

Making High Streets Work

Vision & Strategy

April 2022



MAYOR OF LONDON

prd

**a small
studio**



At first glance, West Norwood and Tulse Hill has much of what a ‘15 minute neighbourhood’ needs; good local amenities (library, cinema, leisure centre, theatre), a traditional high street with a mix of independent retailers, chains and healthcare services; and an adjacent industrial estate and Workspace-run Parkhall business centre which both provide a combination of light industrial and office space.

However, the single aspect that is missing is a good supply of flexible and affordable workspace which, if realised, could bring hundreds more workers into the area. This would provide a positive uplift to the local economy by increasing high street footfall levels and demand for a wider evening economy, which in turn would lead to a more vibrant, compelling and sustainable town centre.

While there is plenty of retail space, there is a chronic shortage of both flexible workspace for those wanting to work closer to home and the ‘dirty, smelly, noisy’ light industrial premises required by craftspeople, food & drink manufacturers and mechanics. These types of businesses were typically found on West Norwood’s Key Industrial Business Area Norwood Works, or in the Parkhall business centre, but as landlord models gradually focus on the relatively more profitable per square foot ‘office’ type businesses, these sectors are finding themselves priced out. Light industrial work space is also being lost locally, with the sale recently of both Bainbridge Studios and ACME’s Carlew House which, between them, housed 35 artists and creatives (despite there being waiting lists of several hundred artists for each studio space).

The challenge for us is to provide the right offer for this strong and growing demand across London and enable them to locate within West Norwood and Tulse Hill.

We have the space; our high streets and the (Norwood Works) industrial estate are home to both long-term vacant and underused stock due to lack of landlord funds (further depleted in the pandemic), lack of landlord/owner ambition or interest, or increasingly, because landowners are holding out for the more lucrative prospect of a change to residential (whether policy compliant or not).

The demand is also there; Parkhall Business Centre is almost full to capacity and local people are working informally at café and pub tables. However, rent and service charges are pricing many SMEs out of our existing workspace provision and poor internet connections and facilities on the high street affect its ability to provide good-hot desking opportunities.

The Mayor’s High Streets for All Challenge funding received by Station to Station and LB Lambeth will help to lay out formally the issues and the evidence that anecdotally we already know, and to come up with a workspace approach that encourages and enables landowners and landlords to capitalise on this demand. We commissioned this “Making High Streets Work’ Vision & Strategy along with Evidence Base and Engagement Process documents to support its development.

We have a key opportunity here to harness further investment and create a local USP for creative business space. This will be beneficial to those workers and businesses seeking affordable workspace as well as to the wider resident and business community of West Norwood and Tulse Hill.

Charlotte Ashworth, BID Manager
Station to Station, the business improvement district for West Norwood & Tulse Hill

foreword

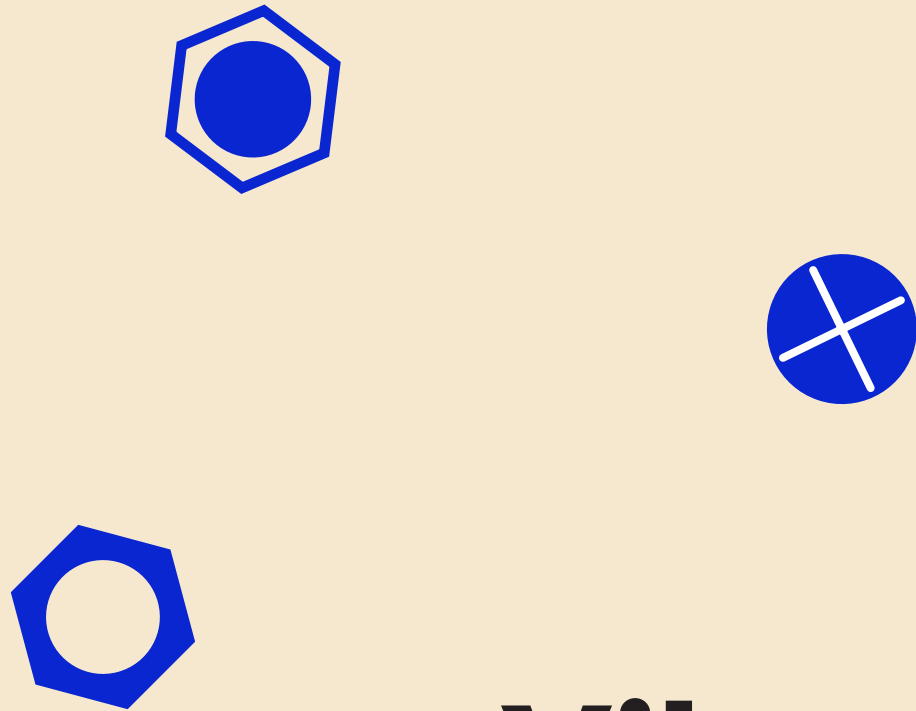
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Vibrant

An animated, thriving neighbourhood: a place where things happen and connections are made. A place of life, activity and opportunity.

Resilient

A place where livelihoods can be made and sustained in the long-term, where strong community relationships and a supportive business ecosystem build economic strength. A place that invites creativity, imagination and innovation.

Collaborative

An environment of safety and support, where people have the freedom and ability to try and test new ideas. Co-creation is encouraged and everyone has a say in the future of their neighbourhood.



Inclusive

A place that provides opportunity for everyone, no matter what they want to do or where they come from; where affordability is treasured and accessibility protected.





Part one:
setting the scene

“The radical change generated by Covid means there is an increased need for local workspace facilities.”

- Respondent from Community and Engagement; Community Group Leader 2021

Report Purpose

PRD and A Small Studio have been commissioned by Station to Station BID and LB Lambeth to lead the development of a strategy which explores how spaces throughout the West Norwood and Tulse Hill areas can be better activated for use as accessible, creative workspaces. This strategy is accompanied by a Vision, which outlines our collective aspirations for making the area more attractive to creative businesses across London.

It aims to:

- Clearly communicate our approach to workspace in the area.
- Explore different uses, typologies and locations for activity.
- Outline demand and make a strong case to act.
- Outline the benefits that a stronger workspace ecosystem can offer.
- Set out how local partners intend to work together to deliver our shared Vision.

Research Approach

This strategy has been co-produced with the West Norwood and Tulse Hill community. Conclusions and recommendations have been drawn from a thorough research and engagement programme, comprising the following elements:

- Analysis of local, borough and London trends exploring need and demand for a diversity of workspace.
- Engagement with local businesses, landlords/ landowners, community groups and other ‘key people’ (councillors, MP).
- Consideration of the need and role of creating a stronger ecosystem of workspaces across the area.

The Evidence Base which has been produced alongside this document contains a more detailed summary of the evidence we have drawn upon to inform our Vision and Strategy.

Research Guide

This strategy is split into two main sections:

- Setting the Scene: a look at the context as it exists today, exploring the case to act and outlining our collective aspiration for the area.
- Taking Action: An exploration of the opportunity: the types of spaces which are currently in high demand and the delivery mechanisms and policy support that can and should be utilised to bring these forward.

introduction

part one: setting the scene

The following map illustrates the reference geography:



Figure 1: Area of scope

The need for more affordable and creative workspace in London is well documented. As commercial rents rise and space is lost to other uses, creative communities are increasingly finding themselves displaced; displaced from the neighbourhoods, communities, supply chains and networks that are so integral to a thriving, resilient and stable business community.

The value that the creative industries can have on a locality is significant and widely recognised. Made up largely of small and micro businesses; creative clusters, including 'makers' and tradespeople can bring life, innovation and culture to an area; they are powerful sources of sustainable, local employment and are often characterised by strong ties to their local communities. Recent research highlights the economic value of these industries; together, they spend £40bn in local supply chains in London alone and every job in the sector supports 0.75 jobs in the wider economy¹. Research published earlier this year by the Creative Land Trust brings the indirect economic benefits of thriving creative clusters into sharp focus: residential property values in creative clusters outperformed the London average by 4.4% per annum over 10 years.

People want to be around creativity; busy, thriving neighbourhoods with an exciting mix of arts, culture, food and activity feel safer and more welcoming; they invite collaboration and can help to establish stronger and more resilient communities; they provide opportunities and new career pathways for local people and can support the creation of a strong local identity. Together, these elements can help to build long-term social and economic resilience.

West Norwood and Tulse Hill (Figure 1) is home to a burgeoning creative and digital cluster and is an area of strategic significance for Lambeth, forming a corridor between Brixton and Croydon. We have an exciting opportunity to support its growth and build its resilience. To do this, we need to ensure that young businesses have access to space to find their feet and established businesses have room to grow.

We need to learn from the London experience: we understand that workspace is in demand and we know that businesses require space that is both flexible and affordable. This strategy is a call to action: with it we hope to activate underused and vacant space across the area to help support the growth of a thriving and prosperous creative business community.

the current landscape

¹The Creative Supply Chains Study, Hatch Regeneris & We Made That (2017)

part one: setting the scene

Strengths we can build on

West Norwood and Tulse Hill is home to a burgeoning creative cluster, from fine artists (Edmund du Waal) and designers (Lottie Radford Studios), to graphic designers (Hyperkit), architects (A Small Studio) and makers such as the group of artists working from Parade Mews (Figure 2); indeed, West Norwood and Tulse Hill accounts for 11% of Lambeth’s entire business base, making it a significant local economy for small businesses. Over the past five years it has witnessed strong employment and business growth in creative, digital and cultural enterprise, and has nearly 1.5 times the concentration of businesses in these sectors when compared to the rest of London².

The area is unique in its offer: our high street offers local services and independent retail and is surrounded by leafy residential streets; all of this sits shoulder to shoulder with busy industrial areas. We are also home to four Key Industrial Business Areas (KIBAs), providing ‘messier’ spaces for tradespeople, makers, artists and others – and these uses are protected by our Lambeth Local Plan 2020-35³. We’re proud of this mix and have a stronger business ecosystem as a result.

Our community is entrepreneurial in nature: the vast majority of our businesses are sole traders and micro businesses and we have significantly higher self-employment levels than Lambeth as a whole. We also have a large working-age population⁴: as more people continue to work from home in the wake of the pandemic. Understanding that this shift towards the ‘local’ and the ‘15 minute neighbourhood’⁵ is likely to be long-term, we need to make sure that there are enough of the accessible and flexible local spaces to cater to the increasing absence of the traditional office commute.



Figure 2: illustrating the spatial distribution of creative clusters in the area, with greater concentration around Tulse Hill and West Norwood stations. Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2021

In speaking to local residents and businesses, it is clear that our area has many of the everyday social, economic and civic essentials people want and need. There is considerable local support for existing SME and creative workspace. Anecdotally, West Norwood is considered one of South London’s most vibrant localities, benefitting from cultural and demographic diversity, exceptional connectivity and a uniquely strong and active community, demonstrating many of the strengths associated with the ‘15-minute city’ development model .

Data supports this, showing that retail spend and footfall bounced back quickly in the wake of Covid-19 lockdown measures: there is an aspiration to build on this, with a vision to see the area established as one of the strongest communities in London, one which is locally distinctive, diverse and welcoming to visitors and businesses alike.

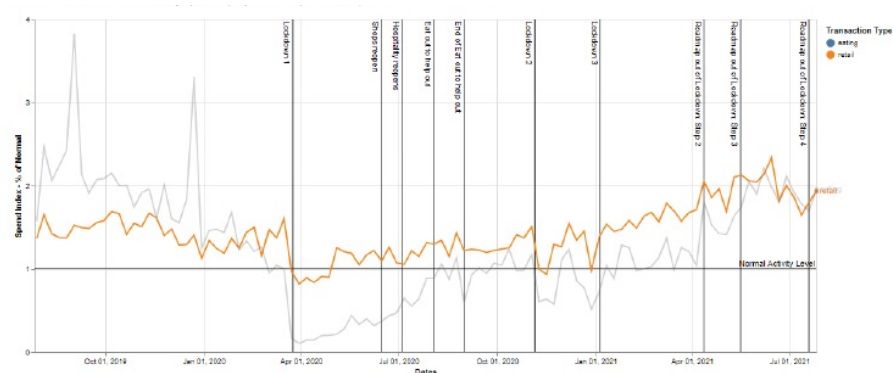


Figure 3: Retail and eating spend on Norwood Road and Norwood High Street, July 2019-July 2021. Source: Mastercard Retail Location Insights, GLA Datastore

Retail spend in West Norwood and Tulse Hill has largely remained above normal levels showing that the area has been successful in providing essential services to its communities (Figure 3).

Footfall data from July 2021 shows that in West Norwood East (the MSOA covering most of the high street), visitor numbers are around 80-90% of normal levels (Figure 4). Similarly, when looking at worker counts in the same area, around 80% of those normally present between normal working hours have returned⁶.

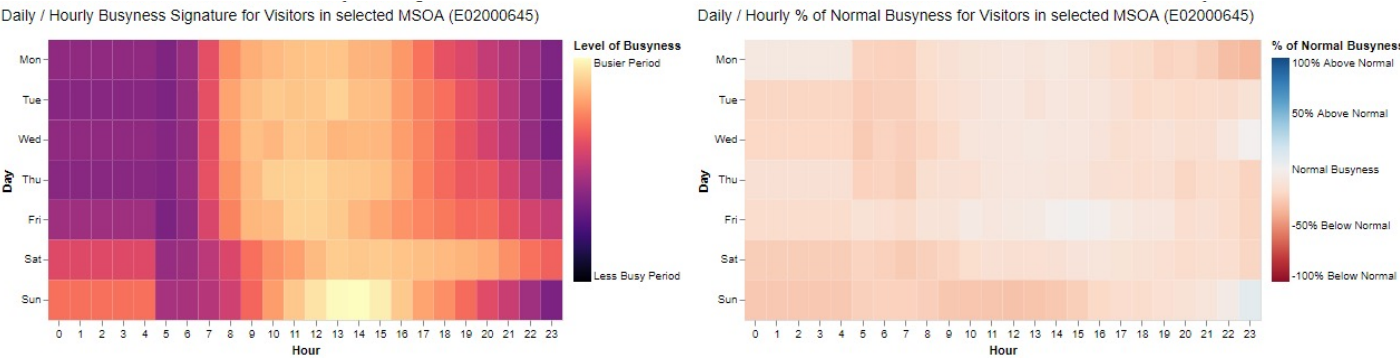


Figure 4: (Left) West Norwood East- pre-pandemic busyness signature. (Right) West Norwood East- 28/06/21-25/07/21 ‘% of Normal’ Busyness Source: Anonymised and aggregated data by O2 Motion, GLA Datastore

² Making High Streets Work: Evidence Base (2022)
³ Lambeth Local Plan, 2021
⁴ Making High Streets Work: Evidence Base (2022)
⁵ Paris’s 15-minute city could be coming to an urban area near you, Bloomberg
⁶ Anonymised and Aggregated data by O2, GLA Datastore, 2021

“There are real examples in West Norwood of studios closing and artists leaving London.”

- Respondent from Community and Engagement; Workspace provider

⁷ LEAP: The affordability crisis (2018)

⁸ LB Lambeth Workspace Topic Paper, 2020

⁹ IDBR, 2018

¹⁰ Making High Streets Work: Evidence Base (2022)

Areas we need to focus on

Despite being home to all of these ‘key ingredients’, the area presently lacks critical mass. This lack of suitable, accessible workspace is limiting prospects for growth over and above catering for the existing occupier base. This is not a Lambeth specific issue: whilst small and micro businesses account for 99% of London’s economy, there is a chronic lack of workspace across the city to house them. Indeed, 30% of small open workspace providers have dropped off the London Growth Hub since 2017⁷.

In turning our focus back to Lambeth, we can see all too clearly how urgent the issue has become at a local level: between 2009 and 2019 office space rents in the borough increased by 71% and light industrial rents rose by more than 80%⁷. This has coincided with the number of SMEs in the borough decreasing by 27% in the decade up to 2019⁸ and by over 5,000 between 2016 and 2018 alone (Figure 5). But we know that this isn’t because businesses don’t want to be here. In fact, local demand remains high and continues to rise¹⁰, but more space - and more support in accessing it - is needed.

This is recognised by workspace providers across London. The Creative Land Trust for example, whose mission is to provide affordable workspace for artists, designers, makers and the creative sector, for the benefit of local communities and London as a whole, has made Tulse Hill & West Norwood one of their key priority areas for their next investment. Other workspace providers such as Arbeit Studios, Arc Club and Good Space have also shown active interest in putting down roots in the area.

There is an opportunity to support these exciting initiatives by strengthening and better signalling our shared ambitions around making our area as welcoming and accessible as possible to creative industries of all shapes and sizes.

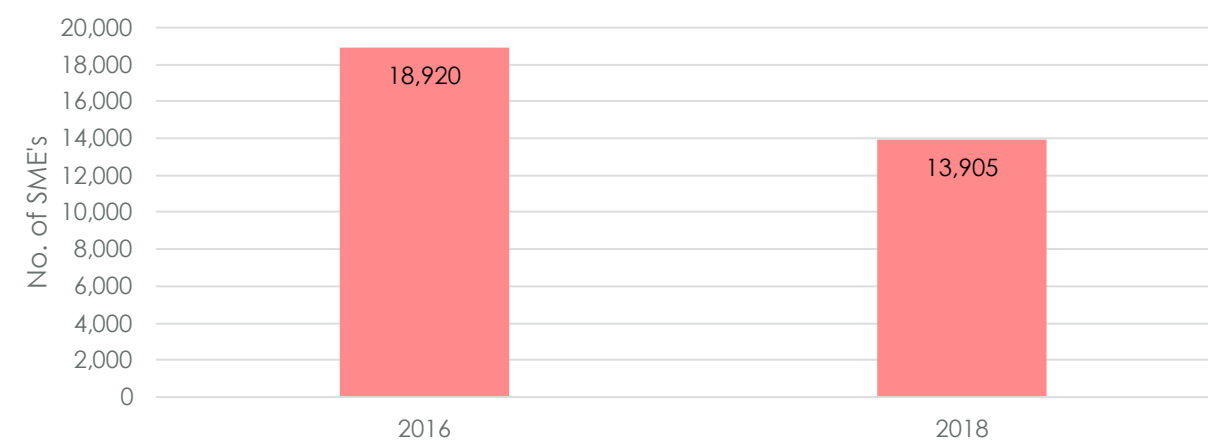


Figure 5: Decline in Lambeth SME business base.

focus areas

Norwood Works for everyone

Norwood Works is the largest industrial area in Lambeth and has a significant impact on the local and regional economy. It is a vibrant and diverse industrial estate and a place to take pride in and be proud of. 'Norwood Works' acts as a 'rally cry' and 'call to action' to all businesses and employees in the area to unify under one common aspiration.

Our values

These simple yet powerful words act as the cornerstone of the Norwood Works brand.

These values must be instilled and promoted in and throughout the brand and its output.

Welcoming
Vibrant
Sustainable
Responsible
Diverse
Ownership

More information on Norwood Works
<https://stationtostation.london/project/norwood-works/>

Norwood Works

The West Norwood Commercial Area is Lambeth's largest Key Industrial Business Area (KIBA) and has a significant impact on the local and regional economy.

Locally, the West Norwood Commercial Area is known as 'Norwood Works' which originated from a shared ambition to shape and grow the area's reputation as an integral economic hub for its current and future business community. With funding from Lambeth Council, a working group of KIBA business owners, Lambeth officers and Station to Station BID commissioned the strong brand toolkit that you can see employed throughout this document. It is also present in a series of physical interventions; murals, lamppost banners and oil drum planters throughout the estate.

The brand and the interventions place 'Norwood Works' firmly on the map as a hub of ingenuity, hard work and a place to be proud of.



focus areas

We must now give a renewed focus to the sustainability of the town centre and economy, in a way that will benefit local people and business; this is more important than ever in the wake of Covid-19. We know that creative industries, many of which are small and micro enterprises, have been hit the hardest by the pandemic. We also know that they have an important role to play in the country's recovery. At a local level, if they are supported to do so, they have the potential to:

- Drive social innovation, using creativity and culture to support important community and public-sector led initiatives and, as 'early colonisers' of regeneration projects, revitalise spaces left behind by the pandemic;
- Support growth in local economies by attracting visitors back to the area, increasing footfall, driving spend and strengthening local supply chains;
- Build cross-sectoral resilience through innovation, testing new ways of working and accessing markets.

We are at an important crossroad; if we don't act fast, we risk losing the creative businesses that bring so much to our area. We have an opportunity to support this creative community to flourish; we want to give businesses, both those already located in the area and those looking for a new home, the confidence they need to put down roots here, knowing that they can stay and grow in the long term.

This strategy has been developed with and for the West Norwood and Tulse Hill community and outlines our collective vision for creating an area that welcomes new ideas, supports growth and drives inclusivity.

IN FOCUS: THE CASE TO ACT

- 1. A growing creative economy:** existing clusters of creative micro and small enterprises are already present in the area. These clusters are valued by local stakeholders, and creative workspace is shown to have the potential to add significant public value and vitality, both providing room for business and employment growth but also strengthening the local economy through higher footfall and subsequent local spend.
- 2. Strong cross-sectoral dialogue and capacity:** Station to Station and LB Lambeth have a strong relationship and deep links with the local business community and landlords. This is a key strength and positions the organisations well to provide effective and meaningful support, guidance and direct intervention where appropriate, to work with local creatives and business owners to unlock potential workspace.
- 3. The area has the potential to deliver:** post Covid, Lambeth has the second highest retail vacancy rate in London after Croydon: this presents an opportunity to test new uses to reinvigorate the area. There is also potential for some industrial intensification within the KIBA, in accordance with London Plan and Local Plan policy.
- 4. Market trends shifting towards a need for creative, flexible and local workspace:** prior to COVID-19, and even more so since, the market for creative and flexible workspace has accelerated. Following the pandemic, the increased appeal of home and local working offers a key opportunity for high streets outside of traditional regional and metropolitan town centres.
- 5. Supply falling short of demand:** despite growing demand, micro and small enterprises (particularly creatives) often cannot access suitable space due to a loss of supply, lack of appropriately sized units and unaffordability¹¹. There is a need to address this challenge to support a sector critical to the city-wide and national economy.
- 6. Expanding policy and funding support:** the scale of the challenge is increasingly recognised in policy at local, regional and national levels. As sources of funding are made more readily available, the barriers to delivery are continuing to reduce.

¹¹ Making High Streets Work: Evidence Base (2022)

“An ideal scenario would be to have small business and workspaces in perpetuity within the KIBA.”

- Respondent from Community and Engagement; Community Group

¹² Market research, Station to Station and LB Lambeth, 2021

¹³ Making High Streets Work: Evidence Base (2022)

What type of spaces do we need?

The demand for workspaces of different types, from incubation and start-up space (considered ‘clean and lean’ spaces), artist and makerspaces (considered ‘dirty and messy’), to different types of co-working facilities, is increasing.

Makerspace, self-contained office space and studio & event space represent the greatest local requirement¹². This isn’t a surprise: over the last two decades we have lost 40% of our local office space and 10% of our industrial space¹³; and, combined with rising prices and increasing demand, this has resulted in a significant shortfall of workspace. As working from home becomes more established, we anticipate growth in demand for local co-working space.

Unlike so many other areas, we hold huge potential: our industrial areas are relatively low intensity and there is an opportunity to activate underused space within them to provide the ‘messier’ uses local businesses need. We also have strong working relationships with landlords and landowners across the area and we know that there is an appetite from them to unlock underused spaces. This provides an exciting opportunity to establish new flexible co-working spaces, collaboration spaces and community hubs.

need for spaces

Key challenges we are facing include:

Increasing demand for lower-cost space:

- There is popular demand for small, lower-cost units for start-ups, one-person businesses, incubator space and small businesses in the area. Provision of smaller, flexible units is needed to meet the level of demand.
- There is also demand from users such as upholsterers, carpenters and furniture makers who need larger premises by the very nature of their businesses.

High levels of competition for land:

- Exacerbated by the closure of ACME's Carlew House and Bainbridge Studios and a lack of confirmed options in the short term.

Lack of diverse workspace offer:

- In the town centre, there is a lack of larger commercial premises limiting the types of workspace providers able to locate there; workspace operators require relatively large floorplates to create viable business models.
- There is a lack of availability of small units, particularly in the KIBAs which are suitable for small and micro businesses and start-ups as a growing sector in the locality. There is an opportunity to intensify use within the KIBAs and support the provision of smaller units within larger buildings.

Challenges around identifying available space:

- Understanding the location and availability of space in the Key Industrial Business Areas (KIBAs), of which there are four in the area; Norwood Works, Knolly's Yard, Parade Mews and Park Hall Road Trading Estate (also known as Parkhall Business Centre).

There are significant challenges that need to be addressed to ensure that creative industries have access to the space they need to remain in the area.

Demand-side challenges: challenges faced by businesses and freelancers in accessing space, such as lack of affordability, unsuitability of some spaces for 'dirty, smelly, messy' types of work and competition for the small pool of suitable existing units.

"Light industrial businesses need significantly more space than other sectors, resulting in much higher business rates. This puts us under incredible financial pressure."

-Respondent from Community and Engagement;
Business owner

"Light industrial and creative businesses are often the first to be pushed out of an area: creating spaces of protected industrial land, such as a KIBA, will definitely help to protect these types of businesses."

-Respondent from Community and Engagement; Business owner

"Making the KIBA a place where we can work from, would definitely help [and it could] help support more light industrial business."

-Respondent from Community and Engagement; Business owner

demand-side challenges

Key challenges we are facing include:

Underutilisation of space:

- Norwood High Street has a number of vacancies and under-utilised properties.
- There is potential for some industrial intensification within the KIBA, in accordance with London Plan and Local Plan policy.

Lack of available space:

- Demand is outstripping supply and this is likely to worsen as Lambeth based workspaces such as ACME and the short-term workspace International House are vacated.
- Landowners - particularly those within the planning use protected industrial areas where housing is prohibited - are in many cases failing to unlock land due to misguided aspirations for residential conversions.
- Local businesses feel they need more guidance/support from Lambeth Council in order to assess opportunities for long-term vacant properties.

Poor or variable quality stock & lack of amenity:

- The age and quality of stock within industrial areas varies considerably; 'lack of promotion' and poor perception deters businesses and employers locating there.
- Requirements and amenities are sought after by micro-businesses and start-ups within the light industrial/makers and creative sectors; which include tailored unit specifications, good transport links, attractive public realm and good local retail, leisure and hospitality offer.

Local perceptions and concerns:

- Industrial areas are often challenged by a lack of sense of place, poor or undeveloped public realm and access to wider amenity. Whilst each of the area's four KIBAs differ in nature and offer, there is a requirement to focus on these elements to ensure that potential and desirability within the KIBAs is maximised. These include things such as improved cycle storage; yard parking; access to green space; and a safer pedestrian environment.
- Spaces connecting the KIBAs with the town centre and surrounding areas are poor, with high levels of traffic congestion and poor walkability. To create a truly connected area, these spaces need improvement.
- Fear of being pushed out through gentrification if the area has an overriding focus on creative business, and there is no protection of affordable rents.

"A major challenge is currently trying to change use from B2 into the new class E which is 'light industrial and others'. Once we can do this we will be able to provide 21 artist studios at affordable rates."

-Respondent from Community and Engagement;
Business owner

There are significant challenges that need to be addressed to ensure that creative industries have access to the space they need to remain in the area.

Supply-side challenges: challenges that affect the supply of space, including low vacancy rates and a lack of appropriate space.

"A challenge is the neglect that East Place Street faces. It floods every time it rains, making access difficult... and the practicalities of converting an abandoned/empty space are complicated: getting business regulations approved, getting good broadband or even fibre optic..."

-Respondent from Community and Engagement; Business owner

"There is huge demand for spaces. Now with Bainbridge Studios shut down, and ACME, there are a lot of artists looking for space. Some of them are coming into East Place Studios but many are leaving and looking elsewhere in south London."

-Respondent from Community and Engagement; Business owner

"We need space and any industrial unit in the KIBA would be ideal. We left Camden and Deptford because it got gentrified and we got forced out from the railway arches. [It would be nice if Lambeth could] promote creative enterprises in the area to enable people to have the work/live lifestyle we've worked for. My ideal would be to have a live/work unit in one single place."

-Respondent from Community and Engagement; Business owner 16/09/2021

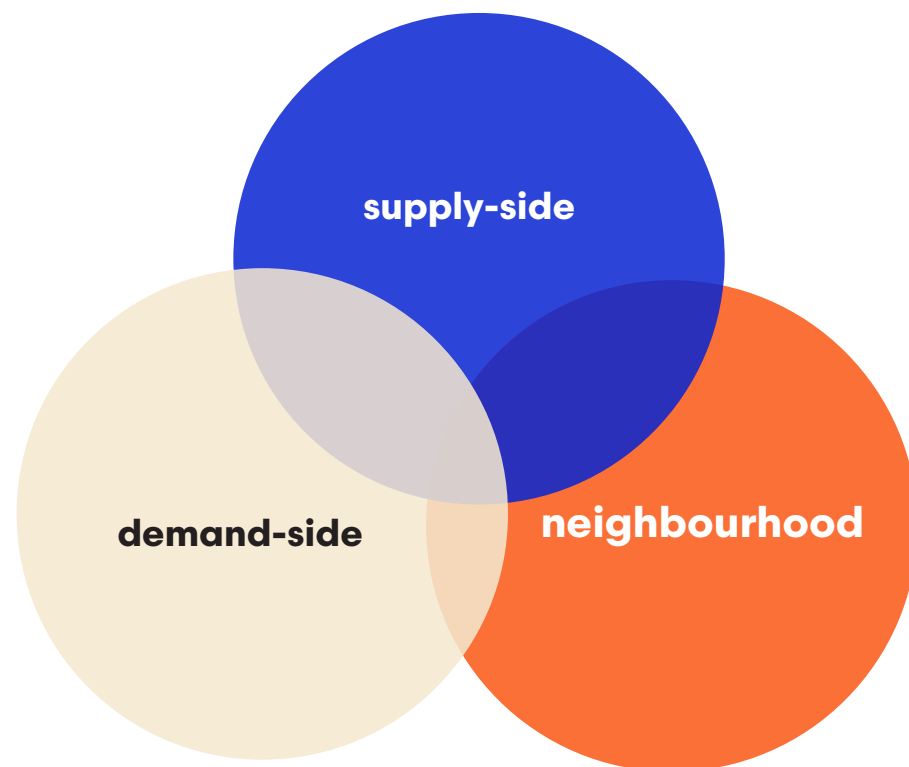
supply-side challenges

We will create a place of opportunity open to all which supports a resilient, thriving business community and ecosystem

1. Close and collaborative engagement with local businesses and residents will ensure that a pipeline of spaces is supported and promoted
2. Strategic input from the council, the local BID and other stakeholders will drive better communication within and between businesses, creating strong supply chain links, opportunity for collaboration and ties with the wider London market

We will create a place where experimentation and collaboration is encouraged, supported and safeguarded

1. Activating underused and vacant spaces will allow rent burdens to be shared across different types of business and will drive greater footfall throughout the area
2. Logistical and policy based support will encourage landowners and proprietors to activate their spaces in a more dynamic way and will help them reach potential users/tenants



We will develop a strong local identity anchored around creativity, culture and enterprise

1. Initiatives to activate the 'spaces in between' will be supported: creative spaces across the area will be linked together by an improved streetscape: more greenery and public space
2. The area will offer the spaces and amenities businesses need, animating the streets at all hours to create a safe and welcoming environment

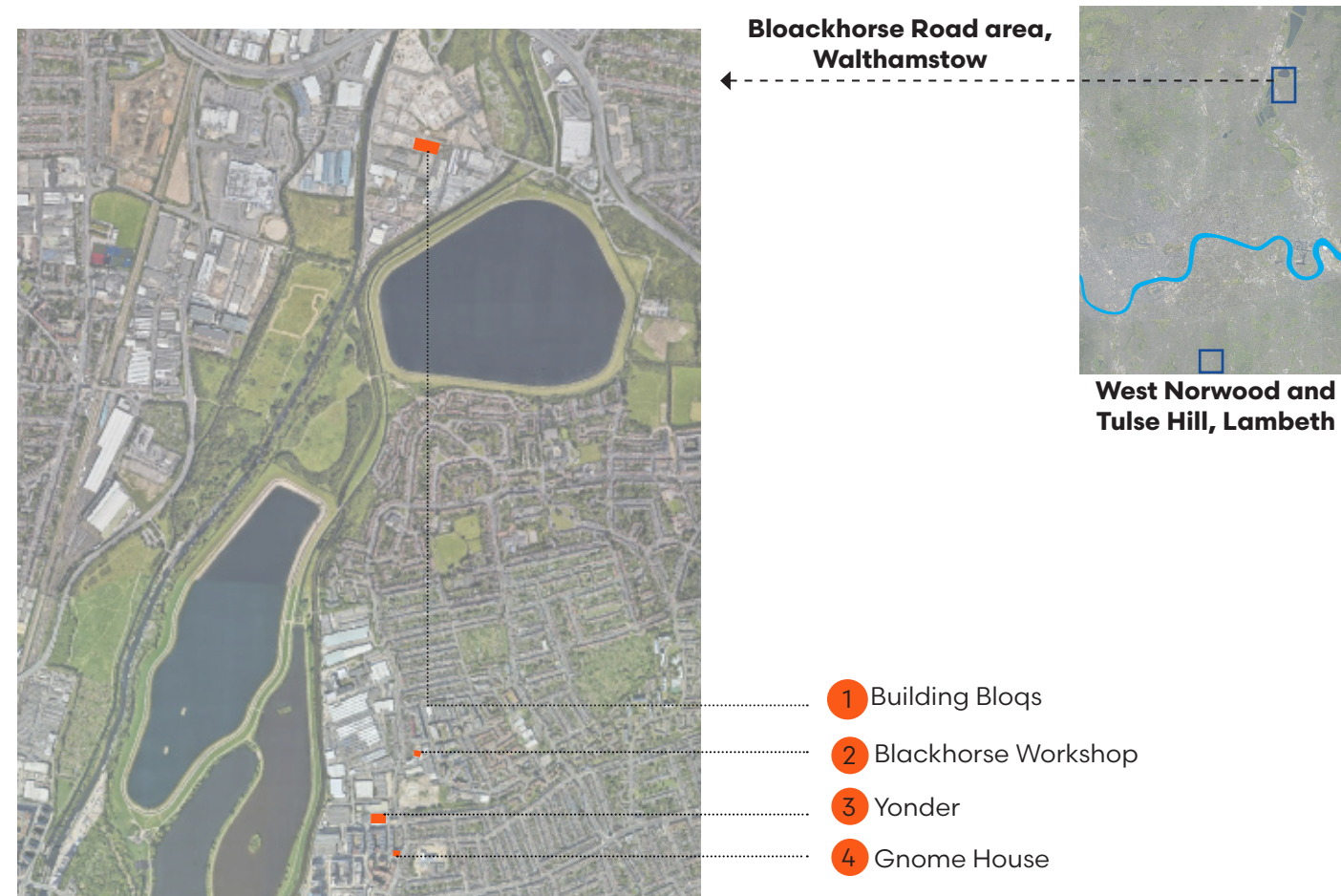
Where we want to get to:

A burgeoning community of business owners, makers and artists; a high street that offers something for everyone with a dynamic mix of different places and spaces: the West Norwood & Tulse Hill area is distinct in character and unique in the breadth and depth of its offer. We will build on this to create an exciting and **resilient** future, full of potential.

We will do this by working **collaboratively** with our businesses, residents and landowners. Together, we will celebrate what we already have and work together to activate forgotten spaces, unlocking opportunity for creativity, innovation and growth. A dynamic mix of spaces will create a **vibrant** ecosystem of makers and thinkers and will provide the space that Lambeth – and London – desperately needs. Above all, businesses will feel secure in the knowledge that they can put roots down in our neighbourhood without fear of displacement: spaces will be safeguarded into the future.

We will capitalise on everything we already have to build a strong identity; an identity based on diversity, **inclusivity**, and serendipity, where people come together to make things happen.

the vision and our objectives



case studies 1

Building Bloqs

Key Facts:

- Makerspace / Co-working / Self-contained Offices / Learning spaces / Café
- 32,000 sq ft
- Market rates
- 300 Active members (booked in past 12 months) and 1,000 dormant members

Description:

This is London's biggest makerspace for professionals providing workshops for metal and wood, fabric and paint studios, CNC and textiles; and is flexibly priced.

Blackhorse Workshop

Key Facts:

- Learning & Event Spaces / Café / Makerspace / Self-Contained offices / Co-Working
- Affordable rates
- Supports 35 makers and designers

Description:

This is an open-access community workshop in London, which specialises in wood and metal processes; with affordable access to tools, space, and on-site technical expertise.

Yonder

Key Facts:

- Makerspace / Hot-desking / Permanent Desks / Semi-Private Studios / Meeting Rooms / Yoga spaces / Café / Climbing Wall
- 9,600 sq ft
- Low market rates

Description:

The philosophy of this workspace is to create an amazing space that offers creativity and community with three specialised floors catering to all walks of creativity.

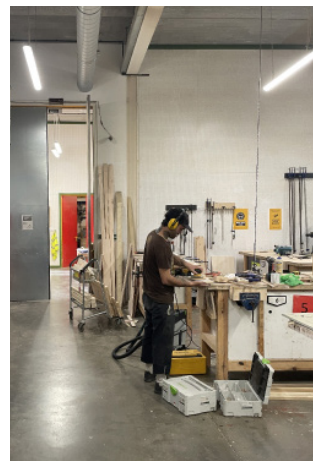
Gnome House

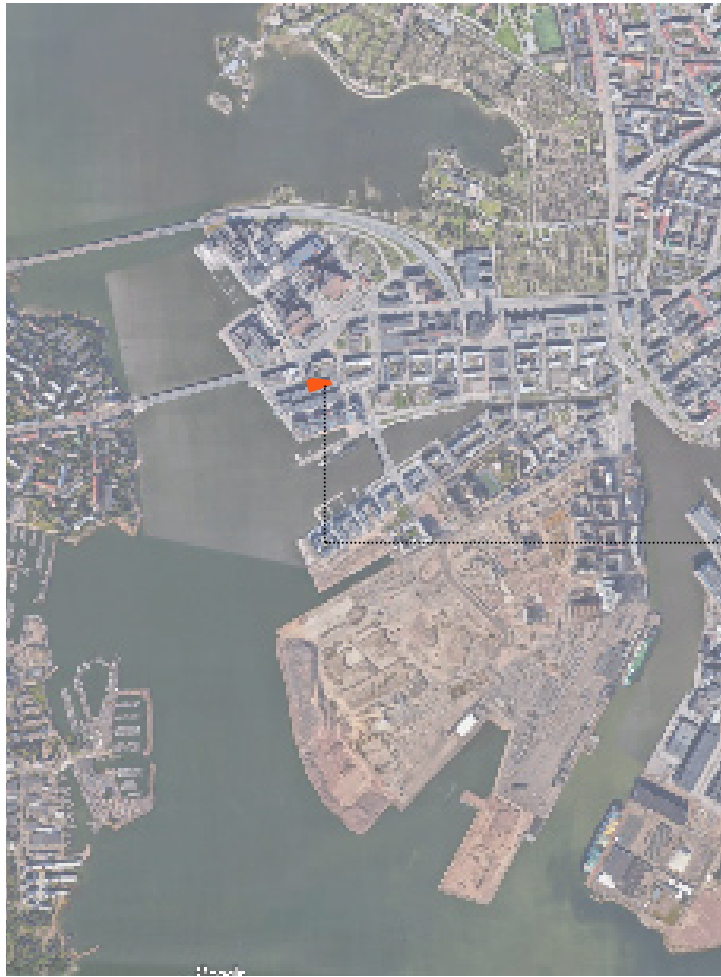
Key Facts:

- Learning + Event Space / Print-making Studio / Café
- 3,000 sq ft
- Rent varies for community events vs. commercial events

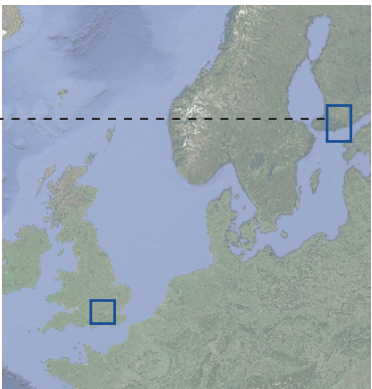
Description:

Gnome House is a community arts space that includes a printmaking studio, a large community/creative space available for hire and a pop-up cafe.





Helsinki, Finland



London, UK

1 The Cable Factory



Brixton Hill,
Lambeth



West Norwood &
Tulse Hill, Lambeth

2 Tripod, Brixton Hill

case studies 2

The Cable Factory, Helsinki

Key Facts:

- The Cable Factory earns income from letting and hiring space, promoting events, and through ancillary activities such as restaurants, retail units, cafes and bars.
- Owned by Helsinki City Council

Description:

The Cable Factory is Finland's largest cultural centre. It is home to a concert hall, museums, art galleries, dance theatres and art schools. It also provides creative workspaces for artists, dancers, designers and architects. Spaces are being rented out on both a permanent and short-term basis. These artists are typically part of artistic and cultural organisations which can be commercial or non-profit. The Cable Factory was developed as a response to Finland's economic downturn in the early 1990s. High rates of unemployment implored the city's council to create a strategy to address the growing issues. Culture, urban design, international networks and new technologies were at the centre of this strategic restructuring, leading to the old factory building to be redeveloped to a cultural centre that rented out studios to artists.

Tripod, Brixton Hill

Key Facts:

- Part of a wider effort to support the growth of creative and digital industry jobs in Brixton
- Operated by Meanwhile Space CIC in partnership with Lambeth Council. Based in Lambeth Town Hall to maximise accessibility and local connections.
- Owned by Lambeth Council.

Description:

Tripod provides space, events and connections for creative, tech and social businesses to positively impact the local community. With a range of spaces including individual desks, pods, and larger studios, there is workspace suitable for everyone from freelancers to start-ups and growing SMEs.



© Meanwhile Space CIC



© Heikki Kourvo and Patrik Rastenberg



**Part two:
taking action**

“We would be interested in using our empty unit as workspace, but we just don’t know where to start.”

-Respondent from Partnership Meeting; business owner



Our recommended approach to the area is to promote a network of spaces that are creative and affordable. This network should be flexible to ensure landlords and landowners can offer space as their needs change, and also transparent to ensure that prospective businesses have an active and up to date register of available spaces and the market rent of each space for referencing purposes.

The network would be a thread of workspaces running from Tulse Hill station to the southern end of West Norwood, with a focus on light-industrial and makerspaces within Norwood Works.

This network would provide a wide variety of spaces that range in sizes, because flexibility and diversity of workspace is fundamental for the promotion of a dynamic area that is responsive to market demand.

The diversity of typology was defined through a combination of methods:

- **Feedback** from the engagement (see Making High Streets Work, Engagement Process Report)
- **Local knowledge** acquired by the BID including need for space, market demands and supply pipeline
- **Lessons learned** from other successful areas in London where workspace clusters are thriving (Brixton, Walthamstow, Hackney Wick and Peckham)

The required spaces can be classified into six typologies ranging from the ‘bulky, messy and dirty activity’ requiring large studio spaces, to the ‘lean, clean and moveable activity’ which is more computer based.



Meeting Space

The **meeting space** is the most flexible typology because it can range in size and in its requirements. It is also one of the most important typologies which continuously emerged (through engagement) as the 'key connector' of people. The founder of Building Bloqs, for example, said: "The café was opened before the workshop because it is where people meet, so it is critical to skills exchange". Similarly, the Neighbourhood Planning Assembly (NPA) confirmed that a meeting space was vital for them because meeting was a way of fostering local community involvement and unity between groups and organisations. They previously used to meet in the library, but "It is always booked up and not very accessible. A pub room would be ideal...however all [meeting spaces] have some level of constraint."



Event Space

Event spaces are those where activities can occur that would have traditionally happened in the village hall. Event spaces can be flexible and meanwhile. A local artist for example said that a major aspiration would be "to have a gallery and use the model of APT (Artists in Perpetuity) in Deptford or Thameside Studios, because galleries act as a community hub and a way of linking artists with the wider community." Furthermore, galleries can offer residencies, workshops and other temporary activities that support the idea of a vibrant, connected area. In addition, a gallery space "would help link up the artists with the wider community so artists don't work in a bubble". Event spaces support activities rehearsal spaces, art exhibitions, and corporate / business events.



Co-working Space

The **co-working space** has different models it can follow, ranging from a membership system that allows hot-desking on an ad-hoc basis, or a fixed desk arrangement with longer-term fees. Co-working spaces are ideal for small-medium enterprises (SMEs) and local residents who work from home but who sometimes require workspace/meeting rooms outside of the home/residential area. It was felt that if the area supported a wider range of artist and maker spaces, there would be more creative events happening that would give local residents a reason to visit the area. This would also raise perceptions of safety and create a more welcoming environment, with the addition of better public realm that would support positive change and help locals navigate the area better. Facilitating an additional layer of amenities that addresses the need for workspace would serve both local residents and emerging business in need of flexible arrangements.



Self-contained office space

Self-contained offices are important for more sensitive equipment such as recording studios and businesses that are IT-heavy. There should be an appropriate number of self-contained offices that allow for expansion/acceleration as the business outgrows their co-working or hot-desk solution and requires something more permanent and secure. There is a high demand for self-contained offices, as evidenced by the waiting list currently in place at Parkhall Business Studios operated by the Workspace Group Ltd.



Makerspaces & Studios

Norwood Works provides a unique opportunity for West Norwood to support a hub of **makerspaces and studio spaces**. An existing community of artists already work within the industrial spaces in the KIBA, renting at affordable rates. However, some buildings have closed, leading to artists leaving the area altogether. One concern raised by the Norwood Planning Assembly (NPA) was that Norwood Works, being highly embedded within and close to residential areas, does not give local residents a reason to visit the area, and "the KIBA should have more of a reason for the community to go there". If the area supports a wide range of artist and maker spaces, there will be an influx of event spaces, open studio days and (maybe even) a gallery that could attract local residents.



Trade Spaces

An overriding concern that emerged from the engagement was that promoting so much creative activity in West Norwood and Tulse Hill would eventually mean the area would be gentrified and local residents displaced through an increase in prices. Until now, the area has been harmoniously balanced between **trade spaces** and creative business and maintaining such a balance is important. Not only do the trade spaces provide amenities that support a neighbourhood (such as mechanics), but they are also spaces where apprentices and skills-based internships are increasingly taking place.

type of workspaces

This is an illustrated page identifying the space criteria of a business premises and is intended to help landowners and landlords identify how and what they can do with their underused space:

key to area allowance:

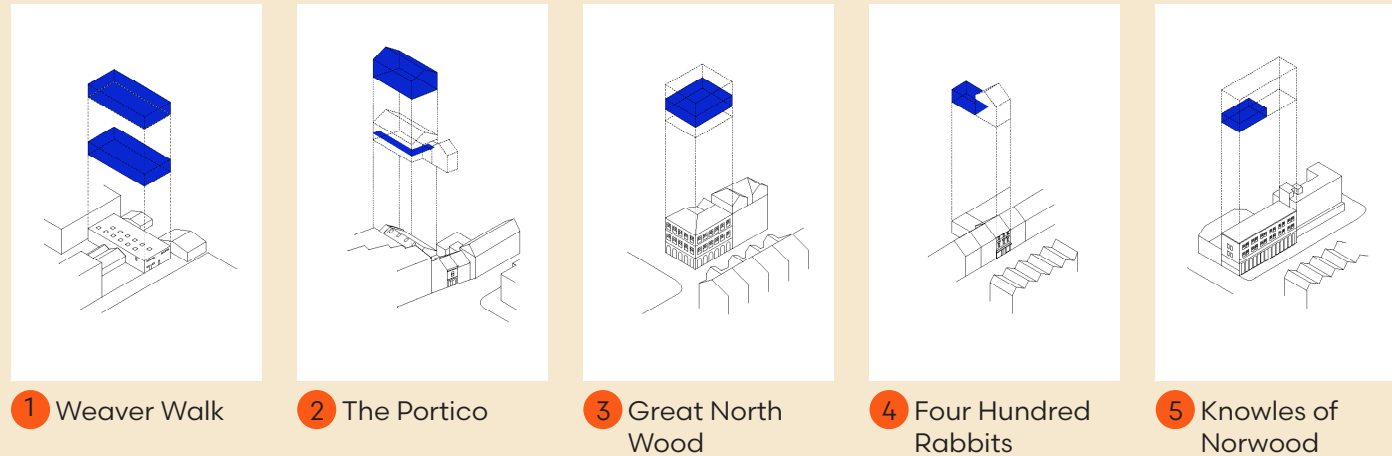
- 1 meeting space = 6 sqm = 65 sqft
- small meeting room (2-4 ppl) = 100 sq ft
- large meeting room (4-8ppl) = 150 sq ft
- events space = 8 sq ft per person
- event space if seated = 10-14 sq ft per person
- 1 desk space per person = 50 sq ft
- Self-contained office space = 1029 sq ft (up to 25 people)
- 1 small workspace with 1 workbench = 65 sq ft
- 1 medium workspace with 1 workbench = 80 sq ft
- 1 large workspace with 1 workbench = 130 sq ft
- 1 outdoor workspace = 130 sqft
- 1 vehicle workspace = 130 sqft

Sources of information:

- [Workspace Ltd.](#)
- [Building Bloqs Ltd.](#)
- [Fluid Meet](#)
- [Social tables](#)

Capacity	Types of Spaces					
	 Meeting Space	 Event Space	 Co-Working Space	 Self-Contained Office Space	 Makerspace or Studio	 Trade Space
<1000 sqft	up to 10 small meeting room up to 6 large meeting room	up to 125 people for standing event up to 70-100 people for seated event	up to 20 desk space	1 office space for up to 25 people	up to 15 small workspace up to 12 medium workspace up to 7 large workspace	up to 7 vehicle workspace
1,000-5,000 sqft	10-50 small meeting room 6-33 large meeting room	125-625 people for standing event 70-357 people for seated event	20-100 desk space	1-5 office space for up to 120 people	15-76 small workspace 12-62 medium workspace 7-38 large workspace	7-38 vehicle workspace
5,000-15,000 sqft	50-150 small meeting room 6-100 large meeting room	625-1875 people for standing event 357-1071 people for seated event	100-300 desk space	5-14.5 office space for up to 364 people	76-230 small workspace 62-187 medium workspace 38-115 large workspace	38-115 vehicle workspace
>15,000 sqft	more than 150 small meeting room more than 100 large meeting room	more than 1875 people for standing event more than 1071 people for seated event	more than 300 desk space	more than 15 office space for more than 375 people	more than 230 small workspace 187 medium workspace 115 large workspace	more than 115 vehicle workspace

*All development proposals requiring planning consent will be subject to London Plan 2021 and Lambeth Local Plan 2021 policies and standards on parking.



Opportunities at a glance in West Norwood & Tulse Hill

As part of the Making High Streets Work, a partnership meeting was held in The Great North Wood pub on September 20th 2021, where seven different landowners attended along with two community group representatives, Lambeth Council, Station to Station BID and other key stakeholders.

Each landowner presented their position and aspirations to the Partnership, and this was followed by an in-depth group discussion.

Landowners and businesses shared information on their properties (whether owned or leased), current uses, the potential of their premises, their aspirations and how Station to Station BID and Lambeth Council could help to support these ambitions.

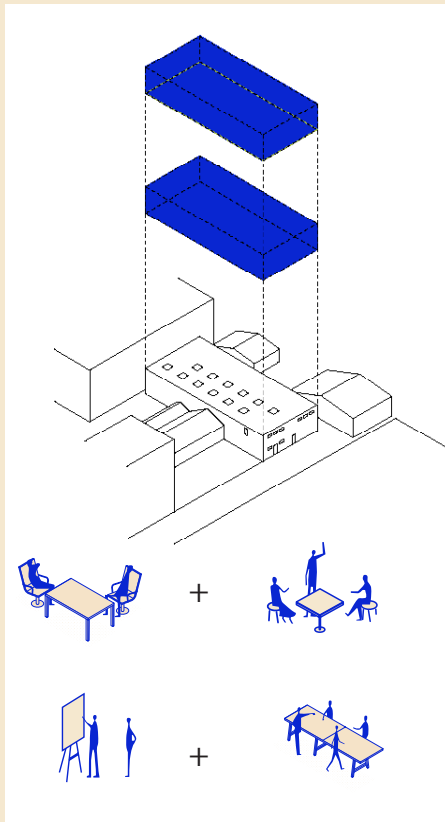
This partnership meeting was fundamental in establishing a shared vision amongst landlords and business owners: the desire to work collectively to address the challenge of underused spaces in their portfolios was made clear.

A 'Collective' of businesses who are willing and able to actively work together to achieve this shared vision emerged from the meeting, founded on the guiding principle that working together to address supply and demand of vacant and underused sites could lead to an exciting local project for the community. This 'Collective' is about working together to create a local network that is vibrant, resilient, collaborative and inclusive.

Five separate sites were identified (overleaf), each with a different issue of vacancy or underutilisation. These sites have been used to look at some of the opportunities currently in existence and how these existing assets could be activated and better utilised.

Moving forward, it is expected that the Partnership will continue on a quarterly basis, supporting and guiding discussions and connections; enabling additional workspace to be realised and support the future growth of West Norwood and Tulse Hill.

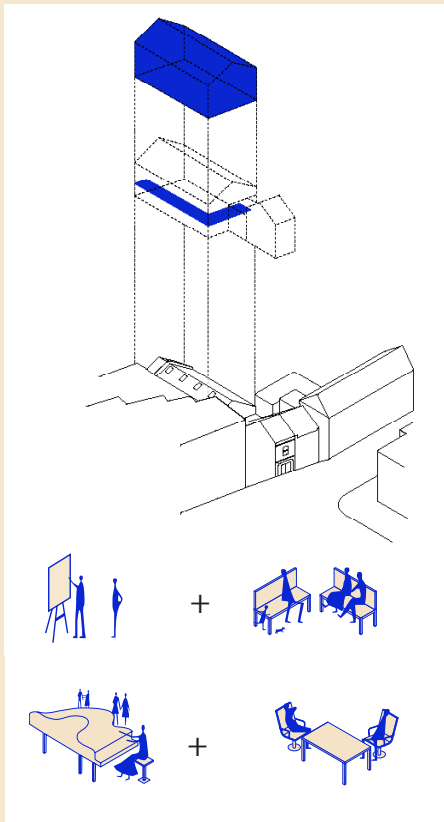
Weaver Walk



Key Facts:

- 13,800 sq ft across two floors
- Place of worship on Sundays, small part of building used as a film and music studio.
- Sits within Norwood Works and could provide makerpace/studios at affordable rates

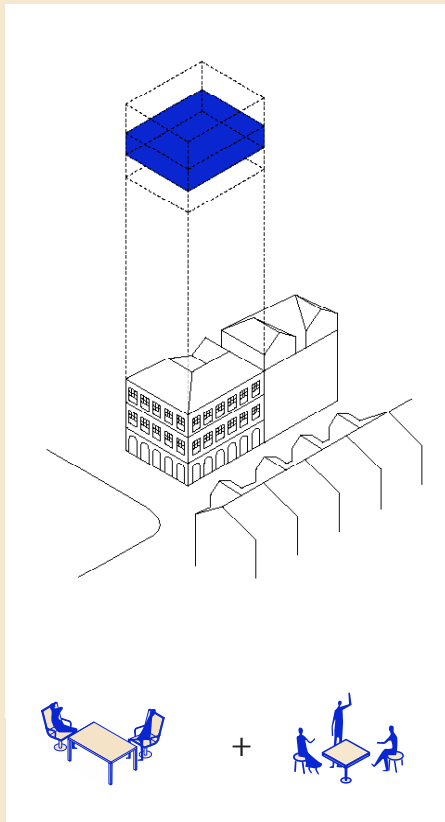
The Portico



Key Facts:

- 10,000 sq ft across two floors with a large internal hall
- Considered the cultural home of West Norwood for a decade
- Is trying to secure funds to provide a variety of spaces such as:
 - Soundproofed recording studios
 - Modular studios for use as editing suites & creative workspace
 - A dedicated space / studio for pottery & art

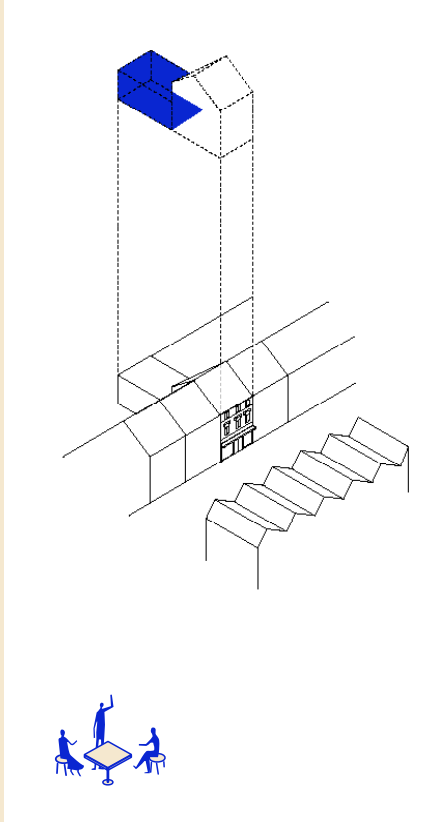
Great North Wood



Key Facts:

- A successful working pub, with a desire to open longer hours
- The first floor is currently underused
- There is potential to convert the first floor into co-working or hot desking space during 9-5 working hours

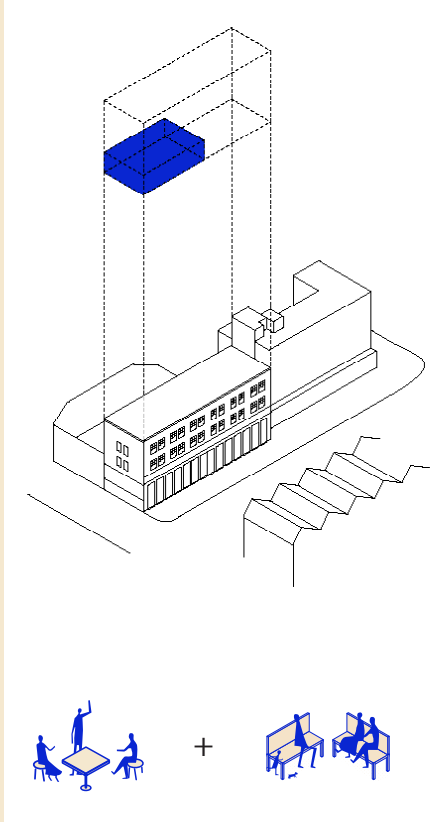
Four Hundred Rabbits



Key Facts:

- A pizza restaurant which is only open after 12pm
- The owner would like to open longer hours but does not have the demand, so the space could be made available for co-working, with the potential of increasing to longer hours if successful
- Needs better internet, preferably fibre optic

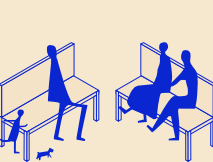
Knowles of Norwood



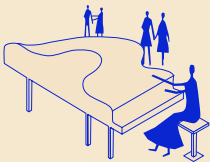
Key Facts:

- Pub that owns vacant retail unit next door to it
- Subject to seeking advice from the Local Planning Authority and any necessary planning consents, there may be potential to bring the space into use by opening up the vacant unit for co-working use

Key:



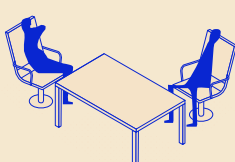
Meeting Space



Event Space



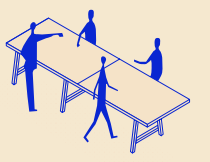
Co-working Space



Self-contained office space



Makerspaces



Trade Spaces

part two: taking action

The need for workspace, particularly low-cost ‘messy, smelly, noisy’ workspace, has become an increasing focus at both a city and regional level. This section sets out the key ‘enablers’ that we will seek to harness in order to deliver our Vision.

Securing the right funding

- Lambeth Council and Station to Station BID will proactively identify and seek to secure sources of public and grant funding that will support the delivery of the Vision, whether this is funding made available by London Borough of Lambeth (such as the Future Workspace Fund), the Greater London Authority or others. To support us making effective, evidenced and well targeted applications for funding we will work collaboratively to measure and understand the issues that matter to West Norwood and Tulse Hill to plan and deliver actions that will make a positive difference and add value.
- We will also work to encourage the right types of investment from existing and new businesses into the area that contribute to, but do not detract from the Vision and the inclusive growth that we want to see.

Capitalising on local, regional and national planning policy levers

- A number of Local Authorities operate dedicated Local Plan or supporting supplementary planning policies to secure and protect workspace supply. This is a natural starting point in influencing market delivery and activity. We are already taking an active approach to leveraging policy to drive desired outcomes:

Local Policy

- The Norwood Planning Assembly is in the process of developing a **neighbourhood plan** (the Norwood Green Town Plan). This is a community driven plan with an emphasis on the Green Charter which aims to identify priority areas for action and intervention. The intention of the NPA is to ensure that any activity undertaken through this vision aligns with this work.
- Lambeth Council has published The **Lambeth Local Plan 2020-2035** (adopted in September 2021): Policy PN7 on West Norwood and Tulse Hill promotes smaller-scale creative business and workspace on Norwood High Street at ground floor, in combination with upper floor residential uses and sets out Lambeth Council’s intention to protect commercial uses across

the affected area. This has also led to the section of Norwood High Street south of the railway line being removed from the town centre and designated as a Creative Business Cluster to promote greater flexibility in uses and spaces.

- A **non-immediate Article 4 direction** has been made, covering the West Norwood and Tulse Hill primary shopping area and the new Creative Business Cluster along Norwood High Street and all four KIBAs. Subject to confirmation by the Council, and subject to any intervention by the Secretary of State, this Article 4 direction is expected come into force in August 2022 and Class MA permitted development rights will not extend to these areas, meaning that planning permission will be required for change of use from Use Class E to C3 residential.
- Lambeth Council is committed to developing a **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** for Norwood High Street which will provide guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policy in this location.
- Regulation 18 Consultation has recently closed on the council’s **Draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD)** which includes a proposed revised site allocation policy for Site 18 (286-362 Norwood Road), and a proposed site allocation policy for Site 19 (Knolly’s Yard).
- The **new KIBA designation** for Knolly’s Yard has potential for industrial intensification and co-location with residential development.

National Legislation

- The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 has introduced significant changes to the system of use classes. The legislation is aimed at enabling the repurposing of buildings in high streets and town centres quickly and in response to changing demand. Of particular relevance is use Class E which replaces the now revoked use classes of A1 (shops), A2 (financial and professional), A3 (restaurants and cafes) as well as B1(a-c) (offices, research and the development of products or processes, industrial process suitable in a residential area), D1(a-b) (clinics, health centres, creches, day nurseries, day centres) and D2(e) (gymnasiums, indoor recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms) and groups them all into one new use class: use Class E.

enablers

part two: taking action

- Due to its ability to enable businesses to be more flexible and have a varied offer, the introduction of Class E can be beneficial in some circumstances in town centre locations. However, it also has the potential to be harmful within town centre primary shopping areas where the critical mass of shop uses can be lost and also outside town centres such as in designated industrial areas (including our KIBAs) because light industrial uses can be changed into a shop, office or restaurant without planning permission, undermining the integrity of these industrial areas and reducing the stock of land protected for industrial use.



Embracing a data-led approach

Evidence-based insight and decision-making can not only support the formulation of more effective interventions and activities but can drive better outcomes against particular local needs. There are a number of data sources and tools available that we are already exploring to support this, including:

- **GLA High street data partnership sources and the Local Data Company:** LB Lambeth is a subscriber to the GLA's ground-breaking new data tool for local authorities and the Local Data Company. We are now able to actively and regularly measure essential metrics such as: footfall data to track how a local centre is being used; vacancy data, which can tell us the number and percent of vacant high street units, whether there are any with persistent vacancies or high tenant turnover, and where they are located; high street catchment characteristics, including the number of businesses to residential addresses, workers to residents and land ownership.
- **Arts Council England:**
 - Local Government Investment Dashboard: existing data at a local authority, regional and UK level has been brought together to track funding and demand in the creative industries.
 - The Audience Agency: Commissioned by Arts Council England, the Audience Agency provides detail of demand by location, activity type and demographics.



Building on stakeholder support and championing collaboration

We recognise that strong stakeholder support is crucial to effective intervention and meaningful change. Without strong partnerships, working relationships and a shared vision, actions are harder to formulate and ultimately deliver.

- West Norwood and Tulse Hill have an active business and resident community who are deeply invested in the area and work collaboratively to support one another and the ongoing vibrance of the neighbourhood. Community forums such as Norwood Forum, Norwood Action Group and NPA, who are developing the new Neighbourhood Plan, are just some of the community groups taking an active role in forging the future of the area.
- Station to Station, the local Business Improvement District covering West Norwood & Tulse Hill, has developed strong working relationships with these local businesses and community members and is committed to working collaboratively with these groups to ensure that support is provided where needed.
- Lambeth Council works closely with Station to Station and other community stakeholders to understand issues and challenges, exploring opportunities to overcome barriers



enablers



Exploring opportunities for innovation in direct intervention and facilitation:

Direct intervention, focused on acquiring existing building stock in local authority or third-party ownership for use as workspace, has become an increasing focus for local authorities as they look to take a stronger role in influencing local economies. This approach recognises that timeliness, locality and affordability can sometimes be best addressed by re-purposing existing buildings within a community:

- An authority can take a direct role in the relationship between landlord and operator / end user thereby creating an important bridge between assets in private ownership and the businesses and community groups that can support activation.
- Local authorities may choose to strategically acquire and directly invest in properties to secure and develop assets that work harder at the heart of their communities.
- Local authorities can also support partnership working with local stakeholders which aim to match landlords, spaces and community end users, or which seek to secure funding (e.g., Good Growth Fund).
- There is also potential for Station to Station and local community groups to formally support and influence community interests (e.g., through seeking designation of Assets of Community Value (ACV) and supporting the Community Right to Bid).
- Norwood Planning Assembly (NPA) are developing a Neighbourhood Plan which outlines a vision for the local area.
- Lambeth Council will provide the necessary support and advice to Norwood Planning Assembly in accordance with the council's policy in its Statement of Community Involvement.

enablers

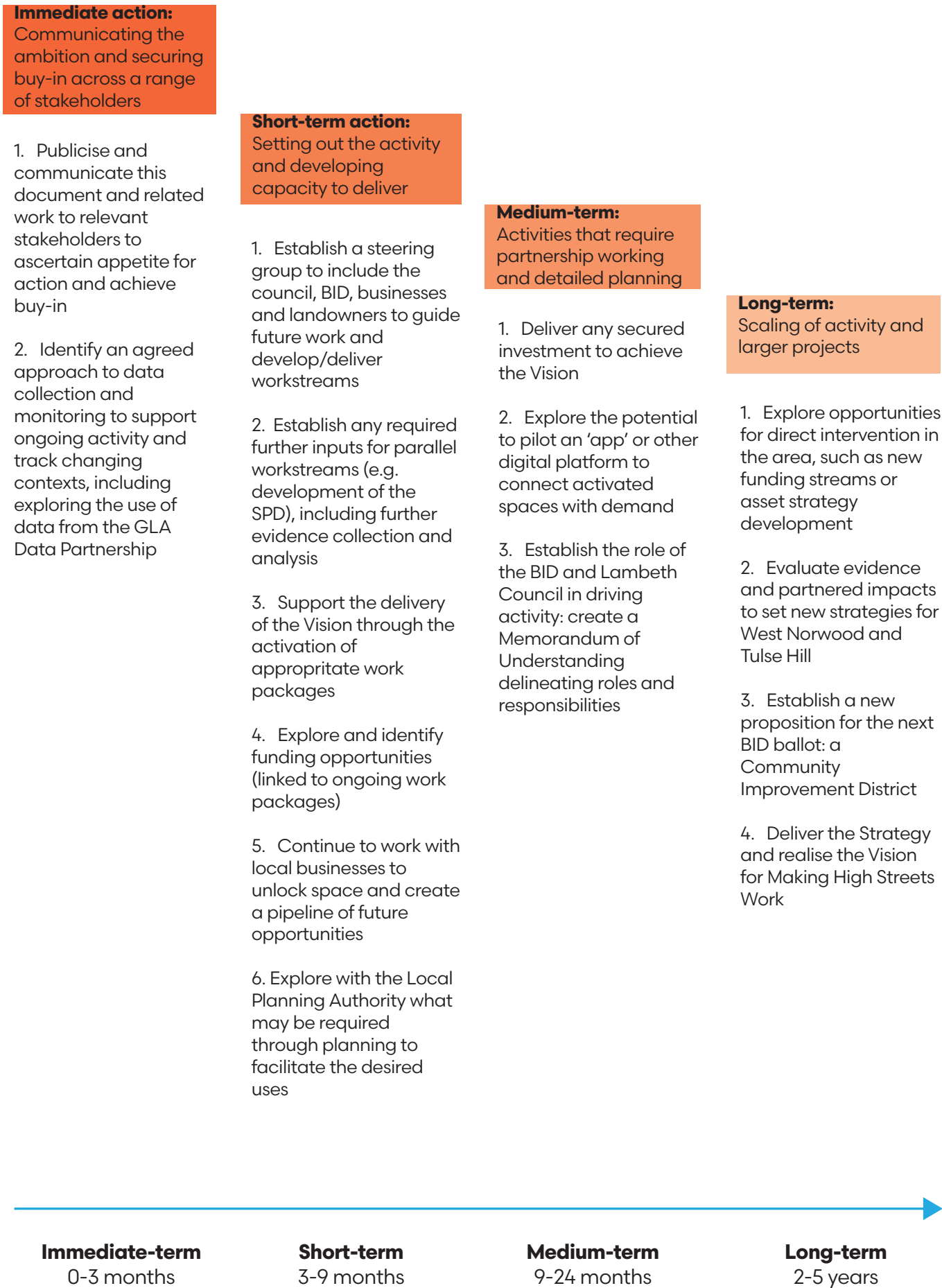
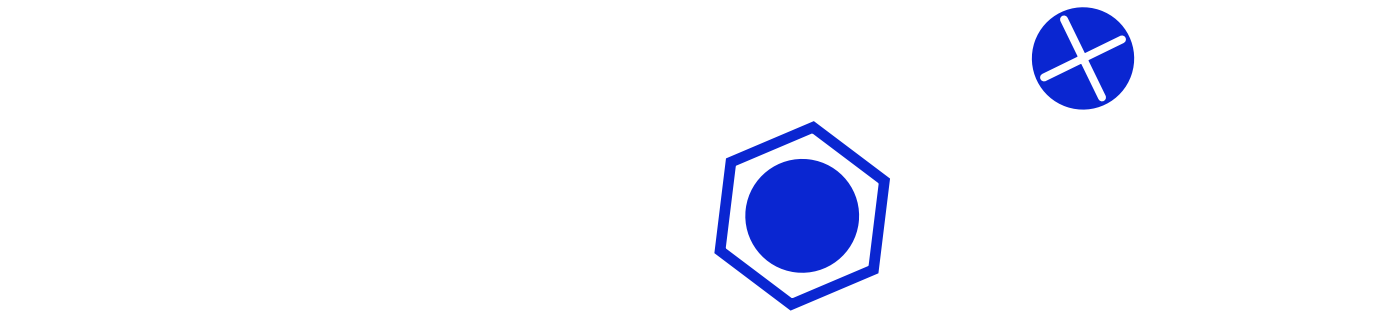


Figure 6: Forward Plan



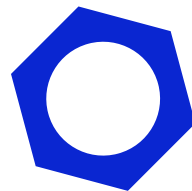
Building on our partnership's strengths to deliver

We recognise that success will require the support, energy and enthusiasm of key stakeholders and will involve local businesses and communities, Station to Station BID and Lambeth Council. We will build on the strengths of our local partnerships and the breadth of our collective abilities to deliver the Vision.

Our Forward Plan (Figure 6) summarises key activities and milestones over the short, medium and long-term time future.

Our approach to delivery will be based on three key principles:

- 1. Collaborate** – We will recognise and capitalise on the different abilities, resources and talents across key stakeholders and will approach delivery in a coordinated, collaborative way that also unlocks benefits that are only achievable though working together. This will involve further discussions about how we plan to deliver the Vision and how we will work together.
- 2. Enable** – We will seek to unlock the untapped potential of assets and opportunities that are already within our community. We recognise that this will require new ways of working, capacity building and support, and we will seek to creatively use the tools and resources available to us. Furthermore, we will proactively seek to identify new sources of funding, resources or support that better equip us to deliver the Vision.
- 3. Celebrate** – We will actively monitor key indicators that help us better understand the key issues and challenges in our local economy and community. We will celebrate both our successes and what is unique and special about West Norwood. and Tulse Hill. By doing this we are strengthening our case for new funding by encouraging inclusive growth that supports our Vision.



the vision



MAYOR OF LONDON

