



**KNOWLEDGE
QUARTER**

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC REALM CHARRETTE: PHOENIX ROAD AND RANDELL'S ROAD

August 2017

SUPPORTED BY

CATAPULT
Digital

**Landscape
Institute**
Inspiring great places



**NEW LONDON
ARCHITECTURE**



 KNOWLEDGE QUARTER
PUBLIC REALM CHARTERETTE
© 2015 Knowledge Quarter
In partnership with the University of Leeds

CONTENTS

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	04
2	SUMMARY	08
3	INTRODUCTION	15
4	ROLE OF A CHARRETTE	16
5	THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHARRETTES	17
6	BACKGROUND: THE KNOWLEDGE QUARTER PUBLIC REALM AUDIT	18
7	THE CHARRETTES:	
	7.1. PHOENIX ROAD	19
	7.2. RANDELL'S ROAD	31
8	LIST OF ATTENDEES	41
	APPENDIX	42



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the audits in Spring 2016 which looked at the quality of the public realm of all the streets and roads in the Knowledge Quarter area, two streets, Phoenix Road and Randell's Road, were chosen as the subject of two charrettes which were held on the 20th and 21st September 2016. The two streets were felt to offer contrasting opportunities but were linked by the prospect of significant change in the future both to the streets themselves and the surrounding area.



As well as being given background about each street from the public realm audit, the 30 attendees were asked to assess:

- changes that could improve the role the streets play for the communities that lived nearby and
- what support was needed to allow them to contribute more fully to the Knowledge Quarter's goals of creating an area that is both better connected and economically and culturally more successful.

The findings of the charrettes now follow. Overall the participants found that the context for each street was dramatically different but a number of common themes were identified that might help to guide change.

Common Themes

It was felt to be important for the Knowledge Quarter to play a supportive and facilitating role for change in these streets but it should aim not to dominate the communities whose lives it plans to touch. There was recognition that the skills that partners bring can help stimulate economic and cultural progress but that the Knowledge Quarter should take care to respect and not overwhelm local community identity. A nice example of how this might operate would be for the British Library to hold an exhibition about the history of Somerstown.

The streets themselves need to be considered in terms of both the immediate area they sit in and also for the role that they play within the wider area and their connections to it and the communities that live there. Any changes should aim to improve the lives of residents on the street itself and in the wider area.

Both streets were close to arterial roads that should not be overlooked. There were issues of traffic domination and severance with both Euston Road (close to Phoenix Road) and York Way (Randell's Road) that need to be addressed.

The following points and issues arose for the individual streets.

1 PHOENIX ROAD

Phoenix Road already has a clear role at the heart of the Somerstown area with many residents and amenities with both its shops and its community facilities. The street is well used including by people walking between the mainline stations. At the same time, there is an opportunity to improve its role further. It was seen as having a poor frontage to the street on the northern side, a large green space that has little connection to the street, excess carriageway which prioritises vehicles rather than people and an opportunity to make more of the presence of the local pub and the shopping parade.

In addition the area is facing an enormous change with the arrival of Crossrail 2 and HS2. Together these would ensure that, over the next 20 years, Phoenix Road would move from being a relatively hidden street that principally serves a local community and become far more a part of the wider city.

Proposals for Phoenix Road were made in four main areas:

- 1) Opening up the design of the street to give far more space to people through approaches such as pedestrianisation or creating a HomeZone, introducing seating and benches, better lighting, greening and re-use of car parking space. Other potentially more controversial suggestions were to make more of the green space outside Oakshott Court by increasing public access to it and making its frontages and those around the garages more open, active and appealing.
- 2) Understanding and meeting the needs of local people and ensuring that the community in all its parts and diversity was involved in planning any changes.
- 3) Fostering greater community interaction by holding events that encouraged different groups to get together. Ideas might include sharing food between different cultures or dancing and designing the public spaces in a way that encouraged interaction, for example, by creating a "Phoenix Beach" or cinema in the street.
- 4) Ensuring that the involvement of the Knowledge Quarter was valuable but sensitive to the existing community..."drop in but not dominate".

RANDELL'S ROAD

The current role of the street is largely industrial and carriageway dominates the overall space. There are relatively few pedestrians and fewer residents and they pick their way along narrow pavements before attempting to cross the heavily trafficked and fast moving York Way. The street has little relationship with the large residential areas of private housing and estates that stretch east towards the Caledonian Road and Islington beyond.

The character of the street is, however, rapidly changing with the redevelopment of Kings Cross to the west and a number of adjacent sites identified for redevelopment. In addition Randell's Road has a valuable potential role as an east-west connection for those on foot or those who are cycling.

There were, therefore, realistic opportunities to reinvent the street as more of a space for people and to stitch the street back together with the surrounding area as had been the case before the early 1960s.

As with Phoenix Road, the proposals for Randell's Road covered four main areas:

- 1) Reconnecting the street to the surrounding area and reducing the severance that York Way currently causes by creating attractive walking and cycling routes between the Caledonian Road and Kings Cross which would include at least one crossing point on York Way that potentially might take the form of "green link".
- 2) To improve the design and layout of the street by reducing the width of the road, widening the pavements, improving lighting, creating active frontages, introducing greenery and pedestrianising the street as far as possible. Other ideas included creating a public space in front of the former tube station and reducing noise from trains by decking over part of the train tracks.
- 3) As the sites on the street were redeveloped including **a)** local services such as a one-stop shop or a convenience store, **b)** (affordable) workspace including artist studios, **c)** reprovisioning the Skills Centre on York Way, which was about to close, to ensure that local people benefit from the regeneration by gaining employment and knowledge skills and **d)** maximising the opportunity afforded by the (closed) York Way tube station, for example, as a community centre or by using the platforms as an exhibition space.
- 4) The process by which designs for the street were developed need to involve residents from the Dehli Outram Estate, the residential parts of Rufford Rd and Gifford St and the surrounding estates in lieu of there being people to engage with who currently lived on the street.

2. SUMMARY

Following the audit which looked at the quality of the public realm of every street and road in the Knowledge Quarter area, two streets, Phoenix Road and Randell's Road, were identified as offering opportunities for further consideration about the role that they currently play and how they might evolve to play a more valuable role both for the communities in each area and the life of the Knowledge Quarter.

THE CHARRETTES

Two charrettes were conducted on the 20th and 21st September 2016 at which almost 30 people looked first at Phoenix Road (20th) and then Randell's Road (21st). For each charrette some background was provided about the Knowledge Quarter's overall goals for the public realm and the characteristics, qualities and opportunity that each street might offer. Attendees were asked to think about each street and to assess:

- the changes that might be made which would improve the role that they played for the communities that lived nearby and
- would also allow them to contribute more fully to the Knowledge Quarter's overall goals of creating an area that is both better connected and economically and culturally more successful.

Common Themes

Before we look in detail at both streets, there were a small number of themes that were common to both days and shed light on the role that the Knowledge Quarter can and should play as it touches on the lives of those who live, work and visit the Knowledge Quarter area.

- The most significant of these common themes concerned the role that the Knowledge Quarter could and should play. On the one hand there was a view that the communities who lived in the Knowledge Quarter area had a real opportunity to prosper from the presence of the Knowledge Quarter and its partner organisation. The impact of economic clusters was well known and largely positive. The prevailing view, however, was that the Knowledge Quarter had an opportunity to become involved in the local communities that it touched but should take care to respect and not overwhelm local community identity. The interventions that it planned to take should be based on a clear assessment of and understanding of the community's needs and aspirations.

- Individual streets do not operate in a vacuum but need to be looked at in terms of the role that they played within a wider area. This was particularly true of both of the streets chosen for these charrettes. Changes should not be proposed that did not take into account the context of the wider area and how well each street was or could be integrated into it.
- While there were a large number of ideas for both of the streets that were the subjects of these charrettes, there was also an awareness that the issues of adjacent arterial roads should not be overlooked. Phoenix Road was sited close to Euston Road and was currently being promoted as an alternative walking route to it. The problems with Euston Road should not be overlooked by the Knowledge Quarter. Randell's Road was sited just off York Way which was a road that was the source of significant severance between the emerging development of Kings Cross and the communities of Islington to the east. The area was felt to be in transition between its industrial past and a more residential and inner London future but at present the design of York Way served to sever rather than to link and over time this would need to be addressed.



Knowledge Quarter Charrette

PHOENIX ROAD

Phoenix Road was discussed principally in the context of the Somerstown area that it is part of and some argued was at the heart of. There were a number of clear strengths to the existing street including the row of shops and the public house, a variety of other amenities such as the school, the nursery and the church, the large and diverse community nearby as well as the green space outside Oakshott Court. The street was also already being heavily used by pedestrians as a through route between Euston and Kings Cross/St Pancras Stations which was both an opportunity to engage with so many visitors passing through the area and an issue as residents were increasingly disturbed by the noise that these passers-by were making.

As a street that sits at the heart of its local community, there were, however, a number of less positive issues such as the poor usage of the available space (with most of the street given over to carriageway that was relatively little used), dominant on-street parking and the long blank frontage in front of Oakshott Court and the wall which prevents access to the green space and the intimidating doors to the undercroft parking.

Overall the question arose about the future role of the street. Would it continue to have a relatively closed off feel of a street that was part of an estate or would/could it be opened up to become more a part of the fabric of the city. It was generally felt that the changes coming to the area with the advent of Crossrail 2 and HS2 would dictate that, in the next 20 years, Phoenix Road would inevitably be drawn far more into being part of the wider city.

The approaches which emerged from the charrette grappled with the issues of 1) opening up the design of the street while at the same time, 2) understanding and meeting the needs of local people, 3) encouraging greater community interaction and 4) ensuring that the involvement of the Knowledge Quarter was valuable but sensitive to the existing community.

1. The Street

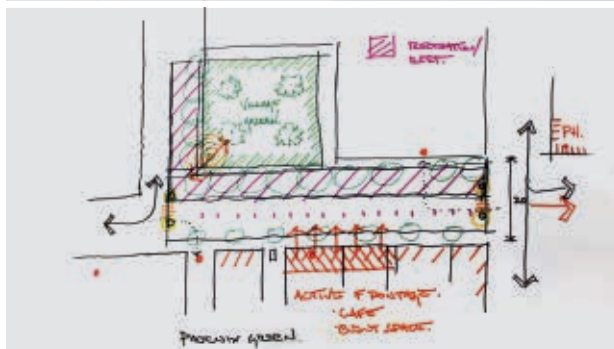
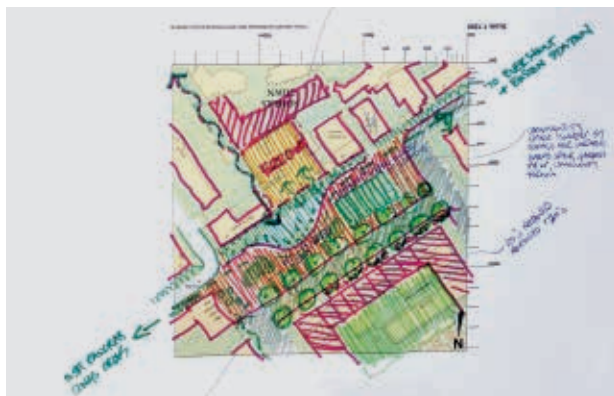
The changes suggested in the charrette aimed to give space over far more to pedestrians, the group who already make the greatest use of the street. Proposals ranged from pedestrianisation (of all or part of its length), the creation of a HomeZone and trialling changes through Play Streets sessions. In addition other public realm improvements were put forward such as introducing seating and benches, better lighting, greening and re-use of car parking space. Throughout, the aim was to add interest and benefit to those who lived there and used the street (such as people dropping off and collecting children from the school or nursery), those walking through the area and those who using the shops in the parade.



Phoenix Road: View of Streetscape

More controversial might be the approaches proposed to open up the built environment. The suggestions were made with the aim of making more of the green space outside Oakshott Court, improving the connections that people could make on the street and making frontages more active and appealing. Some suggestions could, however, have a considerable impact on local people. Proposals included:

- Improving access to the green space by breaking through the wall between the street and the green space and opening it up for greater use by local people and groups.
- Improving frontages on the northern side of the street by making changes to the physical character of the street for example by building residential properties along part of the street currently occupied by the low wall and the undercroft garages.
- Making a wider use of the garages for example as workspace.



Phoenix Road: Designs for the area around Oakshott Court

2. Local Needs

It was important that the Knowledge Quarter ensured that local people were involved in the development of plans and that the community in all its parts and diversity was part of the conversation about change. Care should be taken to ensure that all local residents and in particular those living in the social housing nearby were involved in designing changes locally. Innovative approaches such as setting up a steering group might be needed to ensure that local people were at the heart of what was proposed. Innovative processes could also help deliver change sensitively too with ideas being tested rather than becoming set in stone and continued if successful and abandoned if not.

3. Encouraging Community Interaction

While the strength of the existing community was recognised it was felt that more could be done (potentially through the design of the streetscape) to foster community involvement and interaction. More could be made of the organisations that are based in the neighbourhood, with initiatives for getting communities to mix with each other (eg through sharing food between different cultures or dancing), designing the public spaces in a way that encouraged interaction (eg having outdoors pizza ovens) or creating a "Phoenix Beach" or cinema in the street.

4. Role of the Knowledge Quarter

The Knowledge Quarter partners could play an important role to support the area in ways that would increase skills ("Google in residence at the pub"), help residents start up new businesses or by creating a mini-centre for Knowledge Quarter institutions in the area that put something back into the community. The Knowledge Quarter was advised throughout to be sensitive and to "drop in but not dominate". As well as bringing in its expertise, could the partners also take good things from the local area for example by the British Library having an exhibition about Somerstown.

RANDELL'S ROAD

Randell's Road currently has little of the life and character of Phoenix Road but its position on the edge of the redevelopment of Kings Cross and at the border of Camden and Islington offers opportunities for the street to provide a link between the two worlds that sit either side of York Way. Although there were few residents with an immediate stake in Randell's Road, its evolution into a place that people could comfortably move through, coupled with the redevelopment of two major sites that had been identified by Islington Council, meant that in the future it may become far more widely used.

The charrette recognised that the current role of the street was largely industrial with meanwhile light industrial uses (such as the car wash) and the heavier industrial usage of the cement works. Carriageway dominates the overall space and the kerb is lined with parked cars. The relatively few pedestrians pick their way along narrow pavements that do not fit with their desire lines before trying to cross the heavily trafficked and fast moving York Way. The street tends to emphasise the industrial character of York Way and does little to recognise either the large residential areas of private housing and estates that stretch east to the Caledonian Road or Bingfield Park which is adjacent to the street.

It was felt, however, that this predominantly industrial character was coming to an end with the two significant sites on the street identified for development coupled with the enormous changes that were already occurring in the area with the redevelopment of Kings Cross. This meant that in the future the street could and should play a far greater role as a space for people both in terms of its design and its uses.

As with Phoenix Road the idea of connectivity was a key theme and, as the built environment of the street was more open to change, there were many ideas as to how the whole character and purpose of the street could be altered. There was a recognition that until relatively recently Randell's Road had been part of a more traditional street pattern. It had not been until the early 1960s and the creation of the Dehli Outram estate to the south that this had disappeared and what was felt to be a less coherent street pattern was created.

The ideas that arose fell into four broad categories, **1)** the relationship of the street to the surrounding area, **2)** the design and layout of the street, **3)** the role that the redevelopment of the buildings in it could play and **4)** the process by which designs for the street might be developed.

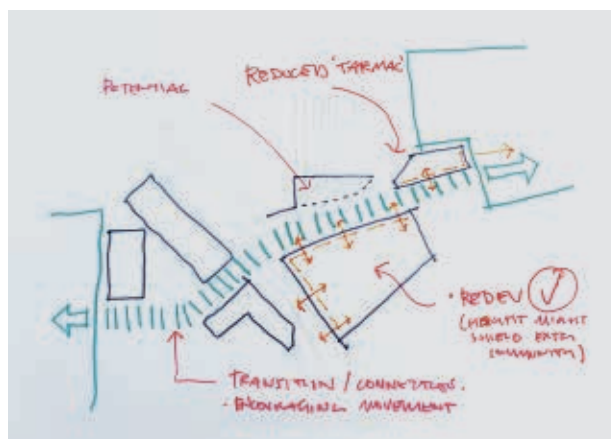
1. Links to the Wider Area

As we have noted, there was a sense in the charrette of a large gulf between the Kings Cross development to the west and the residential areas to the east of Randell's Road and this sense of disconnection was exacerbated by the severance that York Way currently causes. To overcome this, suggestions were made as part of an overall goal of creating attractive walking and cycling routes between the Caledonian Road and Kings Cross. This might be done by recreating elements of the earlier street pattern such as extending Bingfield Street far more legibly through the Dehli Outram Estate, creating a high quality east-west cycling route and creating at least one crossing point on York Way that potentially might take the form of "green link".



2. Street Design

To make Randell's Road more people friendly, ideas included reducing the width of the road, widening the pavements, improving lighting, creating active frontages, introducing greenery and pedestrianising the street as far as possible. There was support for the idea of creating a public space in front of the former tube station for use by pedestrians with a number of walking routes radiating from it. One approach considered reducing noise from trains by decking over part of the train tracks that are currently open and exposed. The decking created could be enhanced with greenery.



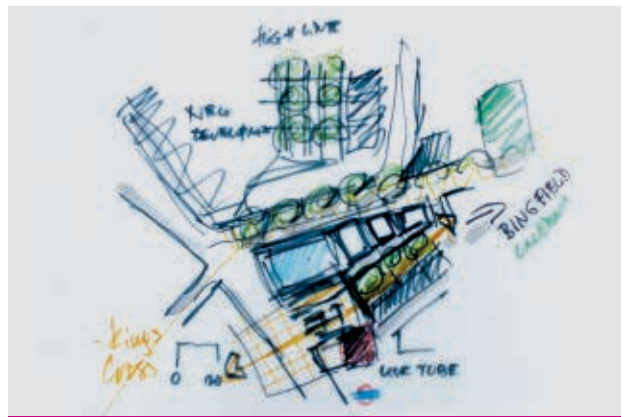
2 | SUMMARY

RANDELL'S ROAD

3. Redevelopment

There were a number of considerations for the development sites that had been identified which included:

- Providing local services such as a one-stop shop or a convenience store.
- Creating (affordable) workspace which was in increasingly short supply in inner London. It was noted that artist studios were absent from the Kings Cross development and provision was needed locally. Also needed was provision for business start-ups, exhibition space and maker space.
- As well as the two development sites, it was also noted that the Skills Centre on York Way was set to close and it was felt important to retain the role it performs as a way ensuring that local people benefit from the regeneration by gaining employment and knowledge skills.
- There was also an opportunity afforded by the (closed) York Way tube station. If it was not going to be re-opened it might be re-imagined as a community centre and by using the platforms as an exhibition space. This location could be further enhanced by the presence of the public square and the radiating walking routes.



Re-imagining Randell's Road as a place for people

4. The Process of Change

Although there were few residents on Randell's Road itself, many people lived on the nearby Dehli Outram Estate and in the residential parts of Rufford Rd and Gifford St and it was important to involve them in any further development of ideas. The role of the Knowledge Quarter was seen as helping to recreate Randell's Road as "a bridge to the Knowledge Quarter and the building on the Kings Cross site in the west" and to consider becoming involved through the pro-bono donation of skills. As with Phoenix Road it was important to be sensitive to the people and organisations that were already active in the local area.

3. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the charrettes that took place on 20th/21st September 2016 at the Digital Catapult in the Euston Road where the two streets, Phoenix Road and Randell's Road were discussed in detail. The aim was to understand the role that they currently play and what opportunities existed for enhancement so that their roles as places could be more fully realised.

The selection of these two streets came as a result of a public realm audit of all the streets in the Knowledge Quarter area that had been undertaken earlier in 2016. Every street was assessed in terms of its key attributes, the role it plays, the quality of the environment and the opportunities that existed for enhancement and improvement.

Randell's Road and Phoenix Road were highlighted as being places where there were real opportunities for improvement. Both acted as examples of rather different issues in terms of where they are sited and the amount of change that is occurring around them.

In this report, we will understand a little more about why they were selected for the charrettes, the ambitions and purpose of the charrette and then the discussions that occurred about each in terms of the role they currently play and how that might change, the importance of their location within the Knowledge Quarter and the discussion and ideas that flowed out of the charrettes themselves

4. ROLE OF A CHARRETTE

What is a Charrette?

The word charrette is French for “cart” or “chariot”. In French arts schools in the 19th century it was not unusual for student architects to continue working in teams right up until the deadline of their term, when the charrette would be wheeled amongst students to pick up their scale models and other work for review while they each worked furiously to apply their finishing touches, they were said to be working ‘en charrette’ or ‘in the cart’.

A charrette is “an intensive planning session where citizens, designers and others collaborate on a vision for future development.”

Peter Murray

Purpose of The Knowledge Quarter Charrettes

To explore a wide array of opportunities and design directions for a critical area of interest/investment in the Knowledge Quarter.

To use the findings to write a full report to provide a strong foundation for the Knowledge Quarter to move forward to develop policy initiatives and respond to funding opportunities.

To bring together a cross-disciplinary group of including local architects, designers, town planners, property developers, academics, local community leaders, local councils, Knowledge Quarter partners and members of the community to share ideas and network.



5. THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHARRETTES

The charrettes were undertaken across two days the 20th (Day 1: focus on Phoenix Road) and 21st (Day 2: focus on Randell's Road) September 2016. Each day ran from 8.30am to 1pm had a similar structure of:

Welcome and Introduction

Day 1
Peter Murray, Chairman
New London Architecture

Day 2
Paul Lincoln, Acting Chief Executive
Landscape Institute

Introduction to the Knowledge Quarter

Jodie Eastwood
Knowledge Quarter

Briefing on days selected area

Ciron Edward, Associate Director,
Fluid and Soundings

Presentations

Day 1
Ruth Heritage, Creative Director
They Eat Culture

Day 2
Henry Holme, LIVE Executive
Pavegen

Charrette in practise briefing

Day 1
Peter Murray, Chairman
New London Architecture

Day 2
Paul Lincoln, Acting Chief Executive
Landscape Institute

9.40 am onwards

Breakout sessions commence
Breakout sessions reconvene
Groups to feedback
Summary and next steps

6. BACKGROUND: THE KNOWLEDGE QUARTER PUBLIC REALM AUDIT

The charrettes were a culmination of a longer piece of work by the Knowledge Quarter to look at the quality of the public realm across the area that it covers.

As part of its objectives for 2016 the Knowledge Quarter Board in consultation with the Public Realm, Environment and Sustainability Sub Group allocated Knowledge Quarter funds for the delivery of a Public Realm Audit. The Public Realm Audit was developed to provide a baseline for the quality of the public realm within the Knowledge Quarter. The audit includes research into public realm activities and improvements being undertaken by the London boroughs of Camden and Islington, Transport for London and significant landowners or agencies.

This important piece of research has provided evidence to develop public realm policy interventions, and will assist the Knowledge Quarter in selecting areas that should be prioritised for funding and investment.

The key task within the audit was a visual survey of all areas of public realm within the study area. This was undertaken by a team that visited all 604 streets within the defined boundaries.

Each street was audited in a similar way using a standard public realm assessment form that rated them in terms of:

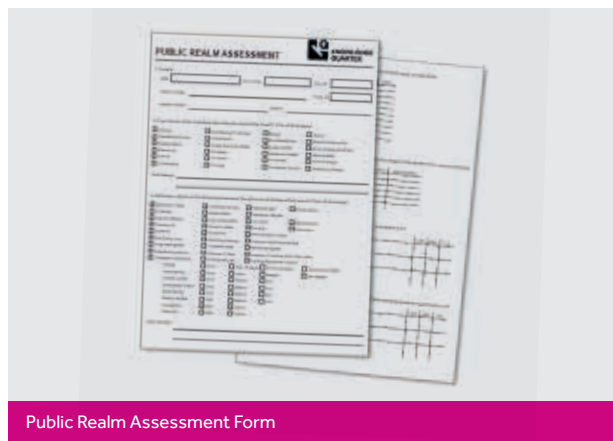
- Feel, first impressions and sense of place
- Attributes including quality of the public realm, access and movement, comfort and personal safety/security and connectivity.
- Land Use – the predominant use of the surrounding buildings
- Street Use – the predominant users of the street such as pedestrians, cyclists, etc
- Challenges or problems
- Opportunities

A database was created of all the findings and this was linked to more than 1,500 photographs which were taken of the streetscene and locations that were felt to be of interest.

Using the areas identified from the public realm audit the Knowledge Quarter has planned this public realm charrette in order to re-imagine two shortlisted areas 1. Phoenix Rd and 2. Randell's Road.



Knowledge Quarter Public Realm Audit: Map of the streets covered



Public Realm Assessment Form

7. THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHARRETTES

7.1. PHOENIX ROAD ►

BACKGROUND

The Public Realm Audit

To act as a catalyst to the discussion, information was provided about each of the streets being studied in terms of the findings of the public realm audit, photographs of the street and a site plan.

Overall Opportunity

Phoenix Rd was identified as an opportunity owing to its central location in Somerstown, the presence of a number of community amenities and community activities, its role as a through route for those on foot and those cycling and its proximity to KQ partners nearby including the British Library and the Francis Crick Institute (where construction was just being completed at the time). It was also felt to be open to improvement as the street's overall character was one of being a functional rather than a flourishing space and the changes that had occurred to date had been piecemeal in their approach.

The Public Realm audit had characterised Phoenix Rd as:

Category

Mixed quality residential

Wider Area Description

Large characterful area of principally social housing, combining dense residential usage with vibrant street markets, shopping parades and active local communities with community centres and schools. Latterly this residential role has been supplemented with large Knowledge Quarter developments such as the British Library and the Francis Crick Institute. Contains a number of important cycle routes through the area.

Phoenix Road Usage

- Residential, Commercial, Green Space, Institutional

Phoenix Road Feel

- Peaceful/calm/quiet
- For study
- Modest
- For families
- Mixed heritage (buildings)
- Blank façades

Phoenix Road Attributes

- Places to sit
- Long views ahead
- Established greening
- Presence of trees
- Buildings set back
- Buildings against the footway
- Traffic calmed

Specific opportunities that were identified throughout the length of the street were:

South

Continuous row of community focused uses:

- Church with outside seating spaces
- Infant school (expanding)
- Convent
- Secondary school
- Tutoring

North

Continuous residential uses:

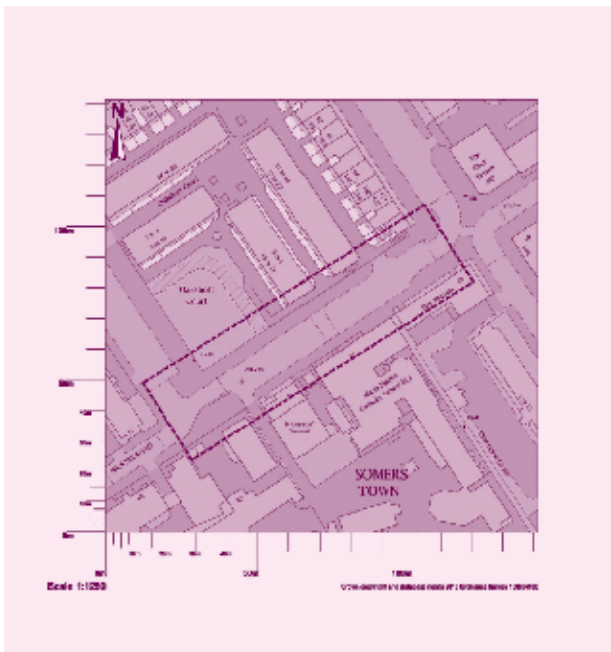
- Residential amenity space
- Excess carriageway
- Undercroft garages

East

Continuous residential uses:

- Inactive frontage
- Recommended pedestrian route

Phoenix Road Site Plan



Phoenix Road aerial view



Phoenix Road looking west



Phoenix Road looking east (excess carriageway)

WIDER AREA CONTEXT

Phoenix Road as Part of the Wider Area

Ahead of the discussion of Phoenix Road itself and how it might evolve, issues were raised about its location in an area that has changed rapidly in recent years and was due for significant further change.

The Existing Communities

There were a concerns about the impact of so much change on the existing community in Somerstown and even questions as to whether, in spite of its strong sense of identity, it can survive in such a prime location sitting as it does between three main stations that are the subject of enormous investment. These concerns included how to integrate change whilst protecting or safeguarding what is already there in terms of community and cultural infrastructure. Changes to Phoenix Road offered opportunities to “give space to the community” and encourage them to take ownership of the area that they lived in before others were welcomed in even more. Throughout it was important to consider how the local community can benefit from the changes that are occurring. A focal point at present for this issue are the concerns of local people at the increase in footfall from people moving from Euston Station to Kings Cross Station and its the impact on the area in terms of noise and of a presence of passers-by who do not have connection to the community.

Local Needs

Some felt that it was important to understand in detail the nature of local needs (employment, social infrastructure, environmental improvements) as ideas and potential approaches were developed for the area. There was a danger that individuals could feel left behind and the question was how to expand their horizons about change in the area.

Wide Involvement

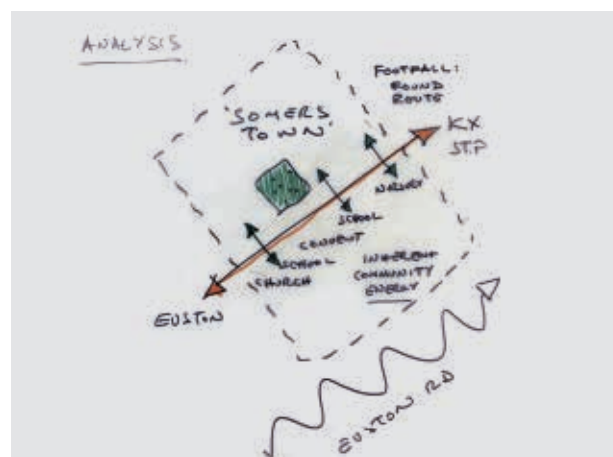
The amount of activity in the area both at a community level and from development offered opportunities for widespread involvement. Ideas that came forward included community organisations sharing their areas of interest and getting community organisations to curate exhibitions and to develop projects as well as creating a space that was able to make the relationships between cultural organisations and local communities as strong and tangible as possible.

Impact of Change

The construction and disruption associated with so change for up to the next two decades was in danger of creating a “second rate environment for a great period of time”.

Connectivity

A major theme of this charrette was the issue of connectivity and in particular the link between Kings Cross and Euston whose usage by pedestrians has grown rapidly in recent years. It was important to consider the role that alternatives to the Euston Road could and should play and the impact of decisions about that on an area such as Somerstown and a location within it such as Phoenix Road. For a cluster such as the Knowledge Quarter to succeed, good connectivity is important and re-establishing the areas within the cluster as part of the city fabric is important. For those walking along this route who may be visitors to London, there was a potential for them to get a glimpse of the real London. While the pedestrian traffic through the area at the minute may be appear disruptive, opportunities may arise for the local area and community benefit from it such as selling products from a community garden to those walking between the stations.



Neighbouring Arterial Routes - Euston Road

Neighbouring Arterial Routes

In making improvements to the surrounding streets and neighbourhoods and alternative walking routes between the stations it was felt to be important not to forget the adjacent main arteries such as the Euston Road which were beset with problems relating to noise and air pollution and the impact of heavy volumes of traffic. These too were in need of significant improvement in the longer term and it was felt that "no city has been successful if it turns it back on a major artery". The poor quality of the Euston Road was why Terry Farrell considered it as part of his plans for the Marylebone Road to Euston Road proposals at the early part of the century¹ and why architects of the British Library so clearly wanted to close it off from Euston Road.



Neighbouring Arterial Routes - Euston Road

Somerstown

Some felt that the nature of the area that Phoenix Road sits in and its perception as being part of an "estate" was revealing of the separate nature of the area and its lack of connection to the urban grain of the city. The residential area was seen as relatively closed in and hemmed in, as an "island", and an aim of any project could be to bring the area more into the city. Somerstown was considered in relation to the character of other adjacent areas. South along Euston Road was seen as much denser but with more publicly accessible open spaces. Somerstown by contrast and north of the Euston Rd was seen as less dense and having less accessible open spaces.

Development pressure and in particular changes in Kings Cross were dragging the centre of gravity of the area northwards away from Euston Road. This and other changes made Somerstown feel increasingly hemmed in and squeezed to such a degree that it was commented

that "it's almost as if its days are numbered". It was felt that at the end of the current programme of development, 20 years from now, the area will be looked at as part of the city and will be far more accessible.

The Wider Area

Some were concerned about the focus on this one street in the neighbourhood and that it would be preferable if the charrette had considered a wide area owing to the impact of major planned infrastructure projects on the area such as HS2 and Crossrail 2. Overall there is a need to look at future connections and opportunities around HS2 and Crossrail 2. This is particularly relevant as it is understood that the redevelopment proposals for Euston Station as part of HS2 include improving permeability by creating new entrances and improved permeability through Euston Station.

Opportunities for Wider Improvement

The development of walking routes through the area and the footfall created offered the opportunities to create significant numbers of local jobs in what could become more of a high street.

Improving the Public Realm

The improvements to the public realm could serve to alter the perceptions that residents might have in relation to change in their area and help them understand how this change can be a benefit to them. Improvements such as creating a Phoenix Square could serve to bring people together in a way that does not currently occur and thus enhance community in the area.

The Environment

Issues raised included how to improve the environment such as addressing air quality problems with trees and greening both in Phoenix Road and more widely across Somerstown. The area was seen as one of the most polluted in London. There were many ways that advice and information could be provided to people such as through live online maps of air pollution hot spots along with suggestions of cleaner routes. These could be made available to people living, working or moving through the area and help bring a new focus to different streets that offered cleaner air alternatives to main roads.

WIDER AREA CONTEXT

The Role of the Knowledge Quarter

The role of the institutions of the Knowledge Quarter and its impact on neighbouring communities was raised amid concerns that the area could end up being viewed and treated as principally as a campus for the Knowledge Quarter.

- There could be for example a tension between the institutions and residents. Both the Francis Crick Institute and British Library were in Somerstown but that was not known or expressed.
- Overall there was an opportunity for the Knowledge Quarter to become involved locally while at the same time respecting and not overwhelming the local community identity and its primary focus should be on the community. The aspiration for the Knowledge Quarter should be about developing and improving relationships with and between the community and residents.
- It was felt that the Knowledge Quarter needed to look at the assets of the community and assess how it could enhance them and plan its interventions on the basis of having a clear understanding of the community's needs. It was believed that there were a number of arts and cultural and digital conversations going on at present and an early role for the Knowledge Quarter might be to help enable them.
- To ensure that local people were engaged and involved, the next step should be a design charrette in Somerstown. Involving at this stage (of these charrettes) would have been valuable to understand what the community sees as a threat or as a gain from redevelopment and so that the local community is treated as a partner rather than it is the Knowledge Quarter "looking down to them".
- By contrast, others felt that the designation of the wider area as an Innovation District should simply be acknowledged and that this would inevitably bring about positive change for the area. Clusters are known to perform economically better than other areas. The active involvement of the Knowledge Quarter in the area offered the opportunity to bring investment as well as educational and entrepreneurial opportunities and allowed it to focus its community outreach in a number of different ways to areas going through periods of change.
- The proximity of such a strong area as Somerstown also offered the Knowledge Quarter opportunities to experiment and to learn how best to become involved in local areas. Becoming actively involved in Somerstown could allow understanding of how different areas could work, interacting with them and understanding the functions that Knowledge Quarter could perform that bring public realm closer to the community. Involvement can in itself be a way to bring the Knowledge Quarter to the notice and benefit of local organisations and communities and gain expertise on bridging the gap between the cultural institutions in the area and the local community

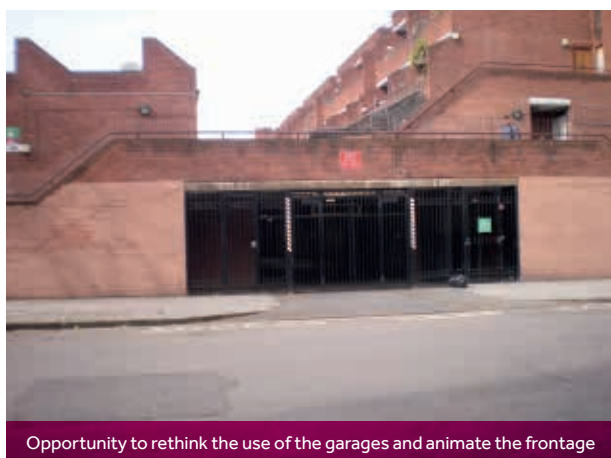
THE CHARACTER OF PHOENIX ROAD

There was general consensus about a number of characteristics and uses of the street that needed to be borne in mind in any changes and which could act as both constraints and opportunities:

- The position of Phoenix Road as being at the heart of Somerstown and the relatively impenetrable nature of the streets in the area coupled with the desire to make these connections clearer and to animate the street better.
- The dense residential character of Phoenix Road.
- Its current streetscape with its lack of active frontages deters communication and interaction and the existing residential such as Oakshott Court gives little back to the street and means that there is no activity on to the street in that area. The aim should be to facilitate more usage by people.
- The design of the green space outside Oakshott Court and the presence of the wall which wraps around it and concerns about how well used and publicly accessible it is.
- Its role in the walking route between Kings Cross and Euston stations and the emerging issue of the noise that pedestrians are making.
- The presence of the garages and their current value and the role that they might be able to play in a re-imagined streetscape.
- To recognise that this location is unique and not simply part of Kings Cross. To encourage development that is in tune with the existing character as part of Somerstown.
- Recognising the role of making changes to Phoenix Road as the start of the Knowledge Quarter's involvement in delivering change across the local area and thus emphasising its significance and the importance of taking the right approach.



Green space around Oakshott Court and the low wall



Opportunity to rethink the use of the garages and animate the frontage

THE OPPORTUNITIES CHANGE BRINGS – PEOPLE & PROCESSES

Various approaches were suggested as to the processes by which change could occur in Phoenix Road. This could mean the degree to which local people and groups led the process of change...

- Turning over the planning for the future of the site to local people for them to redesign.
- Ensuring local people were involved in the development of plans that may be carried out over a very long period of up to 20 years.
- Ensuring that the community in all its parts and diversity was part of the conversation about change and that the residents who are largely living in social housing are brought along with the process. This would involve the residents, the residents associations, the community groups and other people such as mums at the local schools, the public house and the church.
- To crowd source ideas from the community and/or undertake brainstorms with them.
- There were specific suggestions of how local people could be involved and able to give direction to change. One idea was for the creation of a steering group of local community group leaders who would be able to develop a programme of activities that was run by community groups and organised and influenced and led by those community groups. The programme of events could very much come from those who volunteer within the community and fit on top of the work they already do. The program could be a mix of internal or community type events and then external ones involving the Knowledge Quarter partners.
- Treating the space as a test-bed for ideas and trialling a diverse set of interventions on a temporary basis or incrementally as approaches do or do not turn out to be successful. These might include market stalls, moveable furniture, Dr. Bike sessions, a children's day with football in the street, a new market day, car-free day once a week or once a month, a village fete once a year on the Oakshott Court green space. Making these changes on a temporary basis as part of a programme of testing and evaluation would allow decisions to be made about whether to continue with them or not.
- Making more of the involvement of the organisations that are based in the neighbourhood such as doing something in the new buildings that are proposed for the school. Here there is potentially the opportunity to make an attractive cafe facility as part of the frontage of the school onto the street or creating an event space either as part of an active frontage or in a big room in the school where activities such as an artist in residence could be seen working or exhibiting. Would the nuns in the convent like to be more involved in the local area and could this be facilitated on the street? Getting local people to engage more with each other as part of the aims of making changes and improvements in the street. Ideas for this included:
 - Getting communities to mix with each other through sharing food as a way of learning about each others' cultures.
 - Involving people more in activities in public in the area such as having outdoors pizza ovens and/or a tandoori oven provided as part of the infrastructure that is created that people could use themselves or installing a pottery kiln.
 - Emulating the Plaza Del Sol in Barcelona with a "Phoenix Beach" or cinema in the street.
 - Events based around dancing or something similar that can help people really to mix and interact better.

THE OPPORTUNITIES CHANGE BRINGS – PEOPLE & PROCESSES...

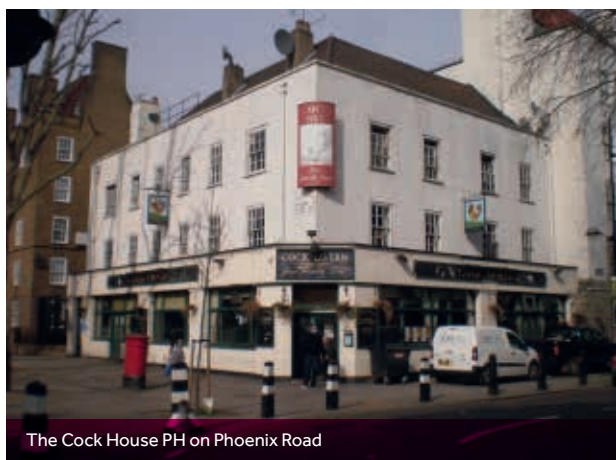
...AND THE INVOLVEMENT THAT KNOWLEDGE QUARTER PARTNERS MIGHT HAVE.

- Knowledge Quarter members becoming more engaged and present in the local area for example with "Google in residence at the Convent" or "The Knowledge Quarter could open an office on the estate for example upstairs in the pub." The Knowledge Quarter would need to determine an appropriate level of involvement in the area "it can drop in, but can't be too predominant". More generally this would reflect the idea of events and activities in the area focusing primarily on the internal needs of the community and then secondarily addressing/supporting external influences. It was felt to be important that this involvement and engagement is a two-way street; could for example the British Library have an exhibition about Somerstown?
- Creating a mini-centre for the Knowledge Quarter institutions in the area and thus putting something back into the community. In such a centre, activities such as community college classes could occur both during the daytime and in the evening. Examples of this might include the British Museum doing a piece of work with the Eritrean community. Looking at the anthropological collection and identifying elements that are relevant to their community.
- Alternatively space in the area/street could be programmed for pop-ups and as a way of bringing the Knowledge Quarter into the streets.
- Encouraging a three-way conversation between the residents, the community and the Knowledge Quarter academics and employees and ensuring that all parties gain from the exchanges.
- Create opportunities for people to start up new businesses (whilst acknowledging that significant support is needed when businesses start) offering expertise and assistance in starting new businesses. This could also include providing practical infrastructure such as new stalls and activities that would extend the current market and offer help to other new local businesses and facilitate exchange, access to information, knowledge exchange and provide links to decision makers.
- At the same time as suggestions were being made, there were concerns that any new ideas needed to fit in with the current role and character of the street and that "the area is too ingrained in residential to become a tech-hub" and it was important to ensure that residents were not inconvenienced by having popular uses for the street immediately adjacent to where they lived.

IDEAS FOR CHANGE

There were many suggestions as to how Phoenix Road could evolve coupled with some notes of caution about the ideas that were being proposed.

- Provide support for the shopping parade to the east of Chalton Street along with other activities to bring to life the shops on the parade that are currently closed or making greater use of existing amenities (for example by having Google in the public house).
- Building on the usage of Phoenix Road as part of the east-west walking route through the area and attempting to make that as attractive and interesting as possible – this might lend itself to other commercial opportunities for local people.
- Ideas about changes to the role and purpose of the street included:
 - Taking an approach that sought to design something that is simple and not too complex. A road closure that becomes a blank canvas for local people.
 - **Pedestrianisation.** This would be partly in response to the high numbers of people already using Phoenix Road as part of the walking route between the stations. This could involve closing part or all of the road to through traffic and having access only/servicing for the undercroft parking and into the school along with the development of a larger green space in front of the park and the removal of the adjacent carriageway.
 - **HomeZone.** The creation of a HomeZone with pavements that are wide enough for children to play there so that the area becomes more of a space for people.
 - **Play Streets.** The development of a programme of Play Streets events which would involve periods of the street being closed to motor vehicles.
 - **Improved Connectivity.** Creating links through the public realm that bring the residential and the schools together. The places where people gather could be nearer to the community spaces such as the school. Wayfinding could also be improved through signage. A number of approaches were discussed such as the use of more subtle forms of wayfinding and placemaking. Examples were given from Southwark such as orange lampposts in Southwark for the Tate Modern opening and pink tables/chairs in a public space in Southwark (from the local BID Better Bankside) which were put out each morning and could help make the space more active.



The Cock House PH on Phoenix Road



Ideas about the evolution of what went on in Phoenix Road included:

- On-street parking could also be used more creatively such as by the creation of Parklettes and putting down Astroturf to show how the street could change in character in the longer term.
- Installing seating and benches would be useful for those waiting for children after school but with the caveat that they can also be potentially associated with antisocial behaviour alter in the evening.
- Creating a flexible space that could accommodate various uses by different communities and community groups.
- Creating space for specific usages such as a "Spillout space for the pub" where all sorts of different activities could occur.
- Make use of some of the skills of Knowledge Quarter partners and create an intelligent area. Included could be: sensors with geosensing, a Knowledge Bank exchange, digital Information on bins, air pollution monitors, what's on information, video installations, intelligent wayfinding, street furniture with wifi, a space with access to a 3-D printer, places to charge a phone and interactive street furniture.
- Greening associated with pedestrianisation such as creating a series of linear pavements with grass between them along with other greening such as vertical walls or planted walls and, beehives on the roofs. An aim could be to create a "carbon sink of tree planting".
- Celebrating/building on the heritage of the area. There is an opportunity to bring out more of the history and culture of the area and the links to this being Dickens' birthplace.
- Creating a Gateway to the area with a suggestion that could be an entrance to a place that might be known as Phoenix Green with a number of community elements such as an event platform/stage. This idea of creating a Village Green of some sort could lead to the development of a programme of large to small events with peaks and troughs of activity and with a rhythm to them. Many of the events would be internal to the local community but every once in a while there would be an event with an have an external influence. The idea of the Village Green was viewed as a very traditional English way to celebrate community and would help address the issue of there being no local point or heart at present.
- Making improvements to street lighting which might also help to reduce anti-social behaviour.
- Creating a piece of static or changing public art in the front.
- Ensuring that a democratic and public space was created that had different types of people using it and was a contrast to More London which is privately owned public space.
- Noise. Alternative surfaces might be able to reduce the impact of noise. Tarmac for example might be quieter to accommodate the noise of wheeled suitcases.

IDEAS FOR CHANGE

Placemaking & Public Realm Improvements

- Creating a space in front of the community area and creating more coherence along this frontage by, for example, breaking through the wall between the street and the green space and opening it up for greater use.
- Opening up the green space and broadening its use by institutions, organisations and the local community.
- Maximising public accessible green space without it feeling like a loss for residents.
- Develop the use of the green space to include a community garden with food grown in surrounding allotments; this might be along the lines of the Eastern market in Detroit. Care needs to be taken through to

- Creating a community kitchen or garden to make the most of the footfall through the area and selling local produce such as honey, gin and eggs to people passing through; the school and its students could be involved in aspects of the garden and food growing.
- Making changes to the physical character of the street for example by constructing a two-storey building in front of the green space and using that to activate the street or putting a building on the corner of the green space.
- Redevelop the housing of Oakshott Court with 100% retained in order to create a new frontage for this space and "a series of moments along Oakshott Court".
- Creating (affordable) workspace as a replacement for the garages in the undercroft car parking (as is occurring in other former car parks across London²) and increasing their impact by extending them along the edges of the buildings so that they helped to activate the frontage.

Rethinking Phoenix Road – greening, people space, lighting, air quality and commercial opportunities

7. THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHARRETTES

7.2. RANDELL'S ROAD ▶

BACKGROUND

The Opportunity. Randell's Rd had been identified as an owing to its proximity to the Argent development in Kings Cross, its potential to offer active travel routes into the site from the east and the residential areas as well as the issues posed by the current industrial/commercial character of the street, the residential areas that surrounded it and the enormous amount of change that was occurring.

The Public Realm audit had characterised Randell's Rd as:

Category

Mixed quality residential

Wider Area Description

Large area characterised by social housing and estates spanning a wide range of eras, but with an emphasis on building since the 1960s. The estates are largely well maintained and have generous amounts of green space, although clutter, railings and some uninviting pockets detract from the area. This is supplemented by a number of parks and other green spaces, for example Edward Square, and the amenity of the Regents Canal. Significant volumes of new housing are being created in the area. The community centre attracts more people to area, rather than a route for just passing through.

Randell's Road Usage

- Commercial, link between new Argent development and other residential areas.

Randell's Road Feel

- Unsafe (personal safety)
- Uninviting, unsafe (traffic)
- Vehicle dominated
- For passing through
- Blank façades

Randell's Road Attributes

- Cluttered
- Traditional highway
- Fast moving traffic

Specific opportunities that were identified throughout the length of the street were:

Opportunity/Context

- Undergoing enormous change
- Connecting existing communities to Kings Cross
- Medium / long term opportunity to refocus on people

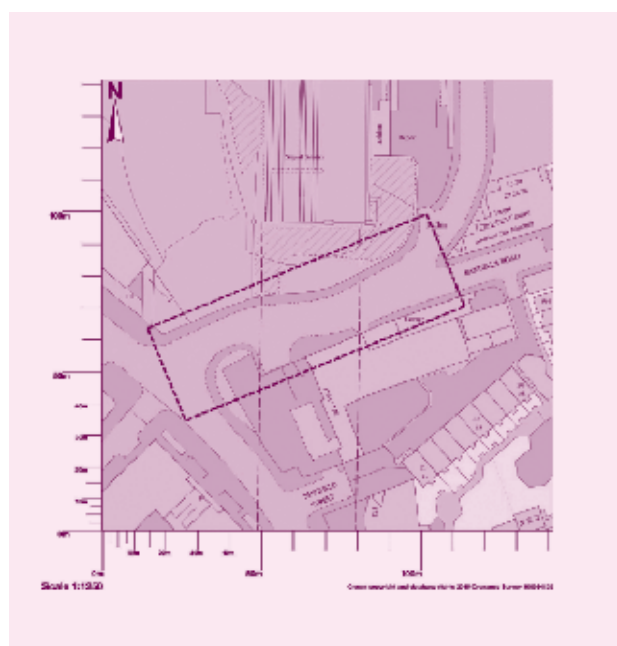
West

- Pedestrian desire line and no crossing
- Traffic dominated:
 - Unmanaged parking and vehicle usage
 - HGVs
- Industrial uses (construction training and cement works)

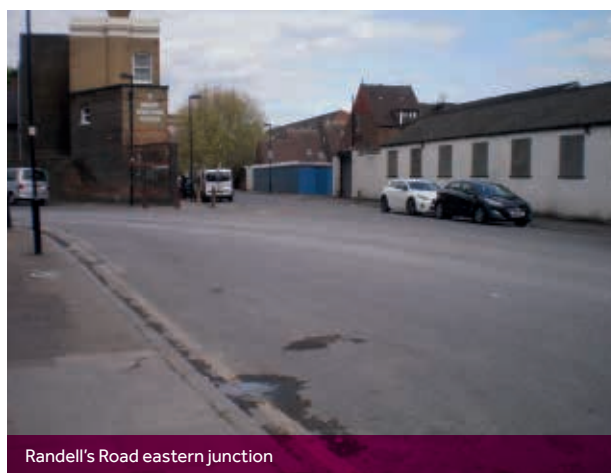
East

- Changing level
- Light industrial uses and blank facades
- Excess carriageway
- Community uses (pre-school and open space)

Randell's Road Site Plan



Randell's Road aerial view



Randell's Road eastern junction



Randell's Road junction with York Way

WIDER AREA CONTEXT

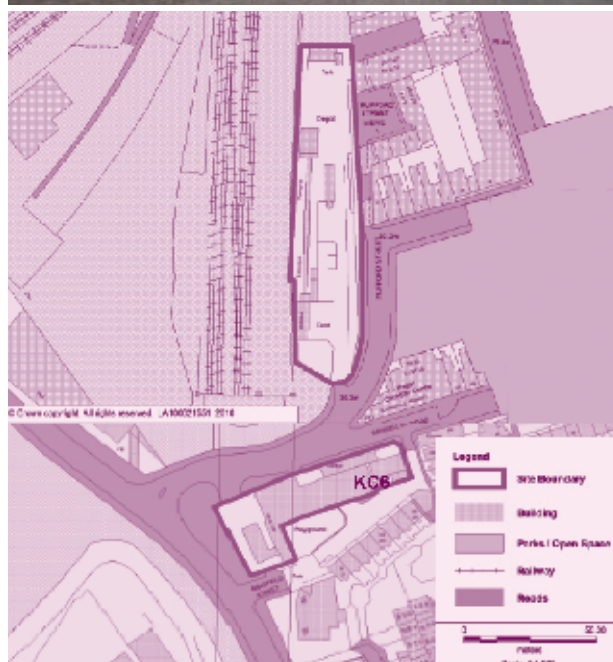
A number of issues were raised about Randell's Road in the context of a wider area that is changing rapidly.



Randell's Road. Current view towards the Kings Cross development

- The sheer pace of change in the area was noted along with a sense that the focus of change was on the Argent site to the west of York Way with relatively little change having occurred to date on the Islington side to the east.
- York Way plays an important role as a boundary road between the boroughs of Camden and Islington. In addition, owing to its width and design and the volumes of traffic using it (including HGVs) it serves to sever the area it runs through and to contain the Argent development and to keep it distinct and separate from the surrounding area.
- There was a difference in character between the Kings Cross development to the west and the areas to the east of York Way which were felt to have an urban grain and a pattern of streets that were different from the new developments to the west. Immediately to the east of York Way the area was seen as having a more "estate-like atmosphere with modernist architecture and green spaces" and then on towards Caledonian Road which was felt to have a "more historic pattern of gardens and streets". As well as being architectural, these differences were felt to be social with the need to integrate this area of social housing that sits between Islington east of the Caledonian Rd and Kings Cross to the west of York Way "we shouldn't forget the clash of worlds...at the moment the whole area is sandwiched between Islington and the alien area in Kings Cross."

- Although there were some concerns about the Kings Cross development migrating east and starting to colonise the areas to the east of York Way, there was a far stronger desire to create links across York Way and to help connect the two areas. The key theme of discussion in the charrette was how to reduce this physical and social severance that the redevelopment at Kings Cross was in danger of exacerbating. The aims was suggest improvements to Randell's Road that would bring together different communities through a shared sense of location whether this was done by physical connections across York Way or uses that encouraged mixed communities through for example affordable workspace.
- The opportunity for change that the improvements to Randell's Road offered were enhanced by the fact that 57-65 Randell's Road is identified as a development site (KC6 176-178 York Way) in the Islington Council Site Allocations Direction of Travel (from March 2012)³. Redevelopment of this plot was seen as a good opportunity to change the character of the area more generally and, as well as innovative approaches to re-providing workspace, the residential elements could also provide much needed co-living or co-worker space.
- It was also noted that the Cemex site, which is in Rufford St but whose vehicular entrance currently opens on to Randell's Road, was also identified as a development site (KC4) in the same report. There were concerns that owing to other major infrastructure projects such as HS2 there would be a continuing need to retain for the Cemex site.



Location of the KC4 (Cemex) and KC6 (176-178, York Way) sites (Islington Council)

THE OPPORTUNITIES CHANGE BRINGS

Making changes to Randell's Road offered opportunities to address the issues that had been highlighted in a number of ways.

Involving Local People

In terms of who would be involved, there was encouragement to involve local people from the nearby Dehli Outram Estate and the residential parts of Rufford Rd and Gifford St in any further development of ideas.

Approaches to Development

Overall there was felt to be a broad choice for redevelopment of:

- 1) having a strong structural intervention, considering the building of a car park and large scale architecture which would turn its back to York Way OR
- 2) The potential of a link between Islington and Camden or as a gateway to link the Argent development beyond York Way.

Almost all of the subsequent discussion focused making these connections between the east and west.

Providing Local Services

Creating local services such as a one-stop shop or convenience store. This was supported by the KC6 allocation "A small element of other employment uses could include retail and/or food & drink services."

Improving East-West Connections

The idea of connectivity across the wider area took a number of forms but the dominant desire was to create attractive walking routes between the Caledonian Road and Kings Cross. The aim was to recreate the permeability that had existed in the past but had been lost in post-war development. Ideas included:

- Extending Bingfield Street far more legibly through the Dehli Outram Estate so that it became a far more natural east-west walking route. Currently the estate was felt to exclude people rather than invite them in.
- Creating infrastructure that clearly encouraged and enabled east-west cycling.
- Made improvements to crossing York Way and connections between the Kings Cross development and the area to the east. This might take the form of "green link" with elements of greening such as SUDS, tree planting and other forms.



Randell's Road: Current view of Bingfield Street



Randell's Road: Current view of the crossing over York Way

7.2 | RANDELL'S ROAD CHARRETTE



Current view Kings Cross Construction Skills Centre



Currently disused York Road tube station

Creating Workspace

The KC6 site allocation envisages the re-provisioning of business floor space (B1) and there were a number of thoughts about the types of workspace that was needed and which could provide a useful role in the area including:

- Provision for artists who need larger spaces in which to work and the unavailability of those larger spaces being part of what is pushing artists out of London. It was noted that there were no areas for artist studios in the Kings Cross development and that it was uncommon not to have an artists present at all in an area.
- Retaining light industrial uses was felt to be in line with Islington Council policies
- The legacy of industry and crafts in Kings Cross offered an opportunity for craft spaces and makers in Kings Cross. Maker space was felt to be poorly catered for in London and this could be done in a relatively dense way in conjunction with the development of residential accommodation.
- Retaining the role of the skills centre after it closes. The centre was felt to have been a good way of ensuring local people benefit from the regeneration. It should continue to be a place where people can gain employment and knowledge skills.
- Start-up space for businesses and in particular for students from Central Saint Martins. This space could be ideal for them to test business ideas.
- Exhibition space.
- Creating maker space in developments at ground floor. This could be balanced with having a taller building in the development site KC6 at the junction of Randell's Road and York Way.

Innovative Development

As well as the commercial development that the KC6 allocation proposed, there were other opportunities that responded to the history and character of the area and could, therefore, play a valuable role in engaging with the local area and its communities. Suggestions included:

- The fact that there "used to be a great Great Northern Cemetery Station and a church and there is now a disused tube station" and this could create opportunities to "draw in ideas for the site from its history".
- Reopening York Way tube station.
- There were ideas for re-envisaging the tube station (if it was not going to be re-opened):
- As a community centre/exhibition space using the platforms as an exhibition space perhaps visible from passing trains.
- Putting a pavilion on top of the tube station.

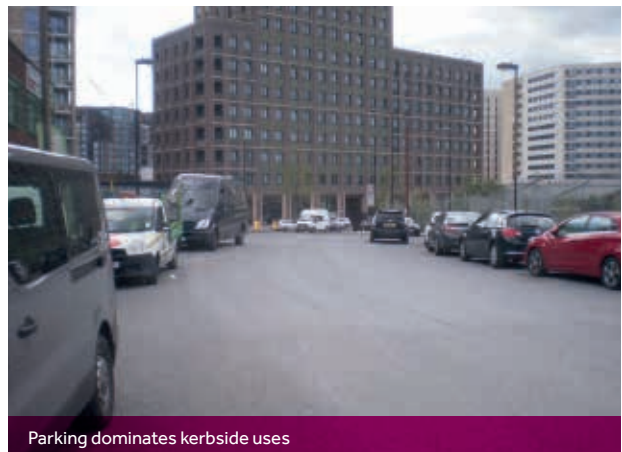
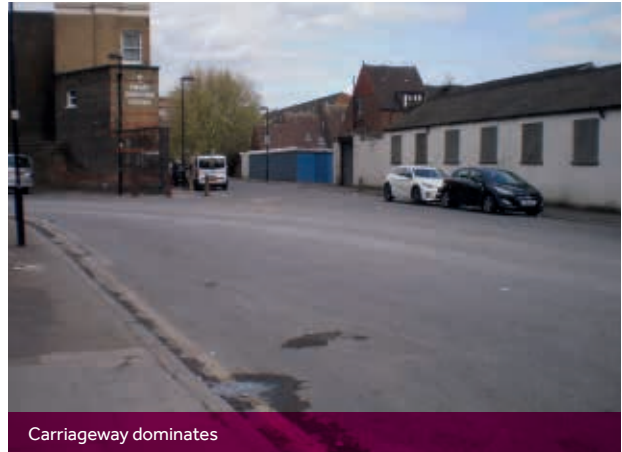
Knowledge Quarter Role

The role that the Knowledge Quarter could play in this re-imagining of Randell's Road came across most clearly in relation creation of workspace. In getting involved in employment uses and more specifically the provision of (affordable) workspace and start up space, the Knowledge Quarter could credibly play a role of recreating Randell's Road as "a bridge to the KQ and the building on the Kings Cross site in the west". This offered a route in for the Knowledge Quarter to become involved through the pro-bono donation of the skills of those employed by Knowledge Quarter partners and students in the Higher Education Institutions within the Knowledge Quarter.

ISSUES TO ADDRESS

Although the current light industrial uses of the street were recognised there was a general consensus that Randell's Road was currently a poor environment for people.

- It is noisy (from traffic and trains) and dirty with very narrow pavements and almost all of the space given over to vehicular uses.
- Car parking dominates the kerbside uses of the street (during the business week).
- Traffic from the lorries going to and fro from the Cemex site have a significant negative impact on the street.
- The air quality is poor owing to the high volumes of HGV movements and being adjacent to the heavily trafficked York Way.



IDEAS FOR CHANGE

A number of ideas were put forward for improving Randell's Road from the point of view of liveability and personal safety and the desire to encourage people to pass through and spend time in the street and to better connect the area that it sits in. Overall the ideas are summed up by a desire to "bring the worlds of the Caledonian Road and Kings Cross together". There were suggestions as to how development could help improve the area for people...

- **Noise.** Reducing noise from trains by decking over some of the train tracks that are currently open and exposed. The deck could be enhanced with greenery. This might offer an opportunity to create a special sense of place as has occurred at the bridge at Primrose Hill with opportunities either to screen off surrounding parts or to encourage people to see them by making them transparent. This could also be envisaged as a location that specifically encouraged people who are trainspotting with a viewing platform that enhanced the view of the trains beneath.
- **Active Frontages.** Redevelopment that created more active frontages that encouraged life at street level with active and passive surveillance. The relationship between the buildings and the street should be redesigned in a far more positive way than is occurring at present with blank facades.
- **Greenery.** Adding to the greenery of the area by ensuring its inclusion in developments that came forward for example by having greening on the sides of walls or creating small green oases across the street.
- **Development.** Creating better links into Bingfield Park by removing the Cemex works.
- **Lighting.** Improving the environment after dark and thus supporting people on foot potentially by using innovative approaches to lighting that not only improved safety but create interest as people walk. Ideas included Pavegen lighting⁴ that generates electricity as people pass over it and other similarly engaging lighting displays.



Randell's Road. Train lines that could be decked over



Randell's Road – view east to the Paget's Christian Centre. How redevelopment can help create more active frontages

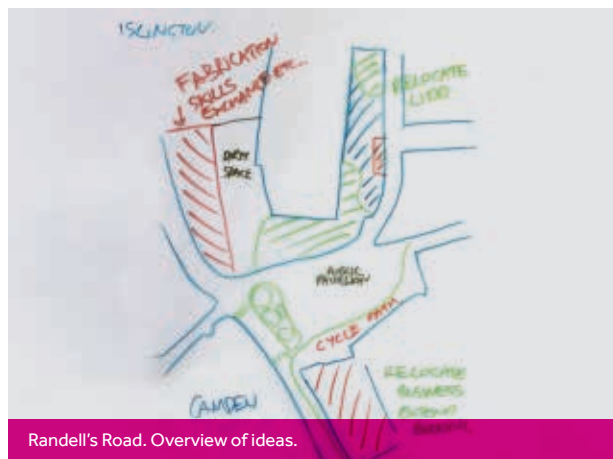
IDEAS FOR CHANGE

...and more specifically how improvements could be made that would improve the public realm, create links between east and west as well as improving conditions for those on foot and those who are cycling.

- Remaking the historic street patterns. Using the public realm improvements and redevelopment of the two sites (KC4 and KC6) to help recreate a more coherent street pattern. It was noted that the 1916 map shows the road complete and the church still in place. Previously in these earlier times there was a grid pattern to the streets. The changes that occurred to the layout were post-war. In 1961 the streets are still there but by 1963 the changes have occurred. There is an opportunity for master planning to "bring the clarity back into the area".
- Rebalancing the uses of the street by reducing the amount of carriageway by:
 - Making the street one way for vehicular traffic. An aim of this would be to create sufficient space for Bingfield Park (to the east) to spill out into Randell's Road.
 - Reduce the width of the road, widening the pavements and pedestrianising the street as far as possible. The use of trees and green space could help with this.
- Emphasising the focus on walking and cycling with a route that feels inviting and connects through the estate to Bingfield St and its route towards the Caledonian Road by :
 - Improvements to the junction with York Way with a clearly pedestrian/cycling friendly crossing (potentially in the form of a Green Link).
 - Creating a square or public or green space within the estate that makes the estate more accessible. There is an opportunity to create a public space in front of the former tube station for use by pedestrians. A number of walking routes could radiate out from the square including a link across from Randell's Rd to the Argent site, a link across to the Argent site from the York Way tube station, a route east towards the Caledonian Road and a route south towards the Regent's Canal.
 - Ensuring that the route goes along the edge of the estate rather than going into it.
 - The creation of an open and accessible route south that created an attractive walking and cycling link through to the canal. This would have the advantage of allowing people to avoid using the heavily trafficked York Way.
- Adding interest to the walking and cycling routes that were created for example by creating a game for children on the way to school.



Randell's Road. The earlier street pattern



Randell's Road. Overview of ideas.

8. LIST OF ATTENDEES

Thanks go to a large number of people who contributed to the charrette.

Tom Alexander
Aukett Swanke

Lucy Andrews
British Museum Estates

Peter Barbalov
Farrells

Toby Bennett
Spacehive

Kate Coghlan
Bennetts Associates

Gary Campbell
Central Saint Martins

Jane Debono
Camden Council

Jodie Eastwood
Knowledge Quarter

Mario Guzman
University of the Arts London

Julian Gregson
Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands

Eric Halliquist
Aecom

Ruth Heritage
They Eat Culture

Henry Holme
Pavegen

Paul Lincol
Landscape Institute

James Lord
HTA Design

Gerard Maccreanor
Maccreanor Lavington

Neil Manthorpe
Atkins Global

Christine Mays
Grimshaw Architects

Peter Murray
NLA

Angelo Napolano
Knowledge Quarter

Viya Nsumbu
British Library

James Paterson
GLA

Michelle Reeves
Head of Social Regeneration for Old Oak

Simon Robinson
MSMR Architects

Michelle Salerno
Consultant

Daniel Stevens
Knowledge Quarter

Patrick Uberbacher
Buckley Gray Yeoman

David Waterson
Camden Council

APPENDIX

About The Knowledge Quarter

The Knowledge Quarter is a partnership of 73 academic, cultural, research, scientific and media organisations within a one-mile radius comprising of Kings Cross, Bloomsbury and Euston, who all have within their purpose the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Since its launch in December 2014, it has welcome a further 39 organisations as partners including the Alan Turing Institute, the Arts Catalyst and the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining. The Knowledge Quarter fosters knowledge exchange and collaboration between staff and users of cross-disciplinary communities to exchange ideas, expertise and evidence.

Knowledge Quarter Priorities

The Knowledge Quarter works with its partners to develop and deliver activities under each of its four key strategic priorities:

Knowledge Exchange

The Knowledge Quarter will facilitate knowledge exchange and identify opportunities for openness, collaboration, networking and efficiencies.

Community Engagement

The Knowledge Quarter will increase access to resources and collections and create opportunities for local community engagement.

Public Realm Environment and Sustainability

The Knowledge Quarter will identify and support work that improves our local sustainable environment.

Advocacy and Communications

The Knowledge Quarter will increase the area's profile through advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

www.knowledgequarter.london

BRITISH LIBRARY

Unmasked
Anarchy
UK

August 2014

Unmasked
Tuesdays
Unmasked

KNOWLEDGE QUARTER PARTNERS

89 Up
Aga Khan University
Art Fund
Arts Catalyst
Bertha Dothouse
Bio Nano Consulting
Birkbeck, University of London
BMJ
Briffa
British Library
British Museum
BT Archives
Camden Council
Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London
Churches Conservation Trust
CILIP
City, University of London
Conway Hall
Crafts Council
Design Council
Dickens Museum
Digital Catapult
Foundling Museum
Futurelearn
Gasholder
Google
Guardian News & Media
Help Musicians UK
Impact Hub Kings Cross
Institute of Mathematics and its Applications
Institute of Physics
International Students House
Islington Council
King's Place
LGIU (Local Government Information Unit)
London Canal Museum
London Metropolitan Archives
London Review of Books
London Sinfonietta

London Universities Purchasing Consortium
Mind in Camden
MRC Technology
NCUB (National Centre for Universities and Business)
Netley Primary School
Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Poet in the City
Produce UK
PRS for Music Foundation
Regent High School
Royal College of General Practitioners
Royal College of Physicians
Royal Veterinary College
Scriberia
SOAS, University of London
Society of College, National and University Libraries
Somers Town Community Association
Springer Nature
SQW
Stratified Medical
Tête à Tête
Theatre of Debate
The Alan Turing Institute
The Farr Institute of Health Informatics Research
The Francis Crick Institute
The Institute of Ismaili Studies
The Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining
The National Association of Decorative
& Fine Arts Societies
The Place
The School of Life
The Wiener Library
University College London
University of London
Urban Partners
Wellcome Trust
Westminster Kingsway College
WMC - The Camden College



For more information please contact:

Jodie Eastwood, 020 7412 7116
www.knowledgequarter.london
@KQ_London