

Somers Town Neighbourhood Plan Consultant Brief

1. Introduction and Context

Somers Town is the area in London between Euston and St Pancras Stations. The Plan area follows the natural boundary lines of Euston Road, Midland Road, Crowndale Road and Eversholt Street, including the Ampthill Estate north of Euston Station.

The area is densely populated and has significantly less open space than other areas within Camden. It is also an area that has experienced – and is experiencing – significant development over the last 40 years. The major developments that will be going on during the production of the Plan include HS2 and the Euston project; the British Library Extension; the St Pancras Hospital Development, including the Oriel (Moorfields) Hospital; and the Central Somers Town CIP (Camden's own regeneration programme).

Somers Town is known for its landmark social housing, with examples from every decade from the 1890s to the 2020s. The people of Somers Town experience significant deprivation. St Pancras & Somers Town is the most deprived ward in Camden and four of five Lower Super Output Areas in the area are amongst the 20% most deprived in England. The ward ranks worst in the borough for both the indexes for Income Deprivation Affecting Children and Income Deprivation Affecting Older People.

Somers Town is a diverse area, with 24.9% of residents in the Plan area identifying as White British in the 2021 Census, 21.3% as Bangladeshi, and 14.0% of residents as Black African, with many of Somali heritage. A significant proportion (19.5%) of people in Somers Town are disabled under the Equality Act.

In the last decade Somers Town has also become known as the centre of the Knowledge Quarter, an innovation district that includes the British Library and Francis Crick Institute and is of international importance. Balancing the needs of two different audiences – deprived and diverse residents and a wealthy Knowledge Quarter – is the unique challenge of the Somers Town Neighbourhood Plan.

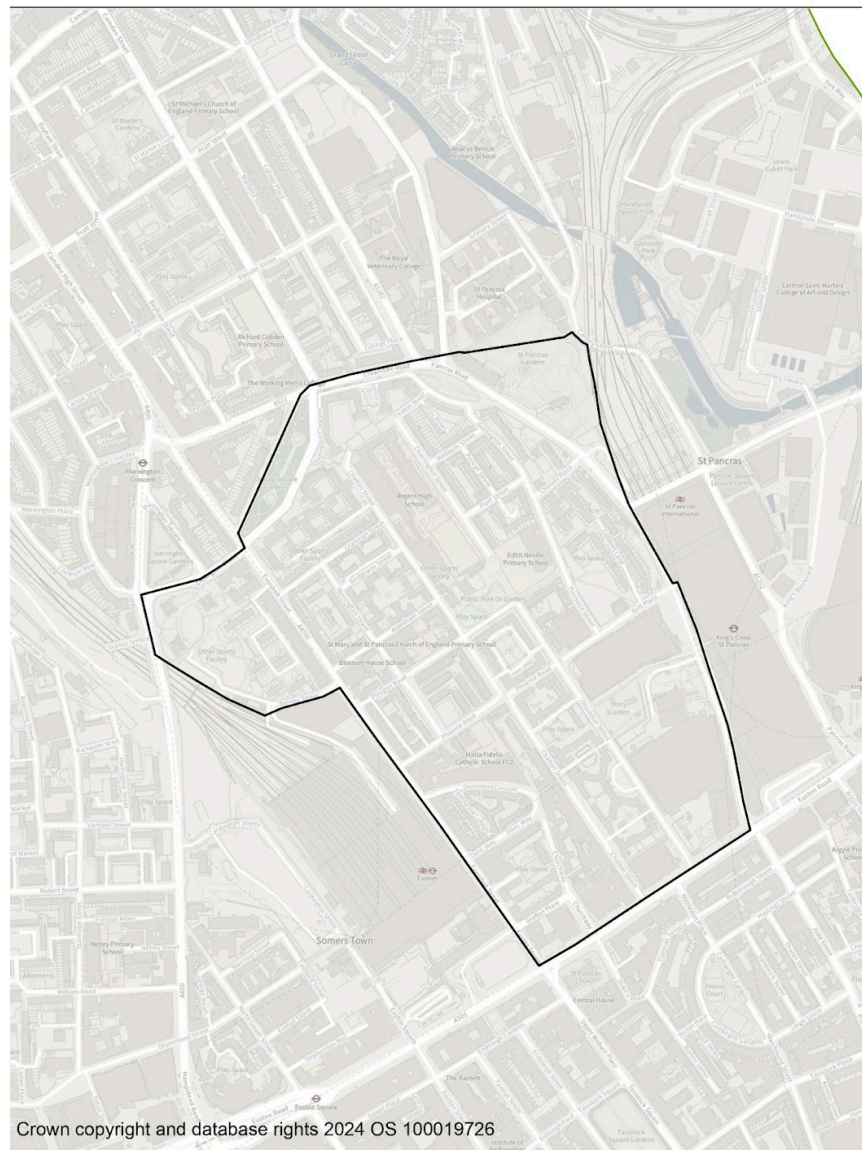
2. Vision and Objectives

Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum (STNF) sees the Plan as an important opportunity for the existing community to help themselves out of disadvantage through access to genuinely affordable housing, jobs and training, access to high quality health and education, and the creation of a safe and attractive environment. The constitution states the purpose of STNF is to promote sustainable development in the neighbourhood of Somers Town by:

- Promoting sustainable means of achieving social well-being, economic growth and regeneration;
- Improving the opportunities for and abilities of local people to secure jobs in the local and London labour market;
- Promoting a distinctive, healthy, safe and sustainable environment where people feel valued, secure and committed;
- Encouraging young people to realise their potential and play a full and active part in the local community;
- Bringing people together and celebrating cultural diversity.

3. Existing planning context

Somers Town is in the Borough of Camden. As well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), our Plan needs to have regard to the London Plan and Camden's Local Plan (including the emerging Local Plan). Part of our Plan area is included within the boundary of the Euston Area Plan, so we will need to have regard to that policy as it is being developed.



Somers Town Neighbourhood Area



4. Community and stakeholder involvement

Since 2013, STNF has held open monthly meetings, including online meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also held walkabouts, workshops and larger meetings. Regular meetings are advertised online and through word of mouth. We produce flyers to advertise larger meetings and workshops.

From 2017 to 2018 we worked with Voluntary Action Camden, University College London (UCL) and the Environmental Law Foundation to hold an inquiry and produce a [report and action plan](#) on the cumulative impacts of development on the health and wellbeing of local people. The experiences of approximately 1,200 local people were recorded over three days at sessions, resulting in an inquiry report and action plan to try and protect our mental and physical health in the face of more development.

In 2018 we worked with UCL's Engineering Exchange to better understand our local [air quality](#) and design actions to improve our air in Somers Town.

In 2021 Somers Town became one of only two Future Neighbourhoods in London, with significant investment from the GLA, Camden and other partners to ready ourselves for climate change by 2030. Alongside Somers Town Community Association, STNF has been a key player in developing the [area-based strategy](#) for the programme, and we want to embed that strategy into the Plan. This would be a significant undertaking that would influence all aspects of the Plan, from housing to air quality to green spaces to jobs.

Recently, we have taken time to review the Draft Plan. There are existing policies on Local Economy and Employment; Meanwhile Use; Movement; Housing and Building; Environment, Green Space and Air Quality; and Community and Cultural Facilities. As well as updating these policies to reflect the new planning context for the area, including the Knowledge Quarter and Future Neighbourhood 2030 status, we want to include two new policies: Health & Wellbeing and Heritage.

We have long known that people in Somers Town have significantly shorter life expectancies than those living a few miles up the road. Also, that Somers Town residents are more likely to have life-debilitating conditions than others in the borough. We would like to address these issues in a Health and Wellbeing policy. A Health subgroup has been set up to gather evidence for this policy.

Secondly, STNF has held meetings and workshops on Somers Town's heritage and are supportive of the People's Museum: Somers Town. A Heritage policy would celebrate the built heritage of the area, much of which is either under threat from development or as yet undervalued, as well as understanding the importance of people – past and present – in creating a sense of place. Community identity and history plays such a crucial role in creating a sense of belonging and diversity, especially in a highly urban area. The history of a place both subconsciously and subtly as well as visibly shapes how a community behaves, what they value, and how they relate to others who live around them. Thus heritage plays an important role in integrating that communal identity which in turn helps deliver more equitable and sustainable economic development.

To move the Plan forward we are revitalising the existing Business, Employment, Education and Training (BEET) subgroup, and creating new subgroups on Health, Heritage and Climate. In parallel to these subgroups, we have also been holding a variety of consultations and discussions around transport and mobility, open and green spaces, and few other tertiary priority areas that fit into the current draft plan policy topics and we are planning to hold future conversations to gather more information around housing.

We have recently received grants from the Future Neighbourhoods programme as well as Somers Town Big Local. This allows us to continue with our plan-making despite recent cuts in the government's spending review.

5. Specification

The overall objective of the commission is to work with the Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum and Somers Town community to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for submission to Camden Council which includes updating policy and recommendations on:

- Business, Employment, Education, & Training (BEET)
- Meanwhile Use
- Movement
- Housing & Building
- Environment, Green Space, & Air Quality
- Community & Cultural Facilities
- Heritage (New Policy)
- Health & Wellbeing (New Policy)

6. Scope

The Forum requires the Consultant to commence work on the study upon appointment. A detailed timetable is provided in section 12 of this brief.

To complete all the required tasks, Tenderers may wish to partner with or engage other specialist consultancies. The total proposed budget for the project must include the costs of all bodies that the Tenderer proposes to engage or partner with to prepare the study. Expectations set out in this document shall apply to the Consultant and all bodies that are engaged by or that partner with the Consultant in preparing the required tasks.

7. Main Objectives and Deliverables

A: Evidence Gathering and Analysis: Researching local needs, demographics, environmental factors, and other relevant data.

- Thorough analysis of data and consultation material that's been produced in or near to Somers Town in the last decade

B: Policy Development: Assisting in drafting clear and effective planning policies that align with the community's vision.

- Updated policy for the following areas:
 - Business, Employment, Education, & Training (BEET)
 - Meanwhile Use
 - Movement
 - Housing & Building
 - Environment, Green Space, & Air Quality
 - Community & Cultural Facilities
- New policy for the following themes:

- Heritage
- Health & Wellbeing

C. Consultation and Engagement: Supporting community consultation events, facilitating discussions, and gathering feedback.

- Support and help plan (if necessary) **at least** 5 policy workshops (but ideally 8 - one per policy area) to inform initial draft
- Attend **at least** 20 meetings, presence at events, and/or other engagement touchpoints for local residents and workers to feedback on the developing policy

D. Draft Neighbourhood Plan: A complete document outlining the vision, objectives, and policies for the neighbourhood. This may include Design Codes should the Forum require them.

- May include Design Codes should the Forum require them
- May include a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) should the Forum require it

E. Supporting documents: A variety of additional documents collected to support and enhance the overall Neighbourhood Plan. These are likely to include:

- Basic Conditions Statement: A document demonstrating how the Plan meets the legal requirements for neighbourhood planning.
- Consultation Statement: A summary of the consultation process, including feedback received and how it was addressed.
- Data sets: Links to any data used in developing the Plan's policy
- Additional Evidence: Any additional reports or documents used to support the Plan's policies

F. Consultation and Examination:

- Update the plan in response to formal consultation and examination to produce a document ready for adoption.

8. Required Expertise and Experience

- **Relevant Experience:**

A broad-based team that includes experience in neighbourhood planning, planning policy and community engagement.

- **Desirable Skills and Knowledge:**

- Understanding of planning legislation and regulations.

- Experience of sustainable plan-making, including retrofit, greening and biodiversity. And knowledge of heritage, conservation, and environmental policy
- Experience in policy writing and evidence-based decision-making.
- Strong communication and facilitation skills.
- Ability to work effectively with diverse groups of people.
- Proven track record in preparing Neighbourhood Plans through all key stages (evidence gathering, drafting, submission, examination, and referendum).
- Demonstrated experience of working effectively with neighbourhood forums and community steering groups.
- Strong background in community engagement, including the design, facilitation, and reporting of public consultation exercises.
- Experience in producing the required statutory documents (e.g. Basic Conditions Statement, Consultation Statement, and evidence base reviews).
- Experience liaising and negotiating with Local Planning Authorities.
- Skills in mapping, spatial analysis, and visual presentation (e.g. GIS, design codes, or illustrative masterplans).

9. Management arrangements

- **Reporting Structure:** The successful candidate will report directly to the Chair. All key documents and milestones will be signed off by the Plan subcommittee.
- **Communication:** We would expect the consultant to meet with us regularly, in person or online to update on progress. We would also expect attendance at monthly Forum meetings, workshops and occasionally other events, meetings and subgroup sessions as appropriate.
- **Access to Information:** The consultant will have access to the previous draft Plan (<https://somerstownplan.info/plan/>), the 2021 Census extract and all information from subgroup meetings and workshops over the last decade.
- **Confidentiality:** We would expect any data received from individuals, particularly on the housing, health and income, to remain confidential and all data to be anonymised.

10. Value of Contract

The total budget is **up to** £40,000 including VAT and allowable expenses. We expect proposed budgets to be in the £25,000 - £40,000 range and for proposals on the higher end to be detailed in their response of why the higher amount is needed. Allowable expenses include travel but not food or overnight stays. The value of contract reflects the fact that the community, whilst understanding of our needs and ambitions, has little planning experience.

11. Evaluation Criteria

The Consultant will be selected on the basis of an evaluation of their quotation submission, which should include:

- Understanding of the project and the community's needs. (30%)
- Clarity of the proposed approach and methodology. (15%)
- Relevant experience and expertise. (30%)
- Cost-effectiveness. (25%)
- Ability to meet the specified timeline and budget. (Requirement)

The Forum will not necessarily select the lowest quotation. The evaluation will consider whether or not every instruction and requirement contained within the Brief has been fulfilled.

12. Timeline

DATE	STAGE
25 September	Brief issued
13 October, 11:59pm	Deadline for submission
16 October	Shortlist Announced
w/c 20 October	Interviews
31 October	Appointment of Consultant
w/c 3 November	Inception meeting & Payment 1 (30%)
Early January	Mid-term formal review & Payment 2 (30%)
31 March	Submission of Draft Plan and supporting documents & Payment 3 (30%)
31 May	Submission of any necessary revision work & Payment 4 (10%)

13. Application Details:

If you are interested, please apply with the following **by 11:59pm on 13 October**:

- A CV (for individual applicants) or Company Profile (for consultancy teams) outlining relevant qualifications and experience.
- A Supporting Statement (maximum 1500 words) explaining how you meet the essential and desirable experience set out in this brief, and how you would approach delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- A Fee Proposal, including a clear breakdown of costs, day rates, and any anticipated expenses.
- Details of two referees

Applications can be sent to somertownforum@gmail.com and **must be received by 11:59pm on 13 October**. You can also reach out through the above email with any questions during the application process.