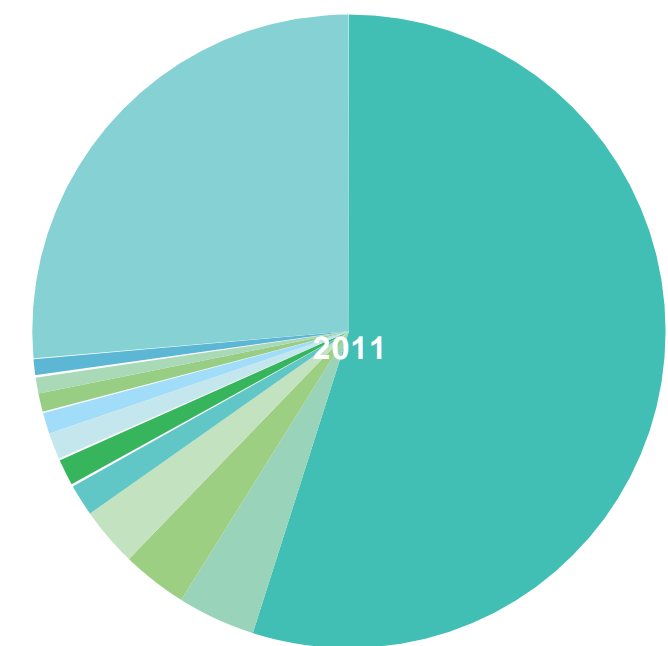
A large proportion of households in Finchley Church End have an 'established wealth', with an income of 75k+. A very low proportion of households have an income that is less than 20k.



- KEY
Cameo data 2015
People aged 16-74 who are economically active
Finchley Church End & West Finchley Wards
- Entrenched struggle: income under 10k
 - Economically challenged: income 10-15k
 - Uncertain means: income 15-20k
 - Limited resources: income 20-25k
 - Budgeted stability: income 25-30k
 - Comfortably secure: income 30-40k
 - Rising prosperity: income 40-50k
 - Secure affluence: income 50-75k
 - Established wealth: income 75k+

country of birth

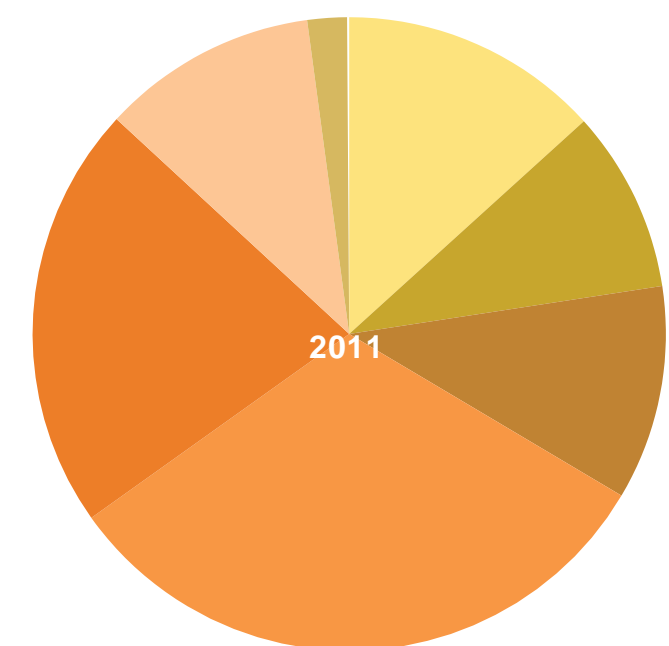
The comparison between the Census data in 2001 and 2011 reveals there is little transience within the population however, over this decade the population became slightly more diverse. There was a significant increase in Polish (3%) and Iranian (3%) residents, but people originating from England (55%), India (4%) and Kenya (2%) continued to make up a high proportion of the population.



- KEY
Census 2011
Finchley Church End Ward & West Finchley Ward
- England
 - India
 - Iran
 - Poland
 - Kenya
 - Ireland
 - South Africa
 - Scotland
 - United States of America
 - Italy
 - China
 - Other

Age structure

The area has a predominantly young population, however there is a significant number of people aged above 65 (14%), a higher proportion compared to London (10%).

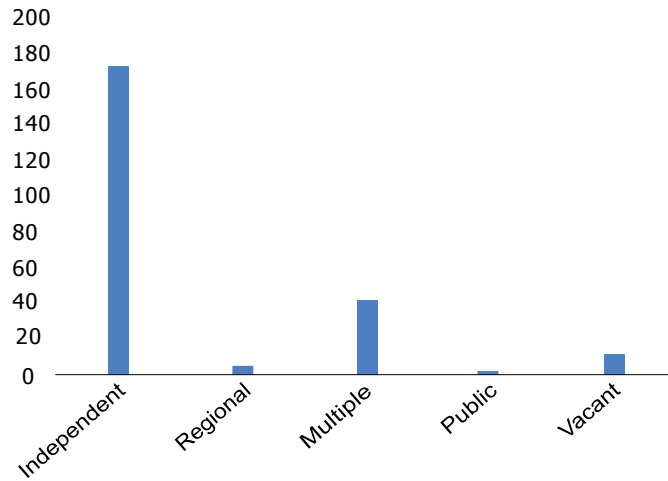


- KEY
Census 2011
Finchley Church End & West Finchley Wards
- Age 0 to 9
 - Age 10 to 15
 - Age 16 to 24
 - Age 25 to 44
 - Age 45 to 64
 - Age 65 to 84
 - Age 85 and over

Retail audit

A high street’s ability to remain competitive and attract customers relies on it sustaining a variety of shops and a wide range of services. The retail audit assessed what what is currently accommodated within the town centre.

- Finchley Church End is a predominantly linear high street; a retail audit completed by Retail Revival identified 234 commercial outlets at ground floor level. Of these 234 businesses; 166 are independent, 42 multiple, 11 vacant and the rest are regional chains or status unknown.
- At the time of study, Church End has 11 vacant units. Smaller vacant units are less attractive for new multiple occupiers and retailers increasingly looking to relocate into larger units in higher order centres. However, smaller vacant units could still be attractive to independent traders, charity shops and non-retail services.
- The shops in Church End reflect the cultures of the demographic. Many of the businesses are presented to a high standard and have very well stocked shelves selling a myriad multi-cultural food and homeware products. Unlike some high streets Church End appears to have an integrated multicultural offer; shops do not act in silos and people appear comfortable to shop cross culturally.



Classification of businesses interviewed in Finchley Central

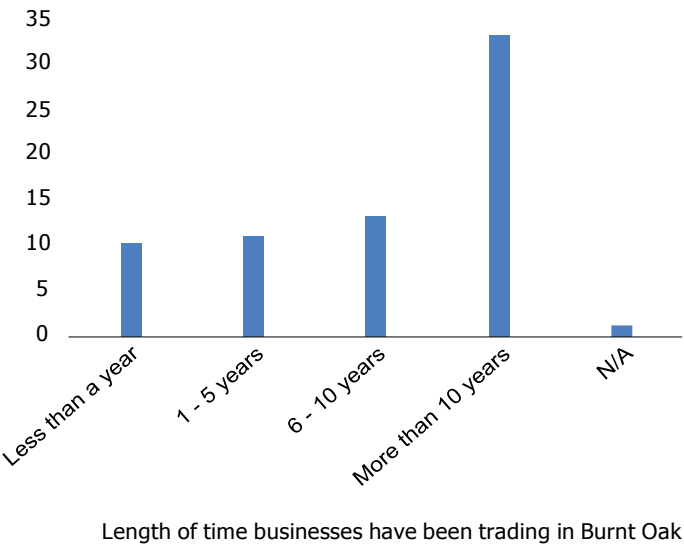
Business survey

A business survey was competed in the summer of 2016 to understand the needs, issues and opinions of businesses that operate in Finchley Central and Church End. Every business in the town centre was invited to participate in the business survey.

- The majority of the businesses were micro in size, 37 employed 2 or fewer full-time staff and 51 employed 2 or fewer part-time staff.
- Nearly half of the participating businesses (33) had been trading in FCE for over ten years.
- Anecdotal evidence gained during the business surveys shows that some business units have a high turnover rate yet clearly a large proportion of the businesses have been sustainable for a significant period of time.
- The majority of business (38) had no plans to expand or improve their business, 12 businesses did have plans to expand or improve and 18 were unsure. Some businesses (26) had plans to diversify by selling new products or services, but the majority had either no plans to diversify (23) or were unsure (15).
- Businesses attributed the decline of their turnover to a number of factors, the most significant were: the economic climate (24), high business rates (31), high other business overheads (23) competition from other businesses (28) and competition from the Internet (21) and other towns and shopping centres (20).

Adapting to meet market needs

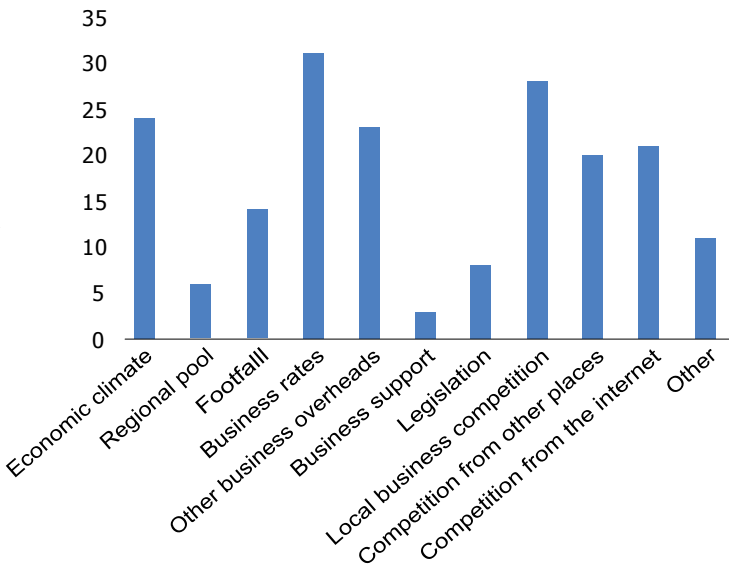
A study of the local demographic provides an overview of the market segments and future trends to which businesses within the town centre should respond, adapt and diversify to ensure sustainable growth. Below is an outline of the key issues and opportunities for Finchley Central and Finchley Church End town centre:



Length of time businesses have been trading in Burnt Oak

- Finchley is well-connected and has excellent transport links, it accommodates a steady flow of commuters and travellers. The route to Finchley Central station, and thus the gateway from the station into the town centre, is unappealing and the businesses in Station Road complain that impulse purchase trade is very low.
- Church End has a high concentration of offices bringing a predominantly daytime workforce to the high street. Existing businesses, particularly food and drink businesses and those selling office supplies and services, reflect the needs of workers and many are sustained by their patronage.
- Anecdotal research with local residents identifies a need for evening activities in Finchley Church End that are not currently being met.
- There are deficiencies or ‘gaps’ in existing shopping and leisure provision which are met by competing towns and shopping centres
- There is over representation in some sectors including estate agents, betting shops and convenience stores. Any future loss of A1 use should be desisted

- More could be done to increase the impulse spend of commuters particularly in Station Road.
- Many non-food multiple retailers are reducing the number of towns they are trading from to focus business in larger stores in the top 150 shopping centres and high streets. This makes it unlikely that Church End will attract many, if any, desirable high street brands.
- The future of Church End as a multifunctional destination, with retail playing a part alongside community, public service, leisure, cultural and civic uses, seems more sustainable.
- An important demographic change affecting businesses in Church End is the rapidly ageing population. Services and local amenities including GP surgeries, libraries and other health services should be located next to convenience stores and chemists as these act as a draw for the older generation who are less inclined and perhaps less able to travel for their groceries but still need to access essential local services.



Attributed reasons for decline in turnover

The high street

The team undertook a number of on site observation studies to help form ideas about current activity on the high street. The study focused on three main locations within the town centre: the high street, the employment clusters, and the station arrival areas.

The team observed people naturally gathering within the generous space outside Tesco, however there was currently no seating provision.

Office workers in the employment areas behind the high street were often spotted struggling to find somewhere to go and eat their lunch owing to poor public realm and a lack of seating provision.

Pedestrian activity was particularly compromised around the station arrival areas owing to the large traffic dominated junction and occasional narrow pavements causing 'pinch points'.



An elderly man rests on a stool (origin unknown) on the wide footway near Tesco.



A family with a pram stop and gather in the area outside Tesco. This area has a moderate amount of pedestrian movement throughout the day.

employment clusters



An office worker uses the boundary wall outside Regents Office Park to sit and eat his lunch.



An office worker paces up and down Popes Drive as he eats his lunch from Tesco.

station arrivals



Pedestrians leaving the station on Station Road are regularly seen walking diagonally in the road towards the employment areas on along Regents Park Road.



Pedestrians walking down Chaville Way are often spotted sharing the road with cars who are travelling to and from the car park or the drop off point.

hello, is it finchley you're looking for?



On Saturday 17th September and Wednesday 21st September, We Made That set up a consultation base within the public area outside Tesco on Ballards Lane, for the event 'Hello, is it Finchley you are looking for?'. The team brought bean bags and balloons to invite people into the space and discuss their thoughts about the area. We Made That also displayed two large maps and a series of key images to assist the team and the participants in their discussions about the area.

The team brought bean bags and balloons to invite people into the space and discuss their thoughts about the area. We Made That also displayed two large maps and a series of key images to assist the team and the participants in their discussions about the area.

The team obtained 49 additional contact details from participants of the consultation, which included both local residents and workers. The team asked the participants in the consultation to fill out a small questionnaire. The questions and responses are captured within this summary.

Question 1: What do you call this area?

- The majority of participants answered this question with 'Finchley Central'.
- A number of people acknowledged that the southern area of the town centre towards the conservation area would be called Finchley Church End, but Ballards Lane feels quite separate from that area.
- Others claimed they had never heard of the name

'Church End', whilst others said it was an old name they had stopped using.

Question 2: How often do you visit the town centre?

- Most people that the team spoke to answered this question with 'every day' or 'nearly every day'

Question 3: Why do you visit the town centre?

- There was a mixture of answers to this question ranging from convenience shopping to using the bank.
- A number of people said they did use the town centre for socializing and visiting cafes and restaurants
- A large number mentioned Tesco for their reasons for visiting
- Many participants said they walk through the town centre regularly to access other things such as the station, work or school and go to various shops along the way.

Question 4: What are the positive and negative aspects of the town centre?

The multiple responses to this question can be summarised under the following themes:

Traffic dominated environment

- A large number of participants in the consultation felt that the significant amount of traffic along Ballards Lane was a key issue for the town centre.
- Many commented on the negative impact that noise pollution caused by this has on the high street.
- The junction between Ballards Lane and Chaville Way was another key issue for many of the participants who felt it was a hostile environment and awkward to cross as a pedestrian.

Public spaces

- Generally, people were positive about the idea of establishing a public space on the high street and agreed that outside Tesco was a reasonable place to do so, given the wide footway at this point.
- Some commented on the current lack of square or

space for people to meet and relax together within the town centre. People were concerned that the town centre had lost community spaces.

- However there were concerns from some people about anti social behaviour on the high street returning if new street furniture was introduced. A number of people reflected on the benches, located on the high street, which were taken away owing to anti social behaviour.
- Church End Gardens was described by a few as a problematic space with common occurrences of antisocial behaviour.
- Many participants were concerned with previous development plans upon Victoria Park describing the open space as 'precious'.

Business support

- A number of people commented on the regular turnover of businesses on the high street.
- The area behind Tesco, where a number of offices are situated, was also described as 'dirty' and an unpleasant environment. A particular concern was the amount of rubbish and poor lighting at night.

Architectural heritage and building quality

- A number of people commented on the good architectural quality of the historical buildings along the high street but felt that the shop fronts let the street down.
- Others commented on the poor quality of newer buildings including the Tesco building, describing them as 'boring'.

Provision on the high street

- A number of people commented on the unfortunate loss of the post office within the town centre and said it was now inconvenient to go elsewhere for these services.
- Most people were positive about the variety and diversity of the cafes and restaurants along the high street.
- A few people were fed up with the large number of betting shops, kebab shops and hairdressers
- A recently closed bookshop was also mentioned several times as local people felt this was a loss of a key community asset. This led to many saying they wished for the return of more independent

shops on the high street

Issues for pedestrians

- A number of people commented on the awkwardness of the narrow footway by the bus stop on the junction between Ballards Lane / Chaville Way. Many would like to see this bus stop relocated.
- Street clutter was another issue that was repeatedly brought up, as it causes problems for pedestrians walking down the high street.
- Cyclists on the pavement are another issue that came up whilst discussing pedestrian issues.
- Many participants agreed that the access to Finchley Central Station could be improved. One man explained that his female friends currently feel unsafe in these areas.
- The quality of the paving was also an issue for many, including poor drainage and uneven pavers.

Parking

- A small number of people claimed they go to Brent Cross instead because of parking issues in Finchley

Lack of identity

- The town centre was described as 'bland' and 'nondescript', which points to the area having a lack of identity.
- It was agreed by a number of people that because the town centre was a long stretch of road it lacked the feeling of a 'centre', which contributes to the lack of identity.

Comparison to other centres

A number of people mentioned that they prefer other local centres to Finchley Central. North Finchley was described as 'more vibrant' with more high end shops and facilities including the Arts Depot. Other centres that were brought up as better examples were Temple Fortune and Totteridge

Cleanliness

- The cleanliness of the streets was another key issue for many people. Rubbish in existing planters and on the floor was highlighted.

5.0
FINCHLEY CHURCH END
TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY



gUiDing PRinciPles

The following 'Guiding Principles' have been developed on the basis of the Finchley Church End urban appraisal, and surveys with local businesses in the town centre. These principles will inform the development of the town centre strategy proposals.



The high street boasts significantly wide footways and is bookended by two green spaces, however the public realm is poor. There is an opportunity to establish public spaces at the core of the high street, introduce activities such as markets, and improve existing green spaces, to encourage people to dwell within the town centre.



Finchley Church End is a key employment hub for the borough, and should continue to perform this role. The strategy will seek to protect employment space within the town centre, whilst also improving the public environment for office workers and visiting clients.



The town centre is currently traffic dominated, and often provides an unfriendly environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The strategy will suggest how the longer term wider transport infrastructure can incorporate a review of busy junctions, and a rebalancing of the road.



The town centre consists of a range of typologies and buildings heights. This offers up potential opportunities for infill development, something which is already underway in the town centre.



The two station gateway points into Finchley Church End town centre are poor, unfriendly environments for people arriving into the area. The strategy will explore how forthcoming development can address this issue.



Finchley Church End Conservation Area contains a wealth of heritage assets, concentrated within the southern part of the high street. The strategy will seek to enhance these assets, by proposing high quality public realm improvements and reaffirming the historical identity of the area.



Finchley Church End is currently a successful office town that serves workers during the week. However, at the weekend the economy is poor and lacks activity. The strategy will seek to create an inclusive high street that serves both local residents and workers, throughout the week, whilst supporting the local evening and weekend economy.



Within local policy the town centre is named Finchley Church End. However, early research has revealed that a number of local people do not identify with this name. The strategy will uncover local perceptions and a true identity for the town centre.

1.0
esTABlish ci Vic sPACES

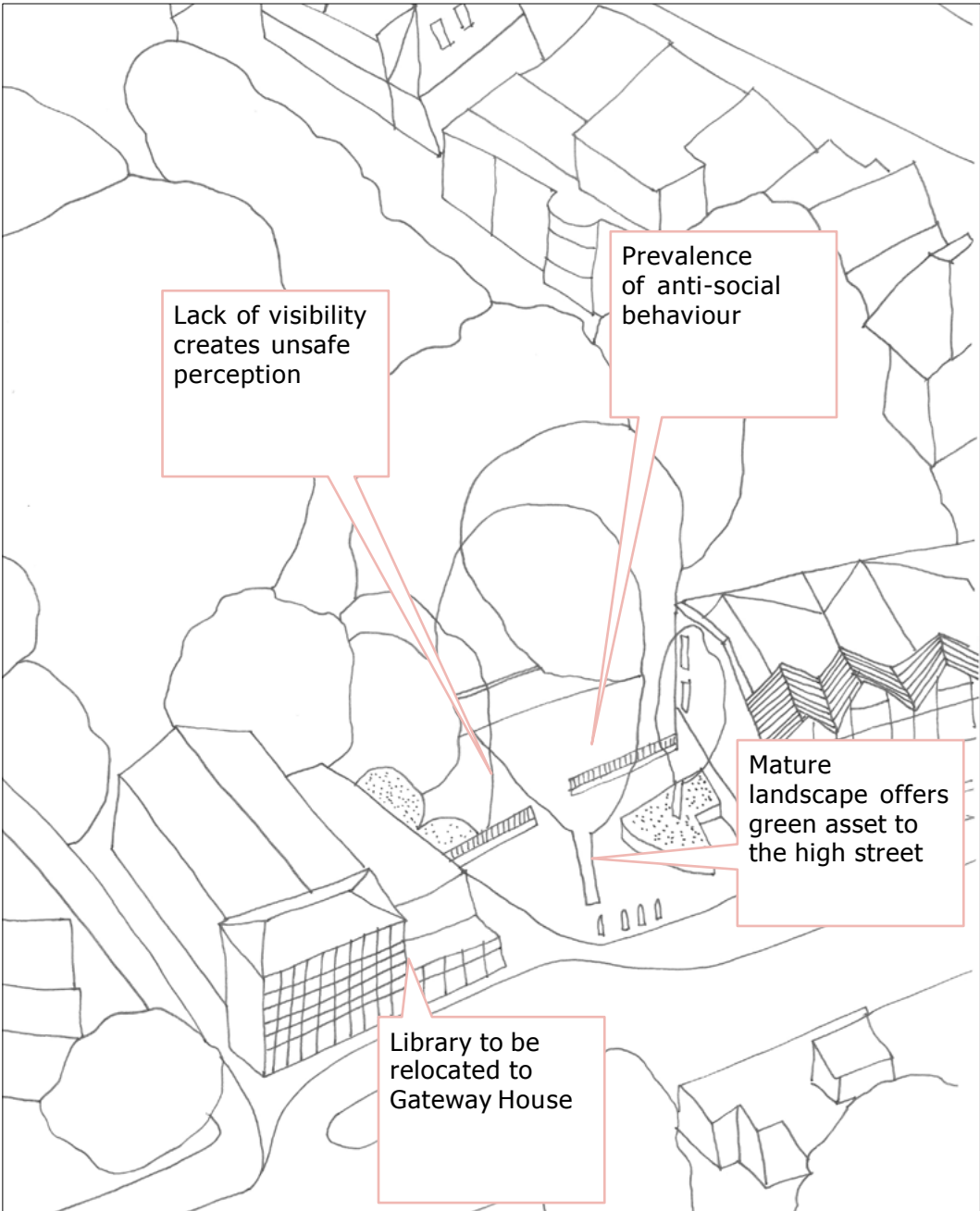
- 1.1 Improvements to Church End Gardens including the entrance on the high street to encourage greater use by the public.
- 1.2 Establish 'Finchley Square' at wide point on the high street to create civic focus for the town centre.
- 1.3 Support the development of the bowls club on Victoria Park as a community hub and events space by establishing a network of local groups whilst also implementing physical improvements to the entrance from the high street
- 1.4 Support the establishment of a community hub within the new library in Gateway House



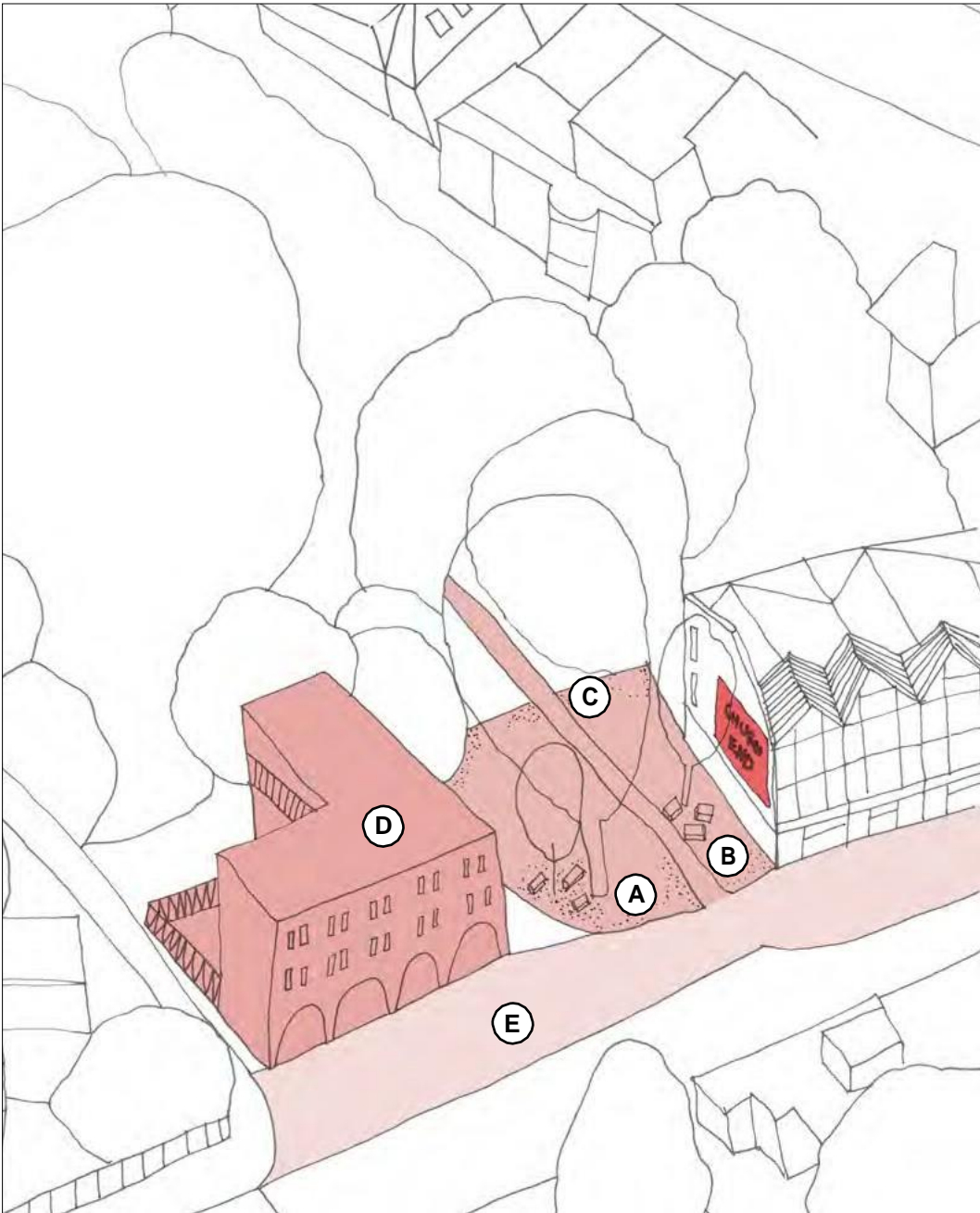
1.1 enhAncementS To chURch enD gARDens

Church End Gardens currently has an issue with anti social behaviour including violating public order and violent offences (see Reported Crime in Appraisal). As a result it is under utilised by local residents and workers. It is a key civic space both within the town centre and the Finchley Church End Conservation Area. The strategy suggests to improve the space by:

- A Expanding the gardens towards the high street to create a positive, legible entrance
- B Introducing improved civic furniture, planting and identity signage on flank walls
- C Opening the gardens by removing fencing and introduce a new link through to residential areas behind through new development on library site.
- D Redevelopment of library site (Refer to 3.2 for further details)
- E Reconfigured footway (Refer to 4.2 for further details)



Church End Gardens, existing



Church End Gardens, proposed



Existing image: Entrance to Church End gardens



Barking Town Square, London

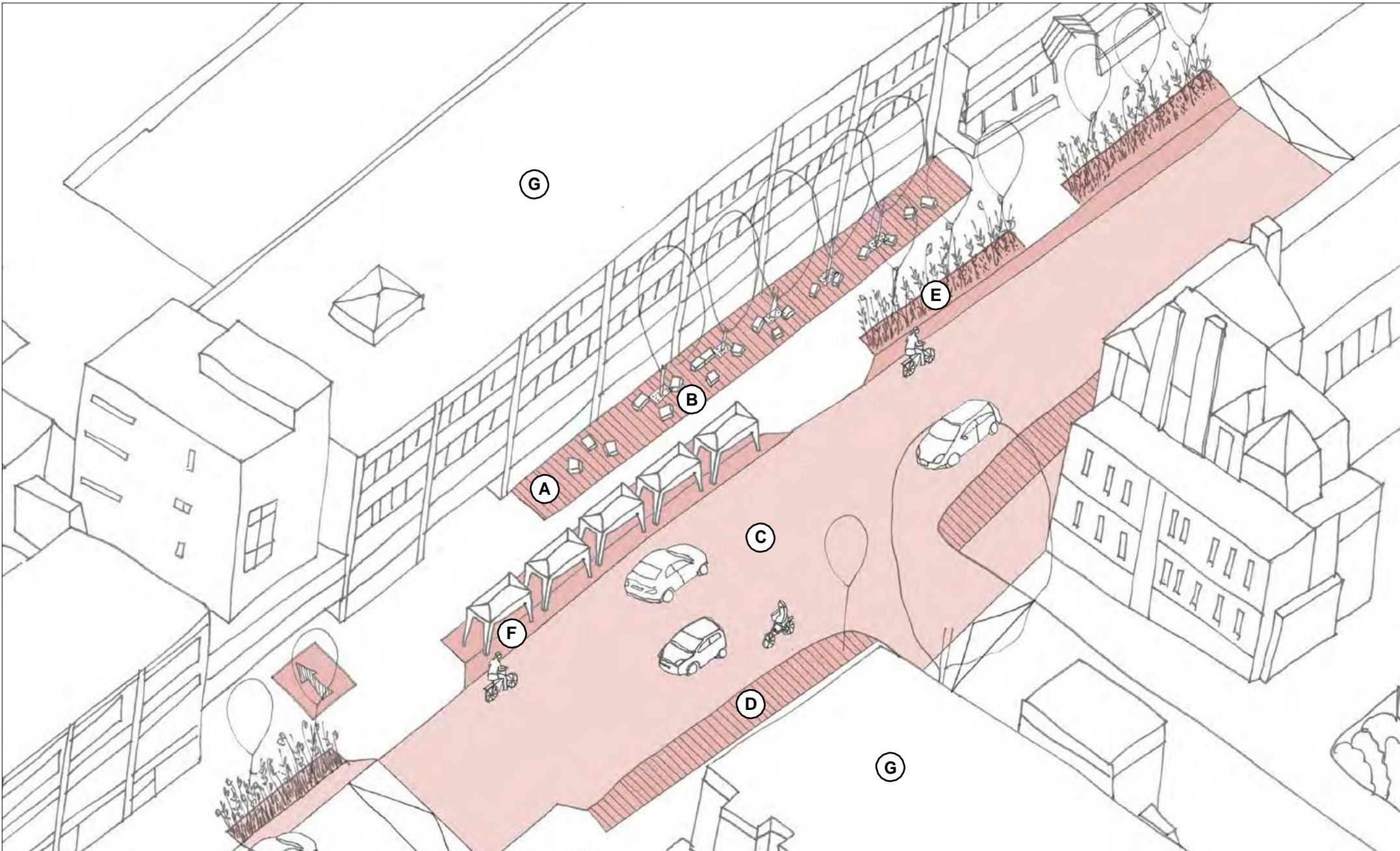


Iron Street Park, Boston

1.2 es TABlish ‘finchley sQUARe’

Finchley Church End town centre is primarily used for either convenience shopping or as a thoroughfare to reach the station or other parts of Finchley. The strategy aims to put the ‘centre’ in Finchley Central by creating a sense of place and offering opportunity for public events.

- A New paving demarcates public square on footway
- B Introduction of civic furniture and planting
- C Raised table in carriageway to ease pedestrian crossing, reduce vehicle speeds and identify ‘centre’ of Finchley Central
- D Raised parking bays offer flexibility of use for events
- E Rainwater gardens to aid sustainable urban drainage as well as acting as a buffer to the traffic along Ballards Lane
- F Introduction of regular market event along wide footway/ parking bays
- G Potential for redevelopment of town centre centre sites



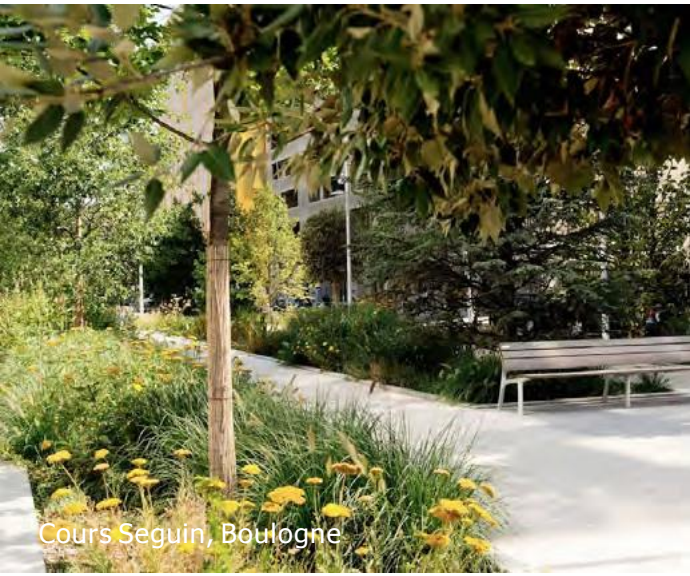
Proposed public square for Finchley Central



Existing image: Outside Tesco, Ballards Lane



Brentford Market Place, London



Cours Seguin, Boulogne

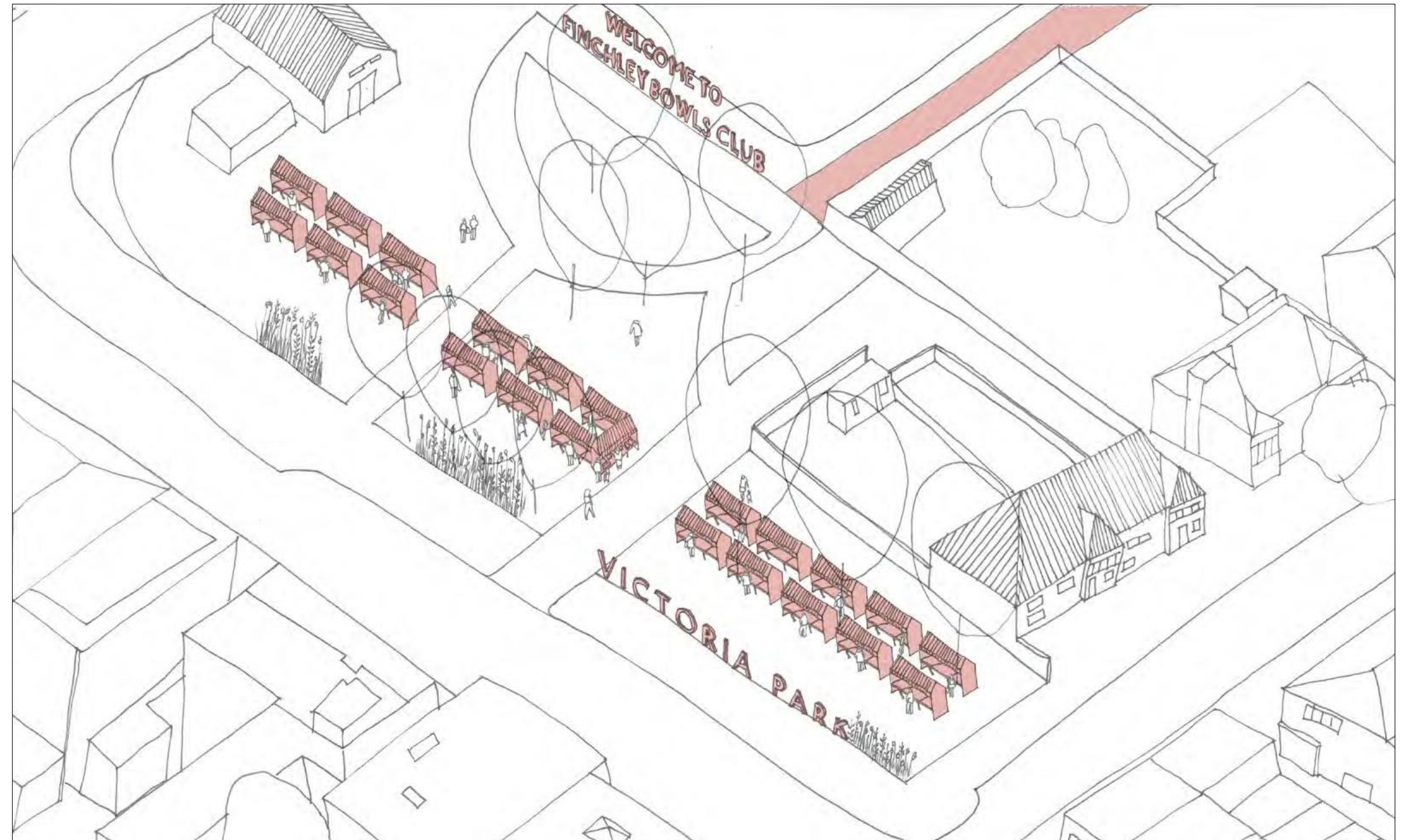


Superkilen, Copenhagen

1.3 celeBRATing VicToRiA PARK As PART of The Town centRe

Victoria Park is a key asset to the local area, however its presence on the high street is of poor quality and lacks a direct link into the park itself. LB Barnet have secured funding to develop a masterplan for Victoria Park including the green space situated on the high street. The strategy proposes the following to be considered for the entrance to Victoria Park:

1. Increase the visibility of the park within the town centre by: investigating options for an improved access point closer to the high street; introducing better identity and wayfinding into the park; and implementing public realm improvements along the high street edge.
2. Support community activity in the park which is led by local people including: the Finchley Bowls Club, an active community organisation that intends to open up its facilities to a wider audience; and a weekly farmers market which is being set up by a local resident.



Considerations for Victoria Park



Existing image: Entrance to Victoria Park



South Kensington Food Market



Korenmarkt Square, Belgium

1.4

es TABlish coMMUniTy hUB wi Thin gATewAy hoUse

The relocation of Church End Library offer the opportunity to re-establish it as a community hub. Conversations with local residents have identified this as a need locally. The new proposals will provide:

- New exhibition space at entrance
- New cafe opening onto Regent's Park Road
- Large children's library with visual supervision on the ground floor
- Reception area
- Spaces for quiet working
- Access to computers
- A large activity space on the lower ground floor which can be divided into smaller spaces if needed available to hire.
- A swipe card and pin system to allow for out of hours access

LB Barnet's library team are keen to develop a strong link between active local groups and the new library. The large activity space on the lower ground floor provides a key opportunity to accommodate a programme of community events. There will be a small charge to hire the space. Regular groups will have access to the swipe card and pin system to give them flexibility and autonomy during out of hours periods. The new library space on the ground floor also has the capacity to accommodate some activity with smaller groups, for no charge. There will also be space provided for advertising and noticeboards to capture the network of community groups and activities.

Image: 21ST Architecture Ltd, from Gateway House Design & Access Statement



2.0
sUPPoRT Vi TAI
eMPloyMenT cIUsteRs

- 2.1 Implement Article 4 on employment spaces to protect further loss to residential conversion
- 2.2 Public realm improvements around employment areas behind and on the high street including Popes Drive and Regents Office Park
- 2.3 Introduce low threshold enterprise spaces within vacant units in the town centre and establish a relationship with the Wohl Enterprise Hub



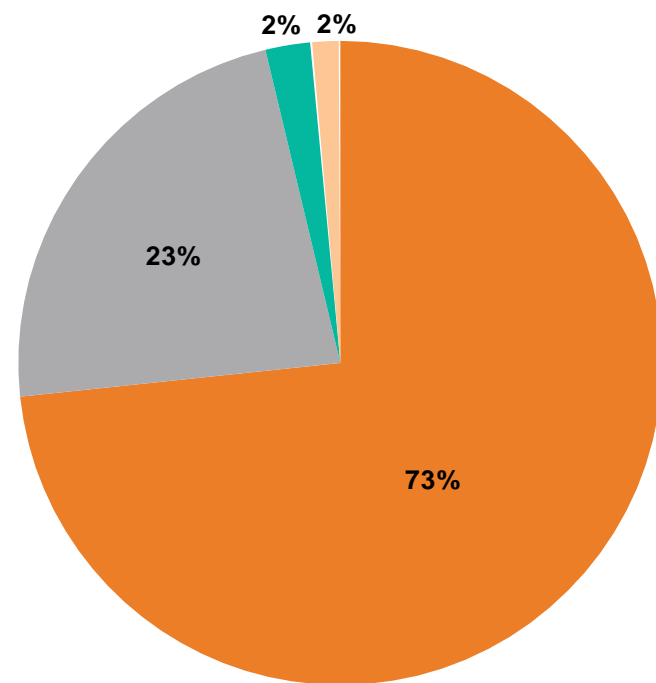
2.1
iMPLeMenT ARticle 4 on
eMPloyMenT sPAces

Finchley Church End contains by far the largest concentration of offices within LB Barnet, a vital asset for the borough. The employment clusters located in Popes Drive and Regents Office Park both have a high PTAL rating of 4-5, owing to close proximity to Finchley Central Station and bus connections.

Evidence provided within the appraisal report highlights that the area is at risk of losing up to 25% of its B1 Business floorspace from April 2011 to present day owing to current developments and successful planning applications. This would amount to a total approximate loss of 7390sqm over a five year period.

The loss of employment space is primarily owing to residential conversions through permitted development rights. This loss of employment space poses a threat to the future prosperity of the town centre, as a high proportion of town centre users work in the area.

An Article 4 direction would restrict the number of future residential conversions, particularly where employment space is well used and vulnerable. LB Barnet should therefore pursue the implementation of such a measure.



- KEY
- Retained B1 Business floorspace to date (2016)
 - B1 Business floorspace under threat of conversion to residential since 2011
 - B1 Business floorspace converted to other use since 2011
 - Previously targeted B1 floorspace (applications refused, 2011 onwards)



2.2
PUBLIC ReAIM
iMPRoVeMenTs ARoUnD
eMPloyMenT AReAs

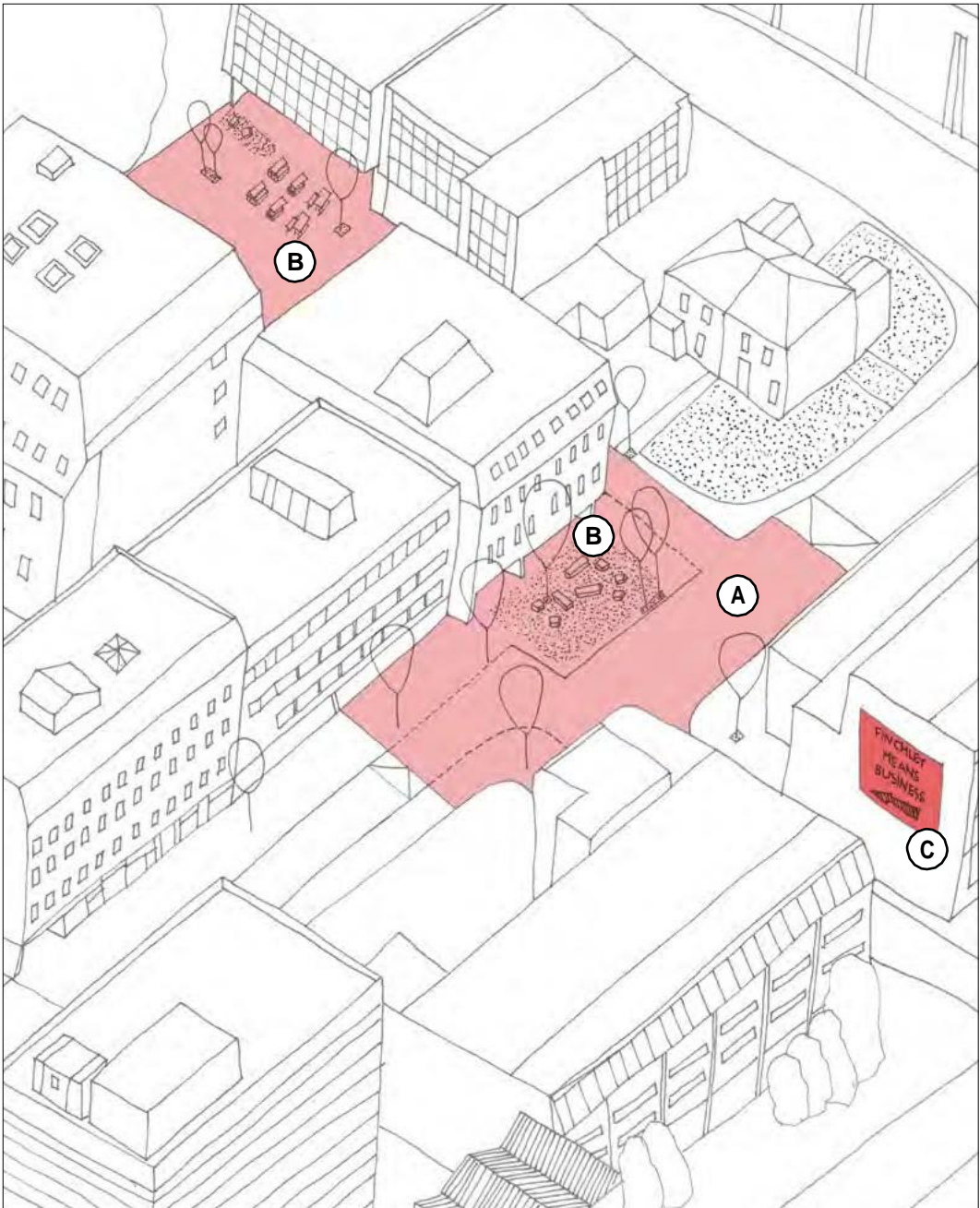
Finchley Church End contains two key employment clusters for the borough. However, both of these clusters suffer from poor public realm which reduces the attraction of commercial offer. The strategy suggests creating sociable spaces within these clusters which includes the introduction of furniture and planting and improved signage.

Popes Drive employment area:

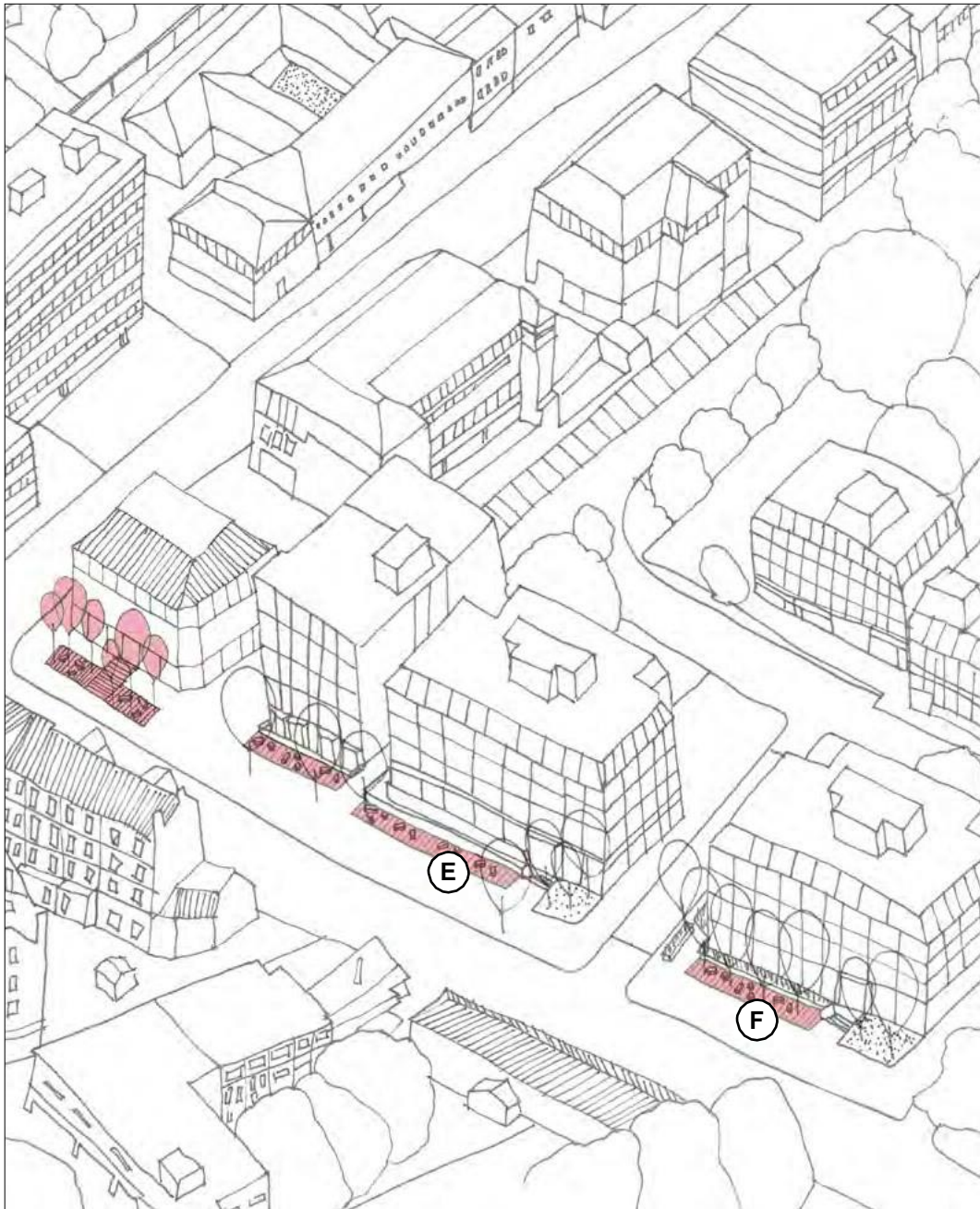
- A Introduce shared surface adjacent to office blocks to ease pedestrian movement
- B Introduction of picnic tables and planting for office workers (controlled access possible)
- C Wayfinding and identity signage to employment area to celebrate business uses

Regents Office Park

- E Remove brick walls and replace with new paving 'mat' to improve street presence
- F Introduce civic furniture and improved planting to encourage office workers use of outdoor space and high street



Proposed improvements to Popes Drive



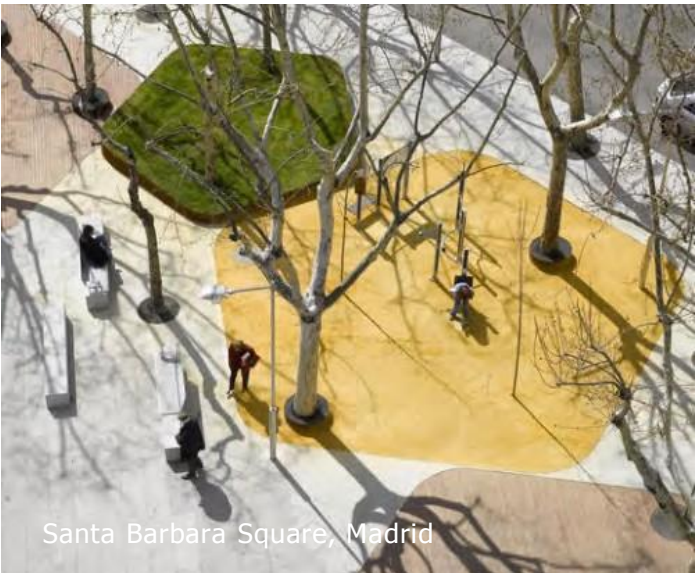
Proposed improvements to Regents Office Park



Existing image: Popes Drive employment area



Plaza Valldaura, Manresa



Santa Barbara Square, Madrid

2.3 inTRoDUce low ThReshold enTeRPRise sPAces

There are a number of vacant buildings and development sites within the town centre which could provide space for business start ups and SME's. These spaces range from vacant office buildings, small retail units and properties such as the former police station which is awaiting redevelopment.



The Wohl Enterprise Hub on Redbourne Avenue



3.0 eAse PeDesTRiAn & cycling MoVeMenT

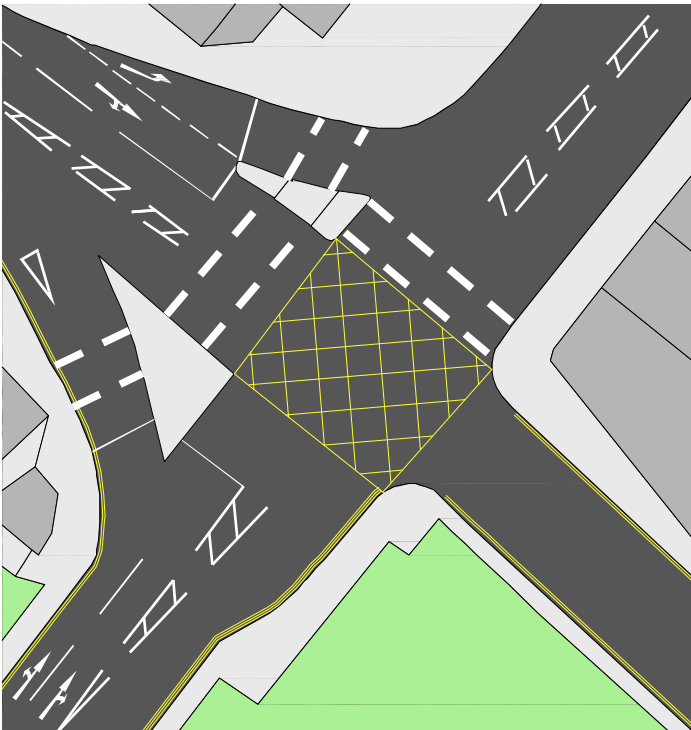
- 3.1 Revise key junctions to improve pedestrian and cycling environment: Hendon Lane / Regents Park Road; and Regents Park Road / Nether Street
- 3.2 Improvements along bridge in co-ordination with forthcoming development in the station area
- 3.3 Introduction of cycling facilities along Ballards Lane
- 3.4 Public realm and lighting improvements to key pedestrian routes into the town centre including Lovers Walk and The Avenue, with improved links and wayfinding towards Stephens House & Gardens



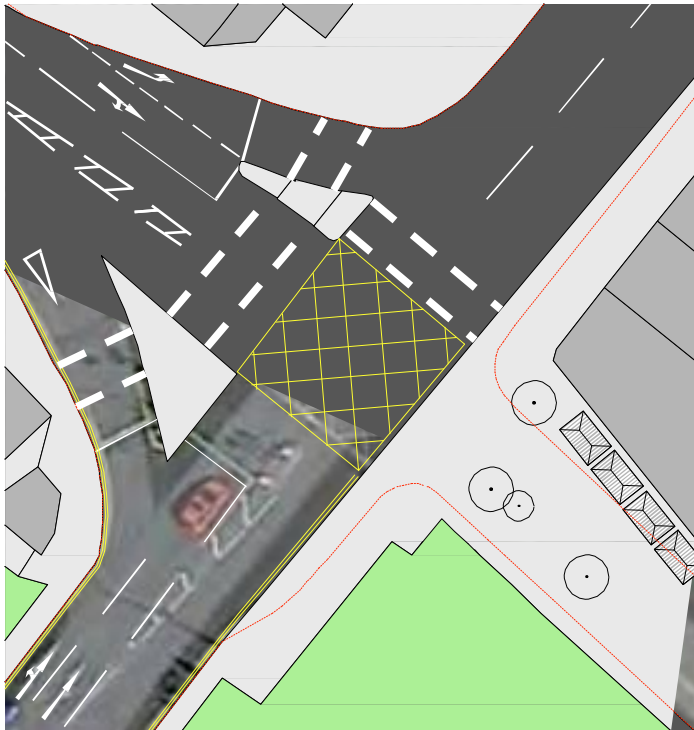
3.1
ReVise Key JUnc Tions

Ballards lane / nether
street junction

Below are a set of options for the Ballards Lane and Nether Street Junction which currently heavily impacts upon the arrival into the town centre from the station. All options shown need to be further scrutinised through a comprehensive traffic modelling study which will ensure a positive outcome for all users of the town centre.

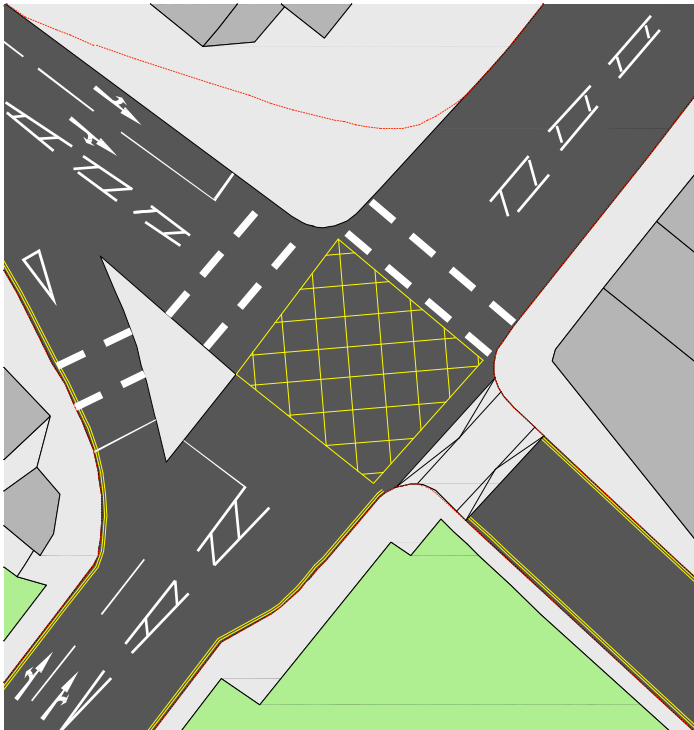


Existing junction alignment



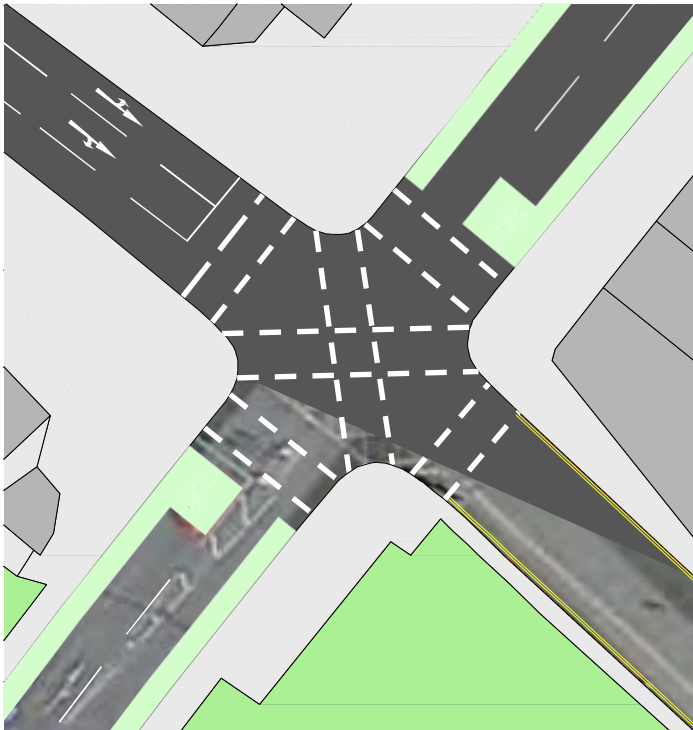
Option 1

- Remove vehicular access along Chaville Way to station car park, with access reprovided via Hervey Close
- Introduction of market or other public activity along Chaville Way
- Introduction of public furniture and planting
- Note: proposals are indicative only and require traffic engineer analysis



Option 2

- Simplification of junction and northern corner by removing slip road and tightening corner to slow traffic down and widen pedestrian footway
- Raised crossing connecting the station bridge to the rest of the high street easing
- Note: proposals are indicative only and require traffic engineer analysis

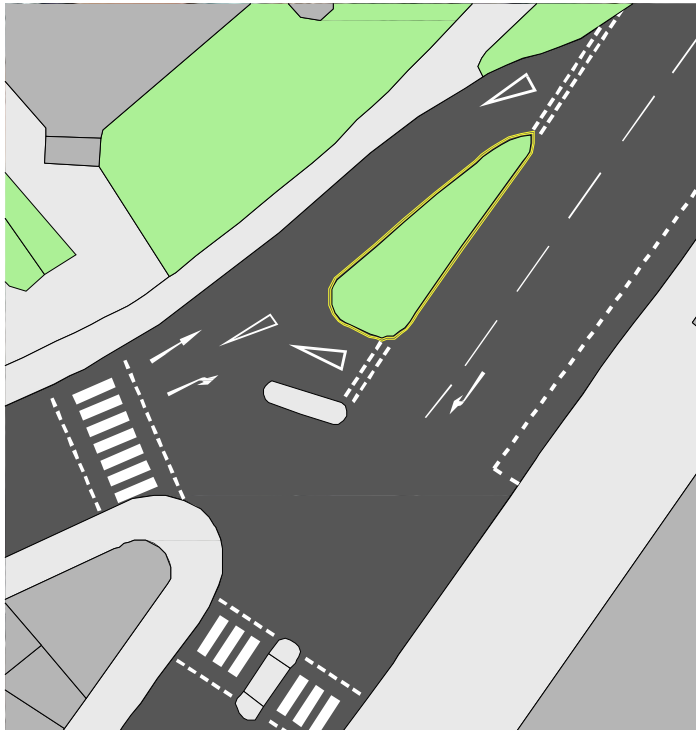


Option 3

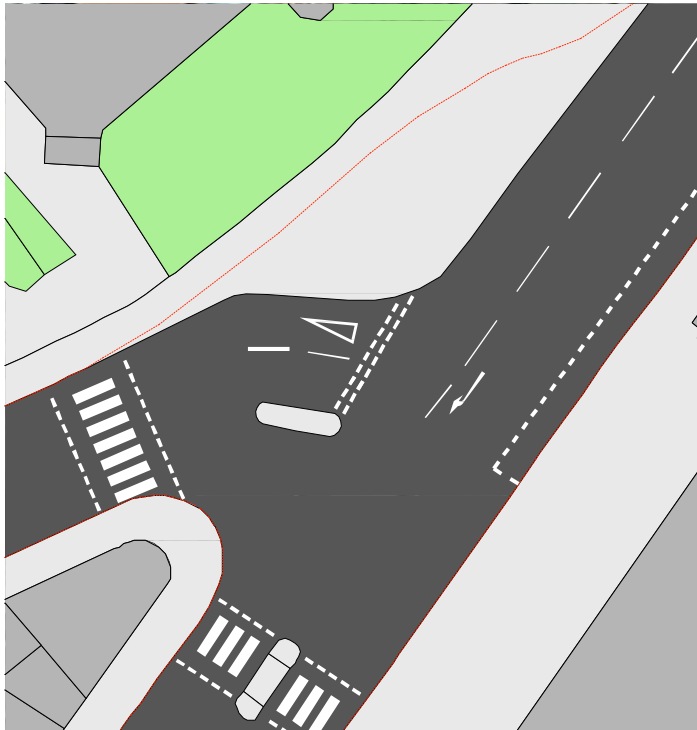
- Simplification of whole junction by removing turning slip road and tightening corners of junction to slow traffic down and widen pedestrian footway
- Addition of forth pedestrian crossing and diagonal crossign opportunities
- Expands space for potential forthcoming development on south-east and south-west corners
- Note: proposals are indicative only and require traffic engineer analysis

hendon lane / Regents Park Road junction

Below are a set of options for the Hendon Land and Regents Park Road junction which creates a difficult crossing point for pedestrians. The option shown needs to be further scrutinised through a comprehensive traffic modelling study which will ensure a positive outcome for all users of the town centre.



Existing junction alignment

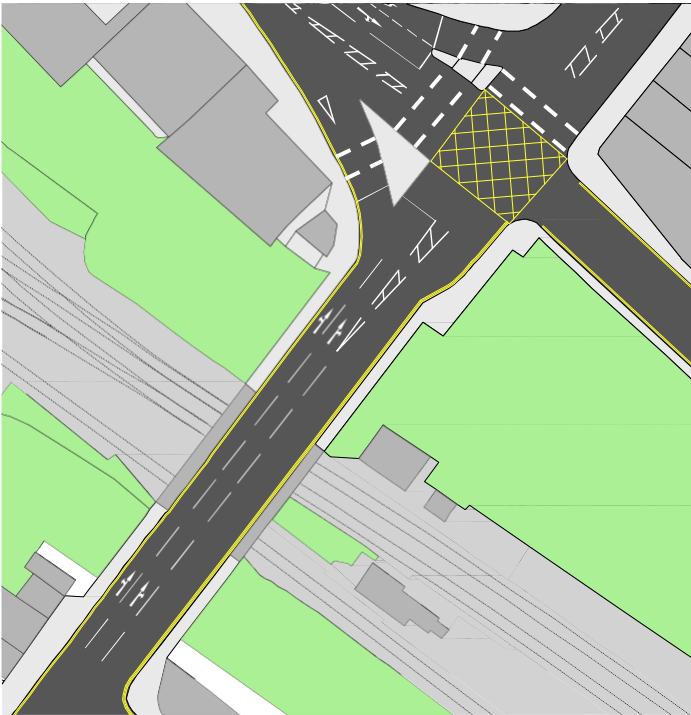


Proposed junction alignment

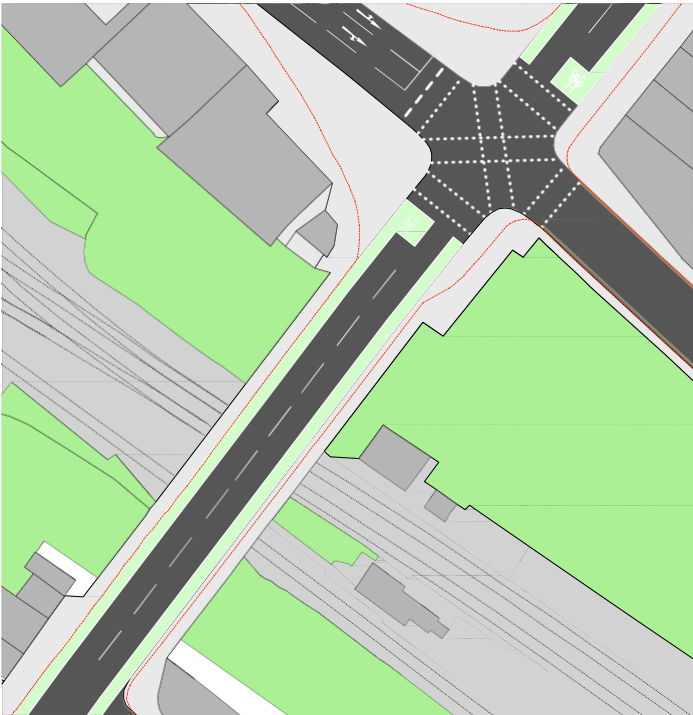
- Simplification of junction by removing turning slip road
- Widen pedestrian footway adjacent to Magistrates Court, allowing for easier informal pedestrian crossing
- Note: proposals are indicative only and require traffic engineer analysis

3.2 ReAlignMenT of PeDesTRiAn BRiDge

The realignment of the pedestrian bridge aims to improve the flow of movement across what is perceived as the 'pinch point' of the town centre which currently causes severance between north and south of the railway, particularly for pedestrians. Below are a number of realignment options which provide varied facilities for different road users; drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. The options shown need to be further scrutinised through a comprehensive traffic modelling study which will ensure a positive outcome for all users.

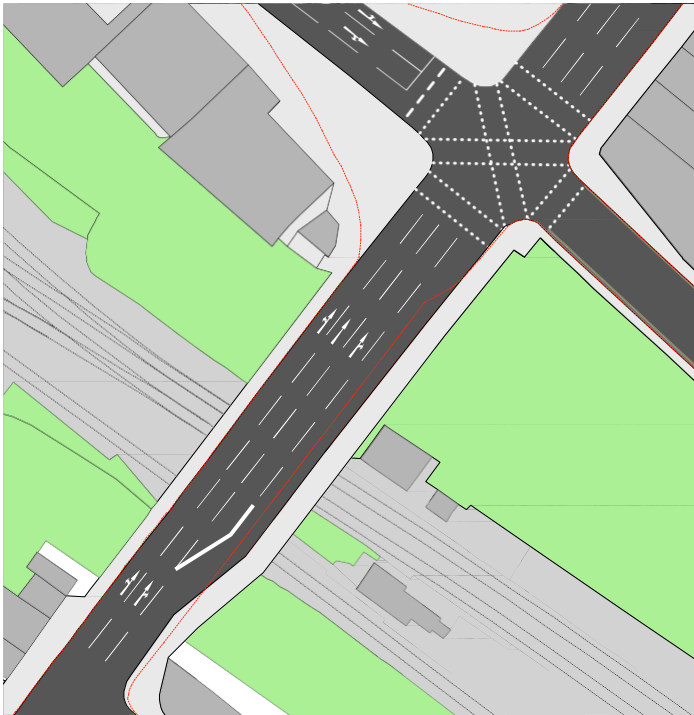


Existing alignment of station bridge & junction



Proposed alignment of station bridge Option 1

- Simplified junction with tightened corners
- Widened footways across bridge
- Introduction of cycle lanes & cycle waiting areas at junction
- Removal of one northbound lane of traffic
- Note: proposals are indicative only and require traffic engineer analysis



Proposed alignment of station bridge Option 2

- Simplified junction with tightened corners
- Removal of pedestrian footway on southern side of station bridge, and introduction of new pedestrian bridge over the railway
- Introduction of additional southbound traffic lane (note carriageway narrows to south, so benefits are limited)
- Note: proposals are indicative only and require traffic engineer analysis



Proposed alignment of station bridge Option 3

- Simplified junction with tightened corners
- Removal of pedestrian footway on southern side of station bridge, and introduction of new pedestrian bridge over the railway
- Introduction of cycle lanes & cycle waiting areas at junction
- Retention of three lanes of traffic for full length of bridge
- Note: proposals are indicative only and require traffic engineer analysis

KEY

Existing kerb line

3.3

inTRoDUce cycling fAciliTies

Existing cycling infrastructure within Finchley Church End is poor, and the environment for cyclists is particularly unfriendly. It is vital that Finchley becomes part of a wider cycling network which improves connectivity to local town centres such as Colindale, which is currently undergoing a large amount of development.

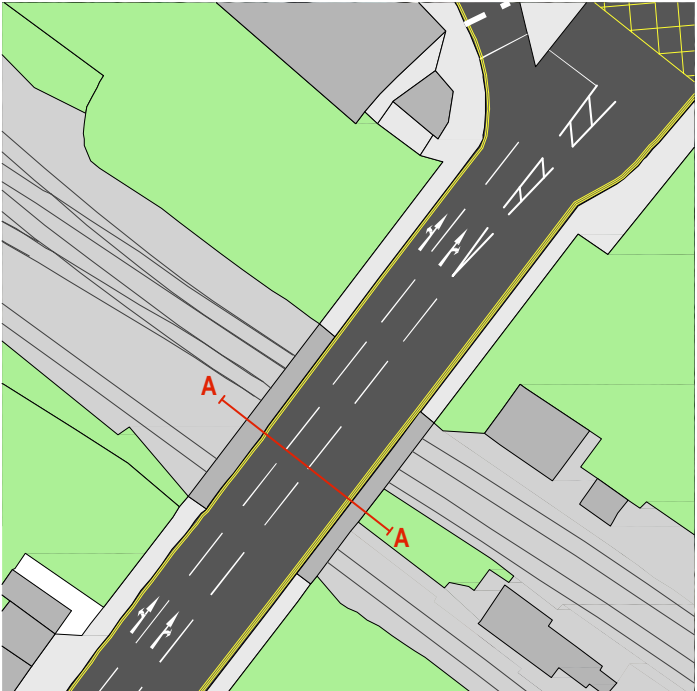
Cycling infrastructure should therefore be implemented, particularly along Ballards Lane and Hendon Lane which will provide a connecting route to these neighbouring centres.

The diagrams opposite illustrate an existing and proposed road layout for the station bridge. It demonstrates that rebalancing the road by reducing traffic lanes, can allow the bridge to accommodate cycling infrastructure, even at a location which is perceived as the 'pinch point' of the high street.

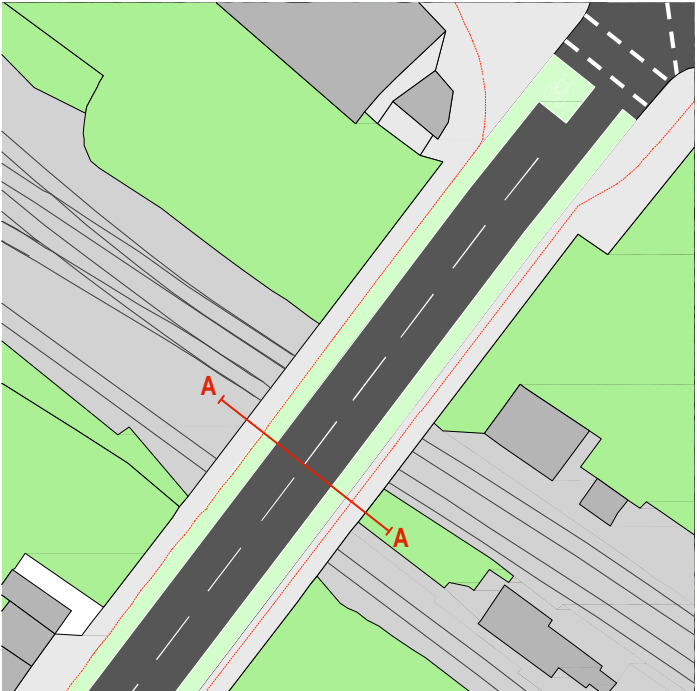
The option shown needs to be further scrutinised through a comprehensive traffic modelling study which will ensure a positive outcome for all users,



Connecting to existing cycle network



Station Bridge Existing Plan



Station Bridge Proposed Plan

KEY

↔

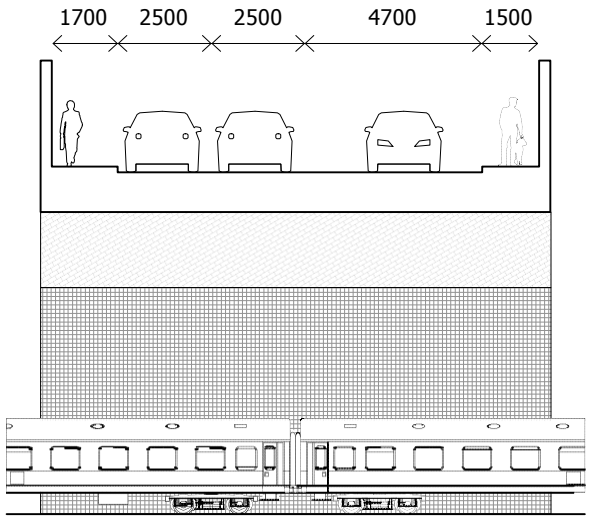
Proposed cycle link

↔

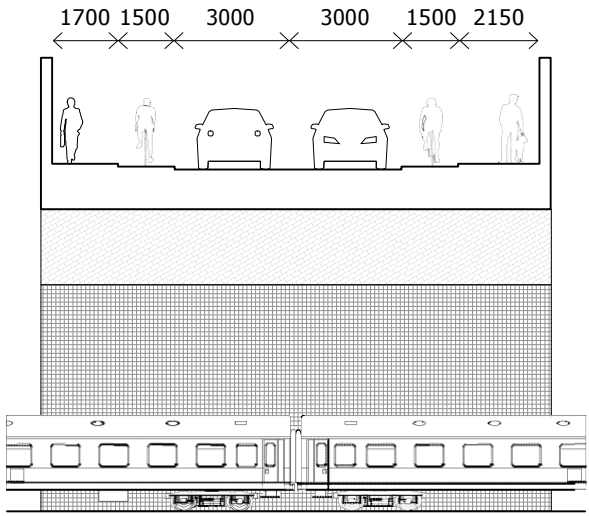
Existing TfL cycle route

↔

Proposed London Cycle Network+ (funding dropped)



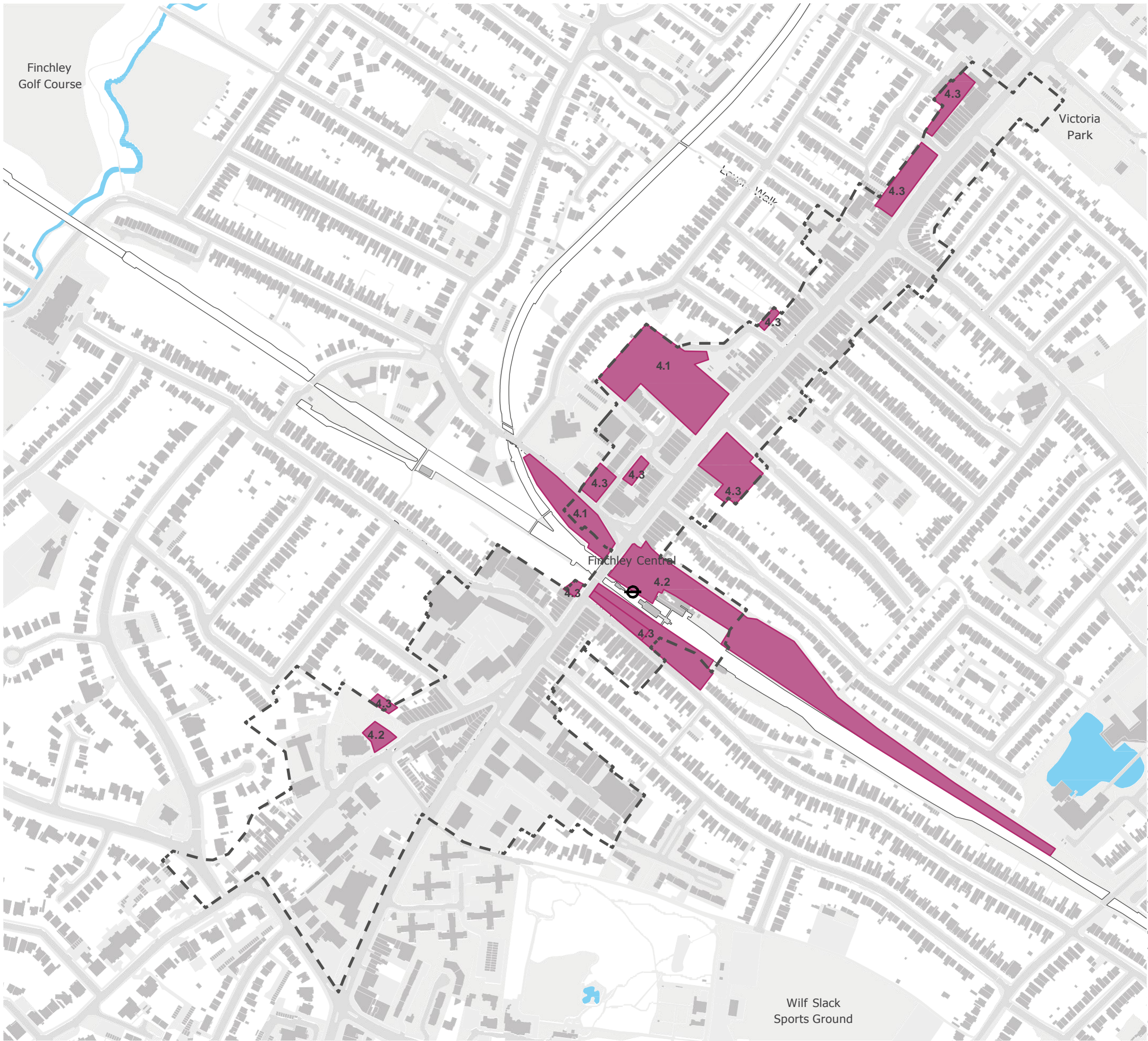
Station Bridge Existing Section AA



Station Bridge Proposed Section AA

4.0
iDenTify DeVelopMenT
gRowTh oPPoRTUniTies

- 4.1 Opportunity development sites previously identified within the Finchley Church End Town Centre Strategy 2012.
- 4.2 Provide site specific guidance for the former-library site and the new station entrances on both Chaville Way and Station Road.
- 4.3 Identify other infill development sites in addition to infill development already underway along the high street.



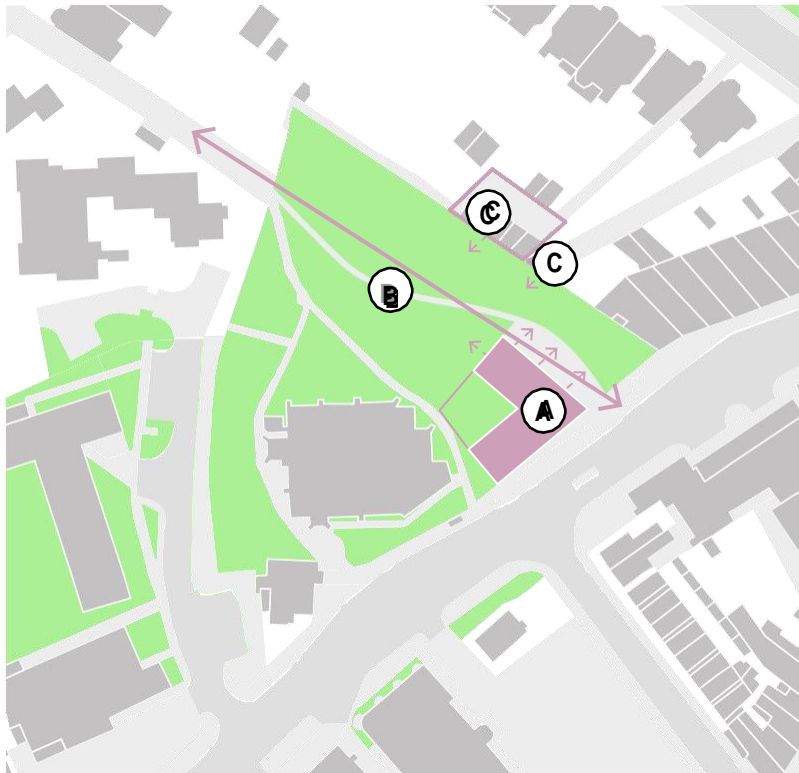
4.2
gUiDance foR liBRARy
siTe ReDeVeloPMenT

The existing library is being relocated to Gateway House on Regents Park Road which creates an opportunity for redevelopment of the current site. It is adjacent to Church End Gardens and St Mary-at-Finchley Church (Grade II Listed). Guidance for development on this site is as follows:

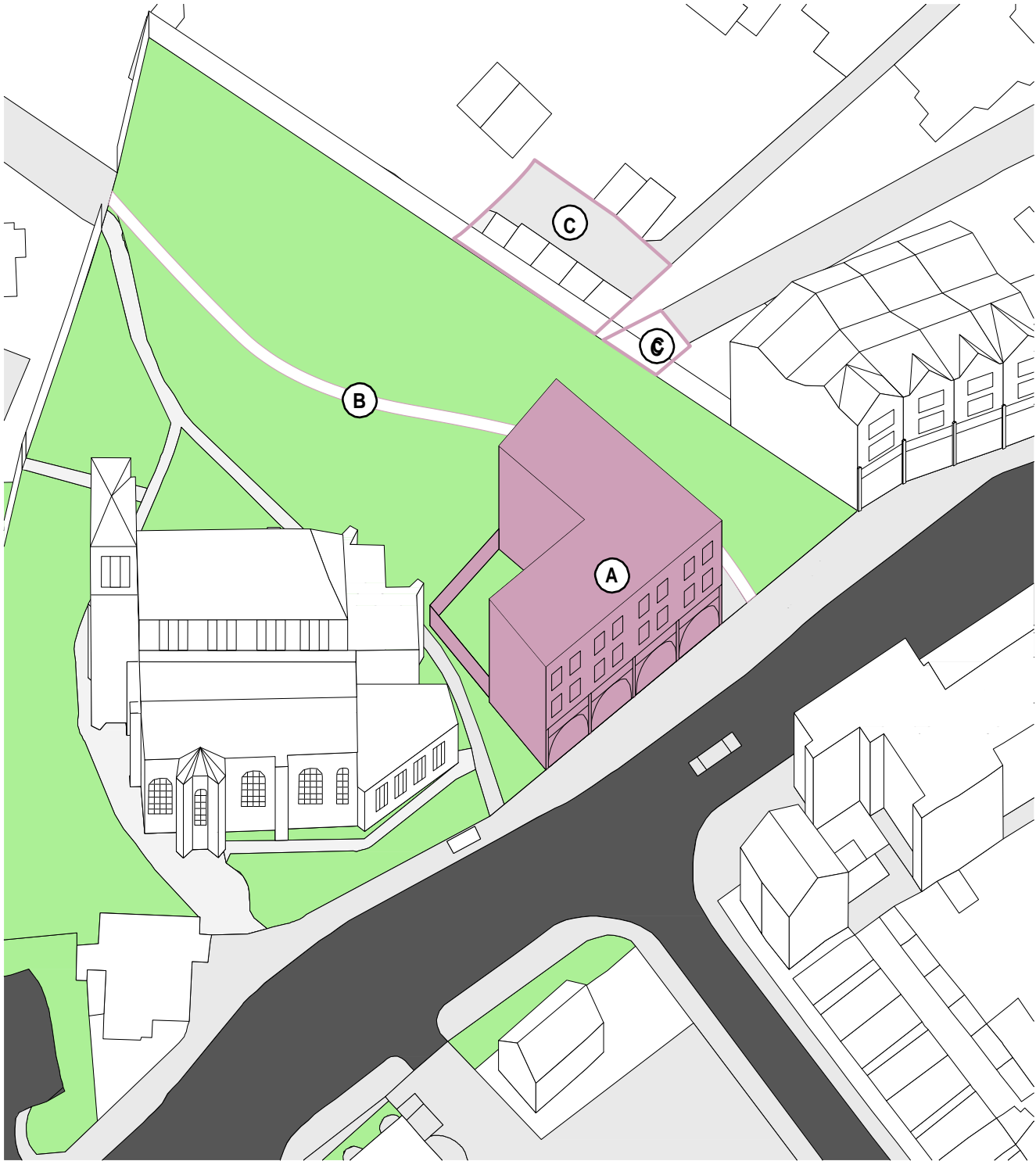
- A Three storey mixed use development:
 - Commercial/ retail use on the ground floor with high quality frontage to complement the historic area
 - Building line continued from adjacent shop parade
 - Residential use on the upper floors, overlooking Church End Gardens to improve passive supervision
 - High quality and distinctive design
- B Introduce an additional path from residential area to the west, travelling through cemetery and Church End Gardens, to the high street in order to transform the gardens from a cul-de-sac, to a useable route
- C Potential for infill development of garages and vacant building which overlook Church End Gardens



Existing image: Finchley Church End library



Proposed site plan



Isometric illustration of potential development

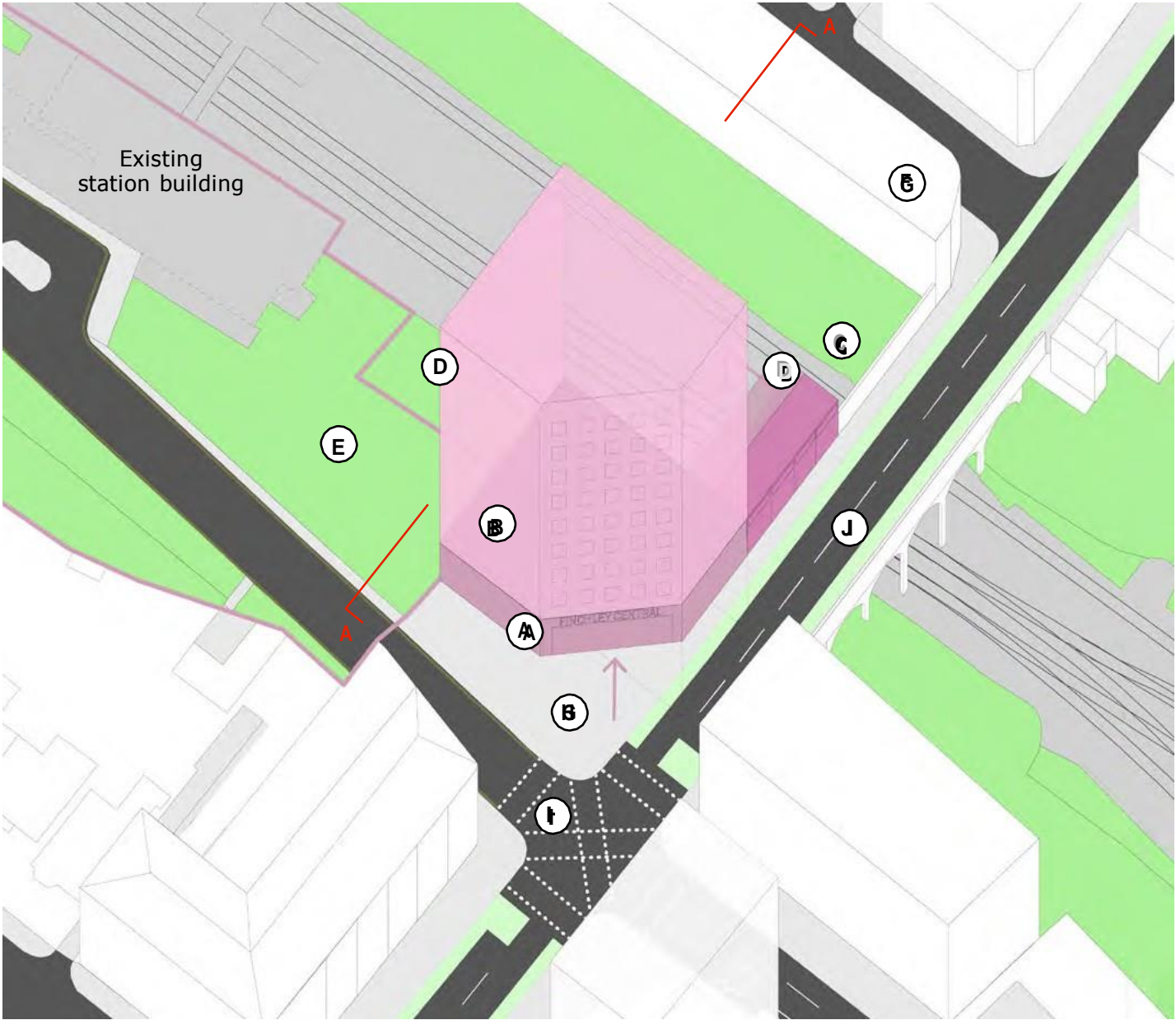
4.2

PoTenTiAl foR iMPRoVeD sTATion enTRAnce

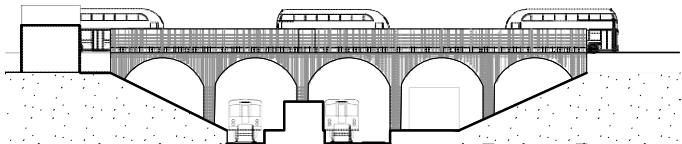
A new station building for Finchley Central, which is designed to a high standard, could be provided through redevelopment of the site. The illustration opposite demonstrates how a new station building improves the gateway into Finchley Central:

- A Station entrance:
High quality designed station building situated in a new location on the high street set back to allow for pedestrian forecourt and cycle provision
- B Residential development
Eight storey residential development above new station building
- C Pedestrian bridge
Introduction of pedestrian bridge with retail units linking the north and south of the town centre
- D Pedestrian access
Stair and ramp access provided from the station building to both platforms at the lower level
- E Development on remaining site
Relocation of the station building creates potential development opportunity alongside railway
- F Infill development
Infill development upon one storey buildings along Station Road
- G Station gateway public realm
Refer to 5.1 for further details
- H Junction realignment
Refer to 3.1 for further details
- I Realignment of pedestrian bridge
Refer to 3.2 for further details

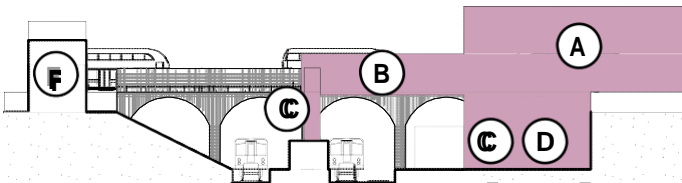
Note: A feasibility study will need to be undertaken to determine how the station is redeveloped which will be consulted on.



Isometric illustration of potential station development



Existing section AA



Proposed section AA

4.2

gUiDance foR sTATion

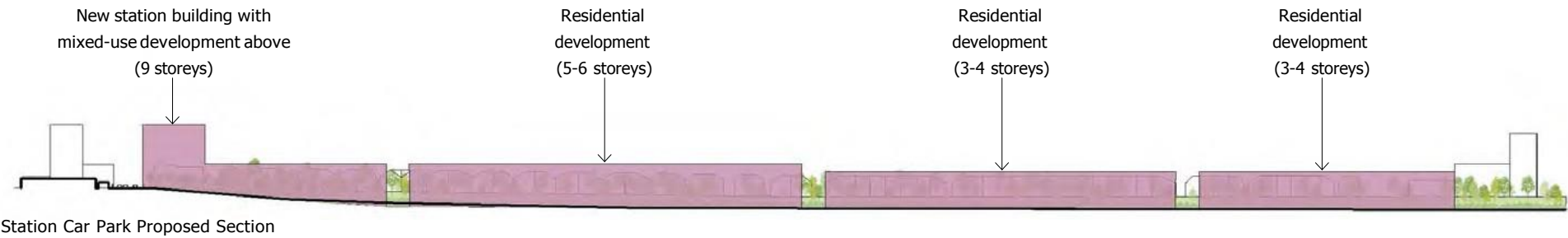
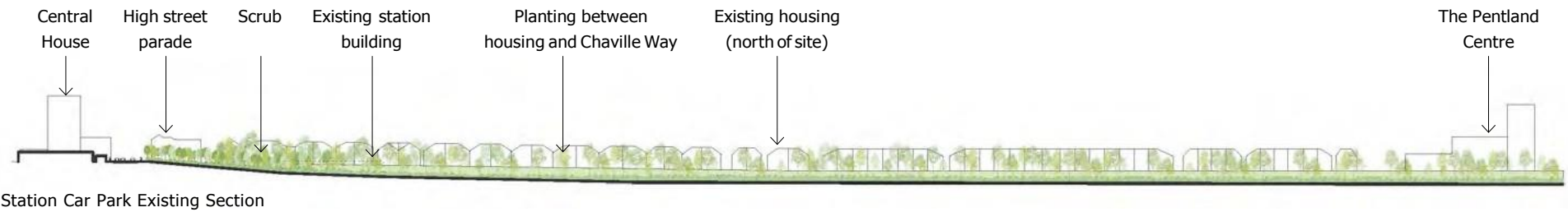
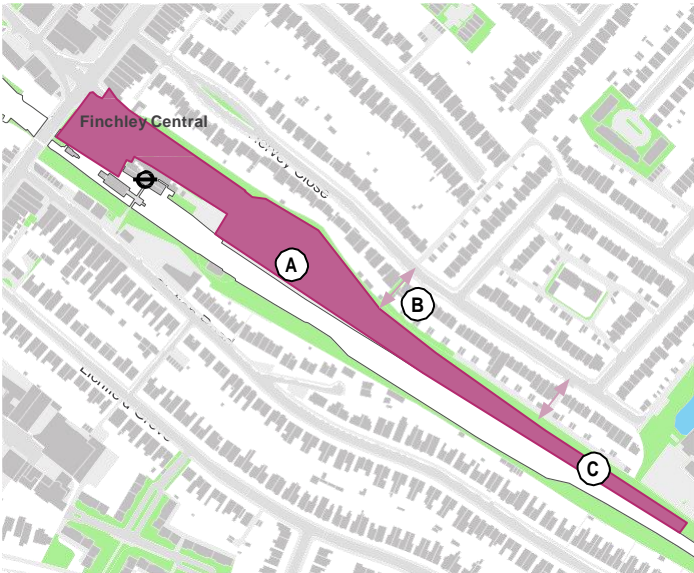
cAR PARK ReDeVeloPMenT

The car park of Finchley Central station is a significant development opportunity for the town centre. However, the site has a number of constraints as it is located alongside the railway and is particularly slim at one end. Development on this site should:

- A Be based upon a detailed parking study to inform potential rationalisation of parking numbers whilst avoiding negative impact on the town centre.
- B Seek to establish new links with Hervey Close to improve accessibility and reduce reliance on the Ballards Lane junction.
- C Consider innovative typologies to negotiate dimensional constraints of the site.

A full parking study will be undertaken prior to the redevelopment of the station car park. Where there is demand, parking will be reprovided. A feasibility study will need to be undertaken to determine how the station and the car park is redeveloped, which will be consulted on.

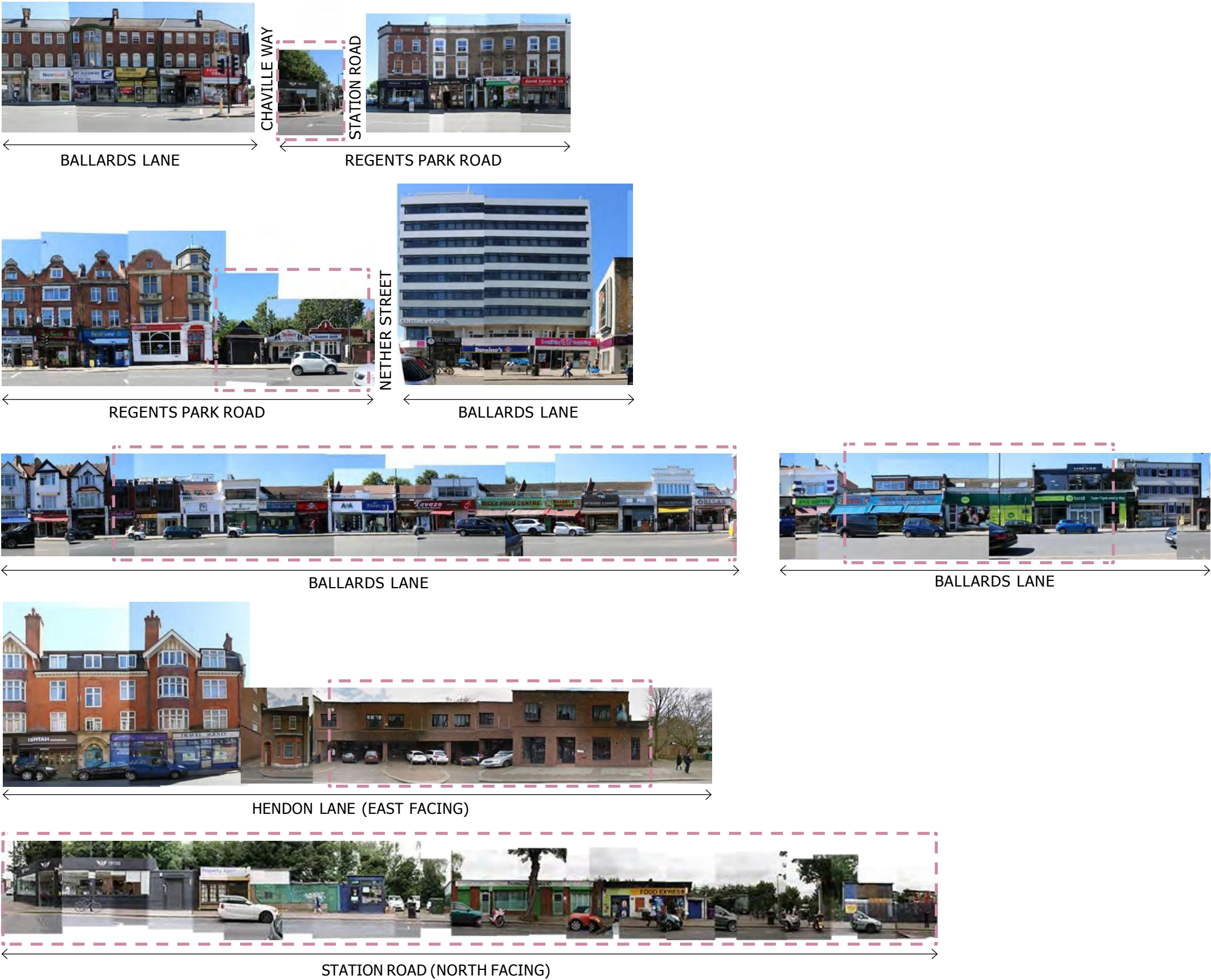
Opposite are two precedent examples of residential schemes which are located within constrained sites. The designs are carefully considered for the environment they are set within.



4.3 infill DeVelopMenT oPPoRTUniTies

The town centre currently has a range of building typologies and densities owing to developments of different time periods. Locations where there are much lower densities or buildings of poorer quality, offer opportunities for infill development.

Several locations fronting on to the high street that present such opportunities are highlighted in the diagrams opposite.



4.3
infill DeVelopMenT
oPPoRTUniTies

The Town Centre offers opportunity for infill development on small sites situated behind the high street. Current construction activity shows that such developments are attractive to the market, presumably due to high residential values in the area. Infill development benefits the town centre through increasing resident numbers. The images opposite present some examples of where infill development is already happening in the town centre.

Potential locations for further infill development have been identified on the map opposite. Further opportunities to intensify the use of the town centre through infill development by individual land-owners should be encouraged and supported.



Residential development on Cornwall Avenue



Residential property on Princes Avenue



Potential infill sites within Finchley Church End town centre

5.0
iMPRoVe gATewAys
ThRoUgh DeVeLoPMenT

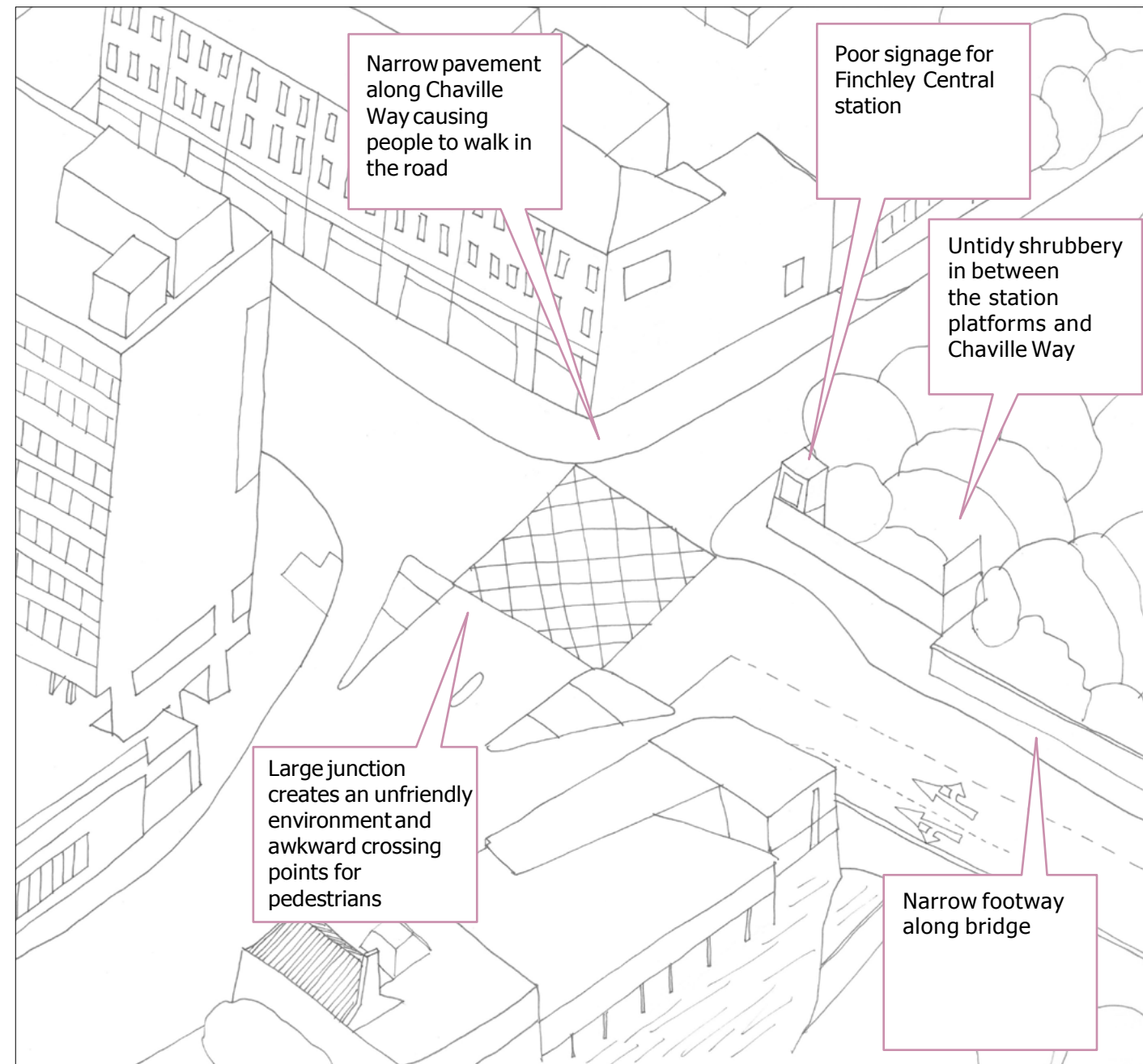
5.1 Improvements to station arrival area
in co-ordination with forthcoming
development in the station area



5.1 sTATion gATeWAY iMPRoVeMenTs

The current arrival into Finchley Central via the station is pedestrian unfriendly, primarily owing to the heavily trafficked junctions. The new station entrance, along with the realignment of the junction provides an opportunity to improve the gateway into Finchley Central.

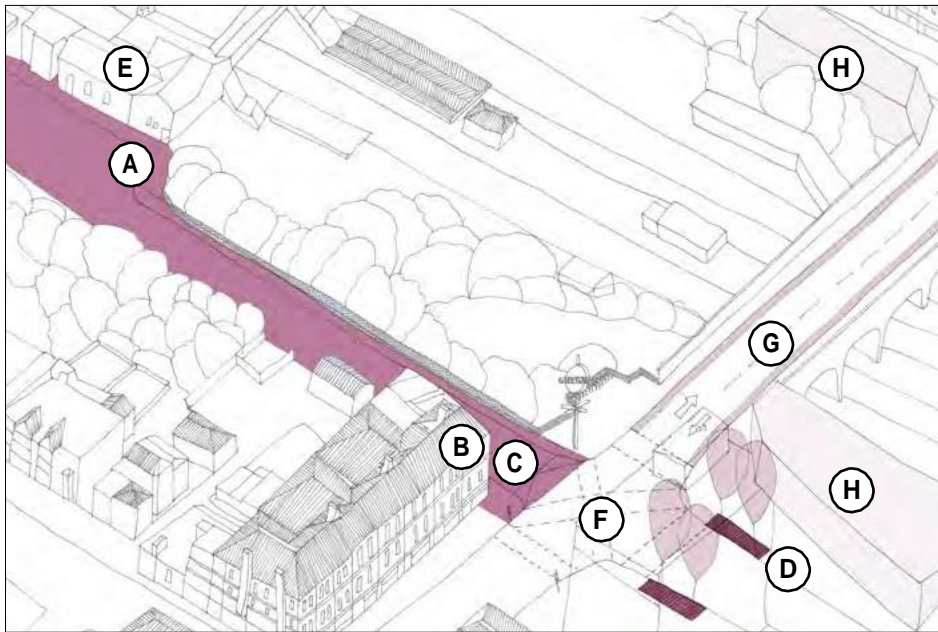
A comprehensive traffic modelling study will need to be undertaken to ensure a positive outcome for all the users of the town centre. A feasibility study will need to be undertaken to determine how the station is redeveloped, which will be consulted on.



Existing gateway into Finchley Central



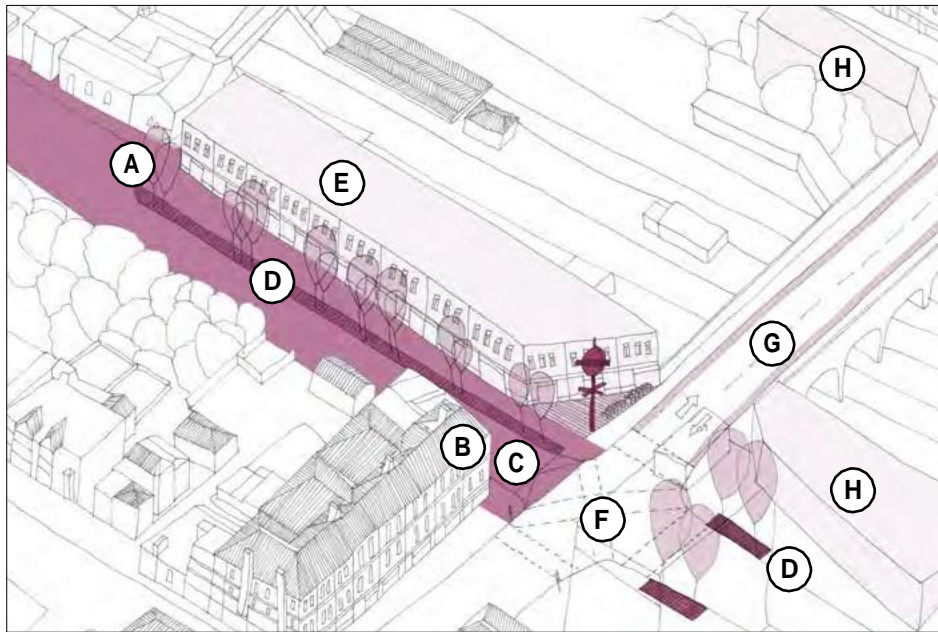
Development option A



Public realm improvements only

- A High quality forecourt area for existing station building with secure cycle parking and wayfinding signage
- B Characterful gateway signage on flank wall opportunity to create sense of arrival
- C Introduction of shared surface along Chaville Way up to entrance of existing station building
- D Introduction of new paving, civic furniture and planting at junction
- E Enhancements to existing station building
- F Realign junction. Refer to 3.1 for further details
- G Realignment of existing bridge. Refer to 3.2 for further details
- H Potential development site

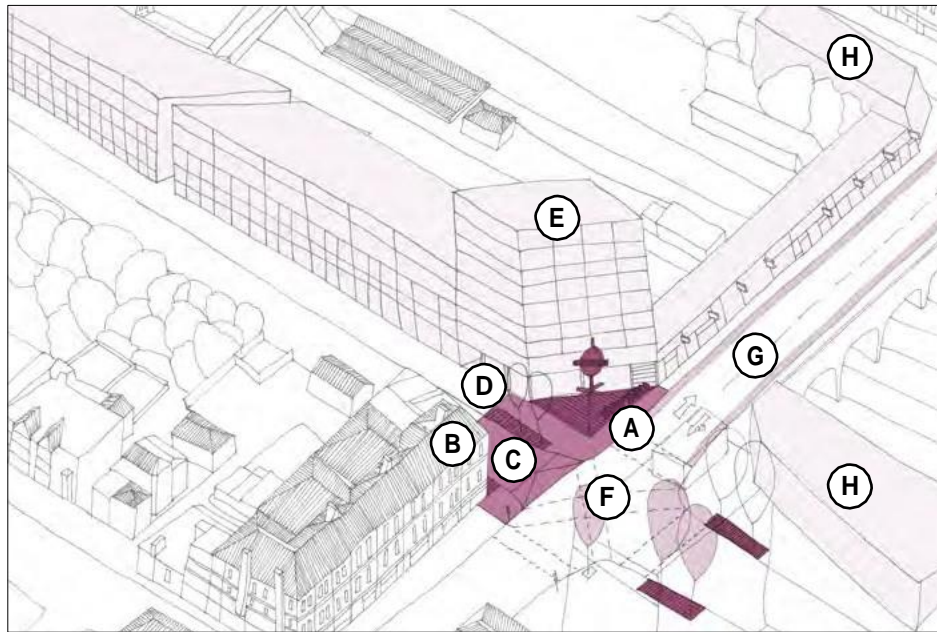
Development option B



Modest development opportunity

- A High quality forecourt area for existing station building with secure cycle parking and wayfinding signage
- B Characterful gateway signage on flank wall opportunity to create sense of arrival
- C Introduction of continuous crossing from station to high street
- D Introduction of new paving, civic furniture and planting at junction and along Chaville Way
- E Two storey mixed use development along Chaville Way linking existing station building to the high street
- F Realign junction. Refer to 3.1 for further details
- G Realignment of existing bridge. Refer to 3.2 for further details
- H Potential development site

Development option c

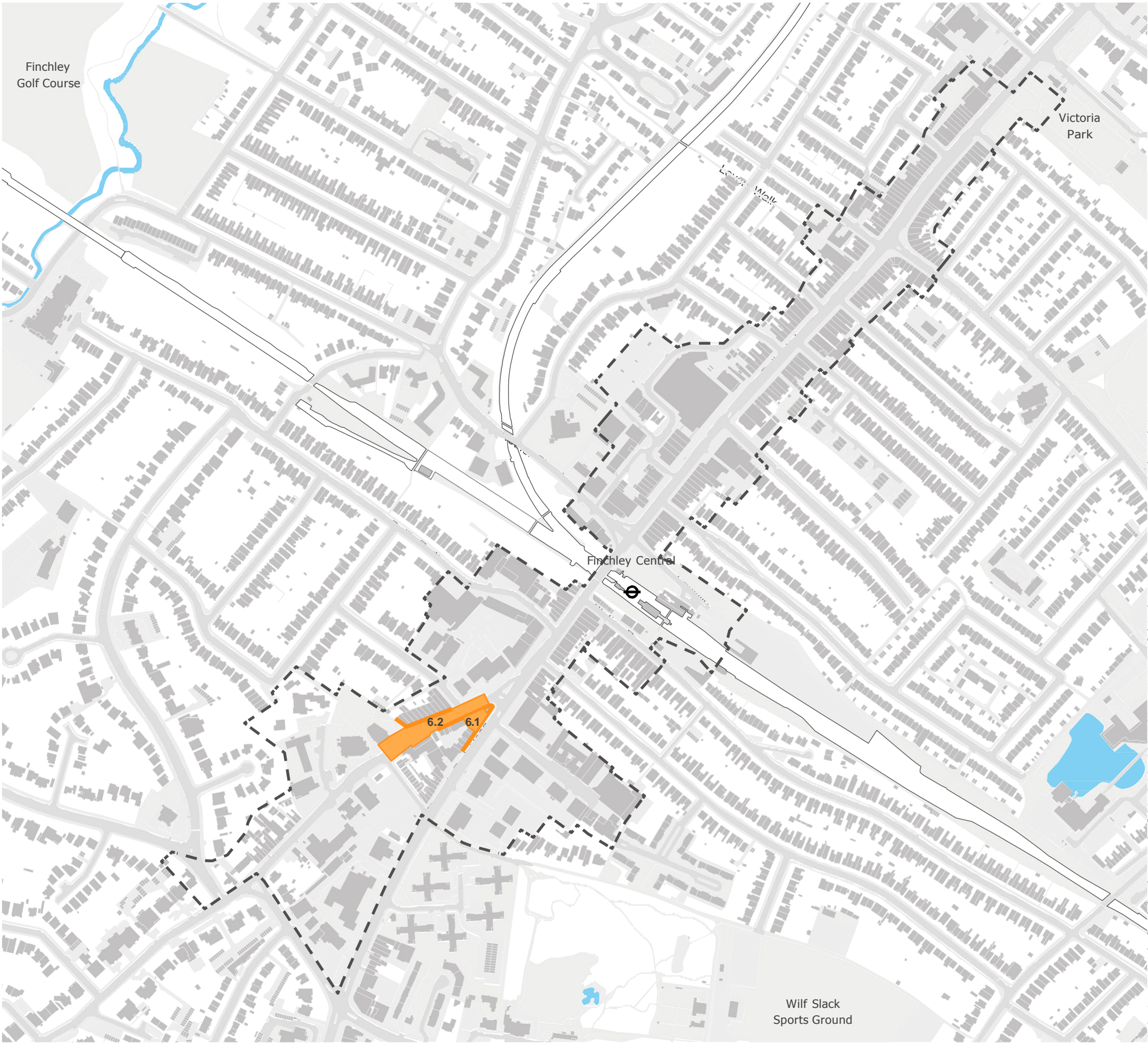


Maximum development opportunity

- A High quality forecourt area for new station building with secure cycle parking and wayfinding signage
- B Characterful gateway signage on flank wall opportunity to create sense of arrival
- C Introduction of continuous crossing from station to high street
- D Introduction of new paving, civic furniture and planting at junction
- E New nine storey station building and pedestrian bridge development. Refer to 3.2 for further details
- F Realign junction. Refer to 3.1 for further details
- G Realignment of existing bridge. Refer to 3.2 for further details
- H Potential development site

6.0
MAKING The Most of
heRiTAge AsseTs

- 6.1 Introduce cultural uses into the King Edward Hall building such as a cinema or community events space, both as temporary uses and in the long-term.
- 6.2 Reaffirm historic identity of Conservation Area through signage, way finding, high quality public realm and shop front improvements within buildings of architectural and historic value, in accordance with the Finchley Church End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

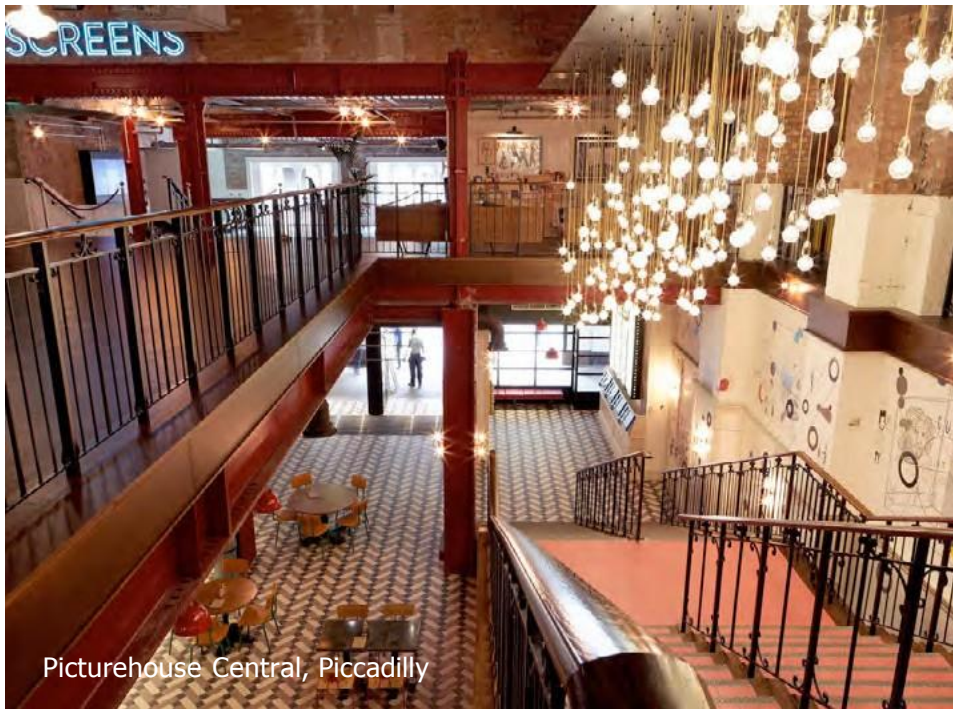
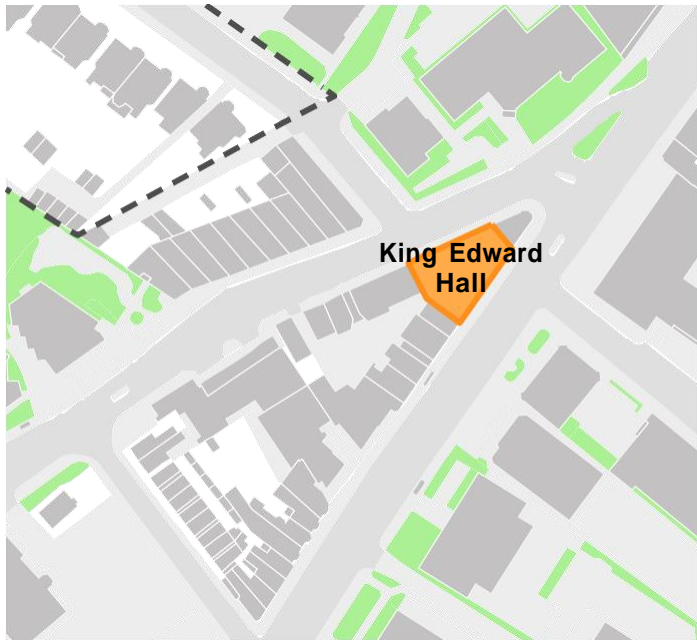


6.1
cUITURAL Uses in
King eDWARD h All

King Edward Hall on Hendon Lane is a prominent Grade II listed building within the Conservation Area, but is currently under utilised. A number of retail units on the ground floor are currently vacant, and the banqueting suite on the upper floor has been on sale for a number of years.

The venue offers a significant opportunity for the introduction of a cultural / community space for Finchley. This could be introduced on a temporary basis, with a view to longer-term proposals. Associated with the arrival of a new high-end supermarket in Gateway House (understood to be imminent), such a venue could reinvigorate Church End Conservation area.

Alterations to the building will need to comply with recommendations set out within the Finchley Church End Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2011).



Picturehouse Central, Piccadilly



King Edward Hall, Hendon Lane

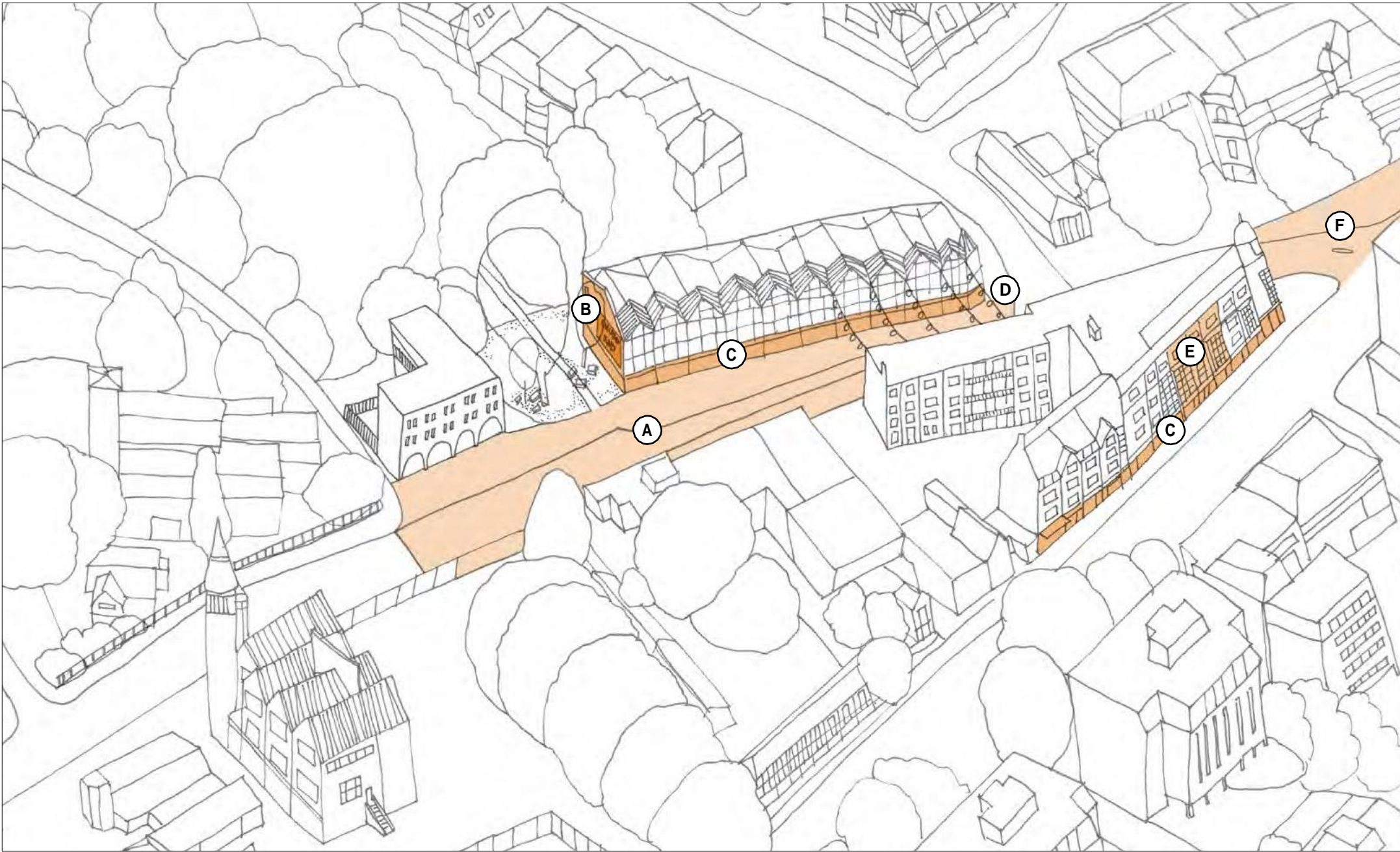


South Kilburn Studios, Brent

6.2
ReAffiRM hisTo Ric
iDenTiTy of henDon lAne

The Conservation Area has rich historic value, however the public realm and commercial units within historic buildings are of poor quality, which has been highlighted as a key issue within the Finchley Church End Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2011). The strategy proposes to enhance the 'village' quality of this area by introducing high quality materials into the public realm and shopfronts, along with reaffirming its historic identity through signage.

- A New co-ordinated conservation paving and shared surfaces adjacent to retail units and Church End Gardens which respects the character of the conservation area
- B Characterful signage highlighting 'Church End' identity and local heritage
- C High quality shop front improvements for units within conservation area including uplift of architectural features
- D Feature catenary lighting
- E Support establishment of King Edward Hall as a cultural venue
- F Junction realignment. Refer to section 6.1

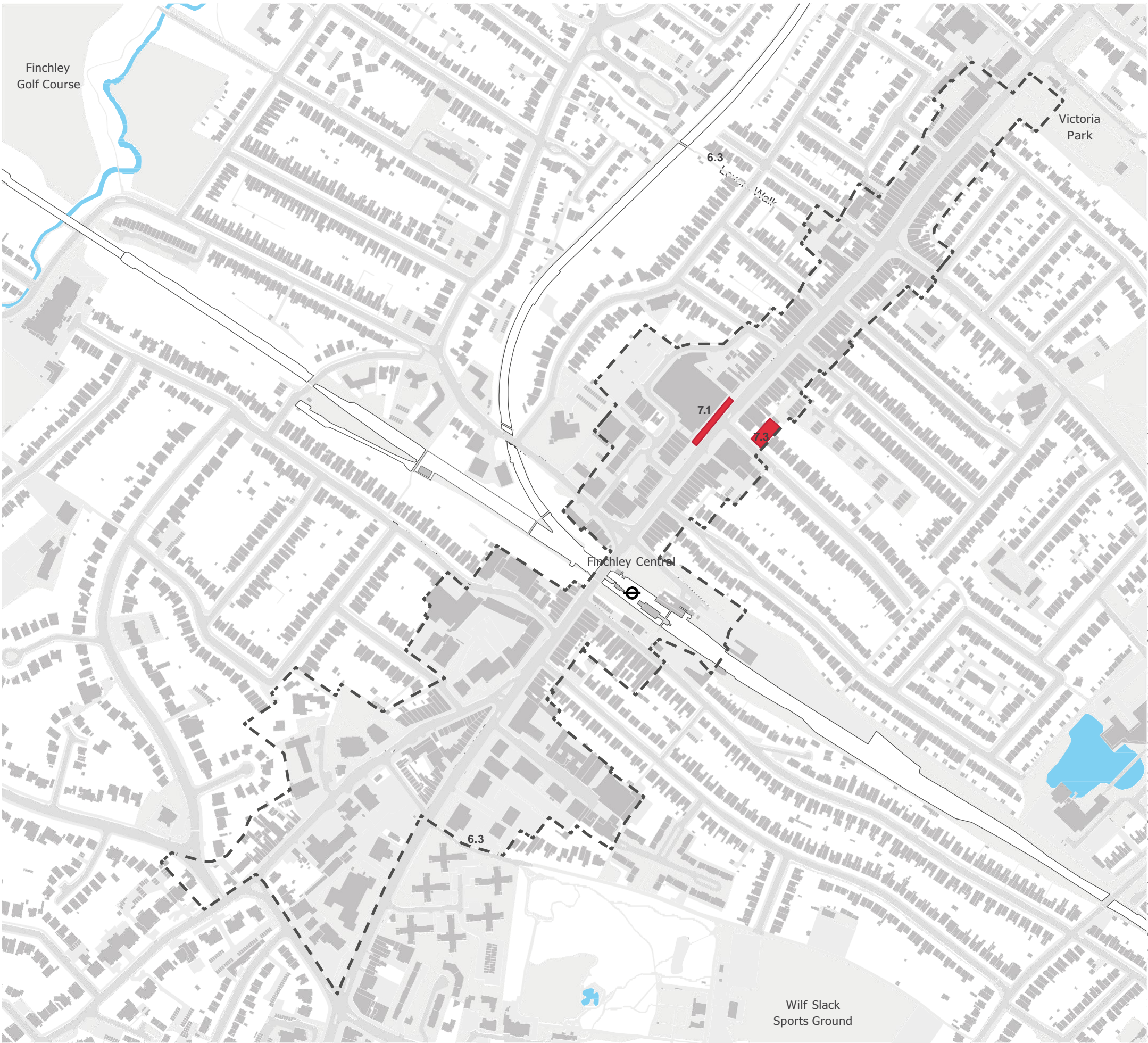


Proposed improvements to Hendon Lane



7.0
encoURAge An inclUsiVe
Town centRe

- 7.1 Organise a cultural event or a regular market at the weekends for local residents and visitors
- 7.2 Support businesses with developing a successful weekend economy by encouraging a diverse town centre offer that attracts a mixed local demographic
- 7.3 Establish a relationship between local older people and local enterprise groups



7.1 oRgAnise A cUITURAI eVenT on The high sTReeT

The local demographic tend to have the disposable income and time to seek evening and weekend entertainment, often without the ties of young families. They are well-educated, most are broadsheet readers, well-travelled and appreciative of the arts and culture.

There is an opportunity for businesses in Church End to attract people seeking daytime leisure activities. The town lacks flexible events space and cultural activities and loses potential leisure visitors to the nearby Great North Centre which has a Vue multiplex cinema, the Finchley Lido leisure centre and Hollywood Bowl, and to the Arts Depot in North Finchley which has a theatre, soft play centre, family café and exhibition space.

Possible interventions include the use of wide pavements for markets and events to attract people to town during the weekend, evening cultural activities delivered from some of the larger bars and restaurants, the creation of an online business directory and town loyalty scheme.

Non-retail uses for vacant high street spaces should be considered to cultivate a sense of community and encourage sustainable cultural, social and leisure high street functions.

Opposite are a set of precedents of meanwhile use and cultural events on the high street.



A film screening outside a bookshop in Peckham Rye



An empty site is temporarily converted into Barking Bathhouse



A vacant shop unit in Nunhead Green being used as a business incubator with exhibition space



The Christmas Glow festival in Enfield which featured a lantern parade

7.2

sUPPo RT BUsinesses To ATTRAcT DiVeRse DeMogRAPHic

The following set of recommendations provide a list of ways in which the high street businesses can be supported in Finchley Church End.

High street offer

- Businesses should be supported to diversify and expand their product ranges to close the gaps in provision and prevent shopper migration to other towns.
- An attempt should be made to animate the vacant shops, like the derelict My Local shop, in prime positions with meanwhile uses until a permanent tenant can be found. This is an opportunity to curate the high street, bringing under-represented products to the town.
- The evening economy should be boosted to accommodate the needs of commuters and affluent residents.

Quality of businesses

- Many of the businesses in Church End were in good repair with clear identities. Some of the most poorly presented businesses and unkempt vacant units lie at the gateways to the high street; these include the old police station and the businesses on Station Road
- The local authority should use their powers to close businesses temporarily if they continue to fail to achieve at least a 2 star hygiene rating; to enable them to make necessary improvements.
- More should be done to promote the high level of food hygiene and variety of cuisine available locally.

Branding and identity

- Church End should be promoted more widely especially the 'hidden' gems including the niche shops e.g. the games shop, decorating and furniture stores and the food and drink offer.

High street infrastructure

- A solution to the perception of parking complexity should be sought including a review of parking signage to make shoppers aware of the locations of free parking in the side roads. Improved signage explaining payment methods in the primary resident languages might be prudent and if possible more shops could be encouraged to sell parking vouchers to help people without credit cards and mobiles phones.



Window dressing in Willesden Green



Shop front improvements in Wool Street



Business support shop in Sidcup

8.0
PRoMoTe PosiTive
PeRcePTion & iDenTiTy

- 8.1 In response to local perception, hold further consultation about whether the town centre should be identified as Finchley Central or Finchley Church End.
- 8.2 Improve shopfronts and visual merchandising of businesses along Ballards Lane which support the local identity
- 8.3 Introduce artwork on flank walls including the bridge to help establish an identity for the town centre.
- 8.4 Establish a Town Team for the centre to support local businesses and engage residents.



8.2
sUPPoRT locAl iDenTiTy
ThRoUgh shoPFRonT
iMPRoVeMenTs

A number of shops have dilapidated shop fronts; these detract from their smarter neighbours. A shopfront improvement programme is recommended to provide financial support and contemporary design advice to businesses unable to fund infrastructural improvements through lack of cashflow.

The photographs opposite highlight some key parades of shops that could be suitable for such interventions.



8.3
esTABlish iDenTiTy
ThRoUgh fIAnK wAll
ARTwoRK

There are a number of opportunities within the town centre to introduce artwork which helps to define and establish a distinct local identity for the area. These tend to be on flank walls of existing buildings as well as the walls of the bridge over the railway.



Blank wall of railway bridge by Finchley Central station



Flank wall on Hendon Lane, adjacent to Church End Gardens



Flank wall at station arrival



Flank wall artwork on Walthamstow High Street



Gateway identity signage in Croydon South End

8.4
es TABlish Town TeAM

A business network or Town Team could be set-up and supported for a minimum of one year to help businesses share their issues and work together to deliver a programme of interventions to raise the profile of the town. Town teams and town centre managers can facilitate business networking. The role of a Town Centre Manager is often underestimated but it can be invaluable for a high street to have a dedicated business liaison officer. A number of businesses would like to attend facilitated networking sessions so that they can meet other businesses.

A free business support programme should be provided to help independent businesses increase their turnover using onmi-channel platforms.



Fruity Fun Day event in Burnt Oak to help promote the identity of the town centre and its businesses



finchley

FIRST STEPS

Planning policy

The Local Plan has to shape the future of Barnet as a place, providing the overarching local policy framework for delivering sustainable development. We need to sustainably manage retail growth and change in Barnet and how the Borough’s network of town centres must evolve to remain economically vibrant.

As part of the implementation of Barnet’s Local Plan (2012) a suite of town centre strategies/development frameworks have been produced for New Barnet, Finchley Church End, Chipping Barnet and Edgware. The Finchley Church End Town Centre Strategy adopted in June 2012 sets out a planning-based approach focusing on identifying potential development sites in this town centre and the associated need for improvements to the public realm and infrastructure to enhance the character of the area.

As part of the implementation of Entrepreneurial Barnet (2014) Town Centre Strategies have been produced for Burnt Oak and Finchley Central. Strategies for Golders Green and Edgware are emerging. This 2017 strategy for Finchley Central therefore has a much broader remit than the 2012 planning document, reflecting the council’s new *Place-Based Commissioning approach* with a greater focus on the local resident and business community in addition to the physical space and built environment.

The Council are now producing a new Local Plan document which will look ahead to 2036 and integrate strategic policies, development management policies and site proposals in alignment with the new Mayor’s London Plan as well as consistent with national planning reforms. This Town Centre Strategy will have a key influence on emerging planning policy, site proposals and the decisions we make about the future of Finchley Church End Town Centre.

Management of projects

A large proportion of the projects listed within this strategy will be delivered through development control, managed internally by LB Barnet officers. Design and engineering consultants will be commissioned to develop proposals further

Local knowledge and skills are a vital part of shaping Finchley Central and Finchley Church End, therefore the strategy encourages the involvement of local people in future initiatives. There are a number of projects that could be led by active community groups or organisations including:

- Organising a cultural event on the high street
- Establishing a town team
- Contributing towards establishing Finchley Square by organising a regular event or market
- Establishing a relationship between older people and local enterprise groups
- Contributing towards affirming the historic identity of Finchley Church End

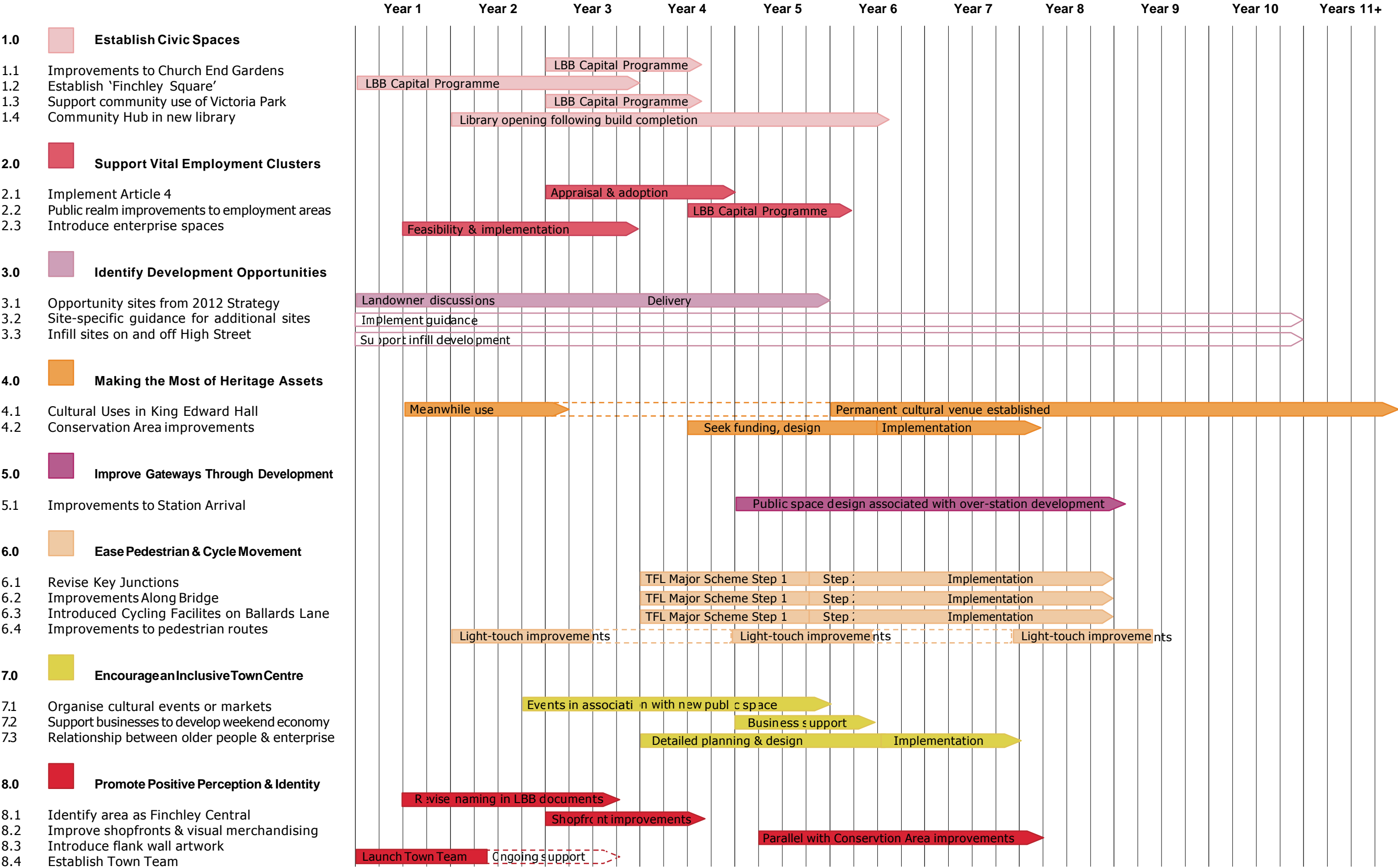
Activities within Victoria Park including Finchley Bowls Club and a proposed farmers market are being led and managed by local Finchley residents with the support of LB Barnet.

Funding sources

Development control
GLA Growth Fund
TfL Major Schemes Bid

Overleaf is a diagram which organises the projects into a priority list over a ten year period, indicating where funding could be sourced.

finchley
first steps



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