

WANDSWORTH

DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

Balham Area Strategy



Wandsworth Council are in the process of completely updating the borough's Local Plan. The Plan sets out a strategic vision and objectives to guide the next 15 years of development in the borough (2023-2038), ensuring that growth and renewal happens in a sustainable and co-ordinated way.

The new Local Plan will shape and guide decisions on the location, amount and type of development the borough requires to meet local needs. This includes buildings and how they're used, as well as supporting infrastructure and accessibility. The Local Plan is the most important document used to determine planning applications.



Area Strategies - a place-based approach

Wandsworth's draft new Local Plan places a greater emphasis on how places are designed. Area strategies have been developed to guide the growth of different parts of the borough in a sensitive and tailored way. Each area strategy is based on an integrated approach which combines three themes:

- **People First:** Prioritising people to create more sustainable, sociable and healthier communities that maximise wellbeing and quality of life. A people first approach allows meaningful choices in how people travel, the housing they can access, the way they work, for play and across all aspects of day-to-day life.
- **Placemaking:** Recognises that buildings, roads, parks and spaces all blend to create something called 'place'. This must be managed to mitigate climate change, support nature, value heritage, manage traffic and secure resilience. It is through the combination of management and design that place identity is established.
- **Smart Growth:** Concentrates on managing development to deliver economic, social and environmental outcomes. It supports a vibrant local economy that creates jobs and opportunity, and emphasises the provision of inclusive, affordable housing. Smart Growth promotes developments that are fit for purpose, responsive to the local context, and which recognise that mixed use supports sustainable places.

Have your say on the development of the borough up to the year 2038 - take part in the public consultation to shape Wandsworth's draft Local Plan until 1 March 2021.

For details please visit:

[wandsworth.gov.uk/localplanreview](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/localplanreview)



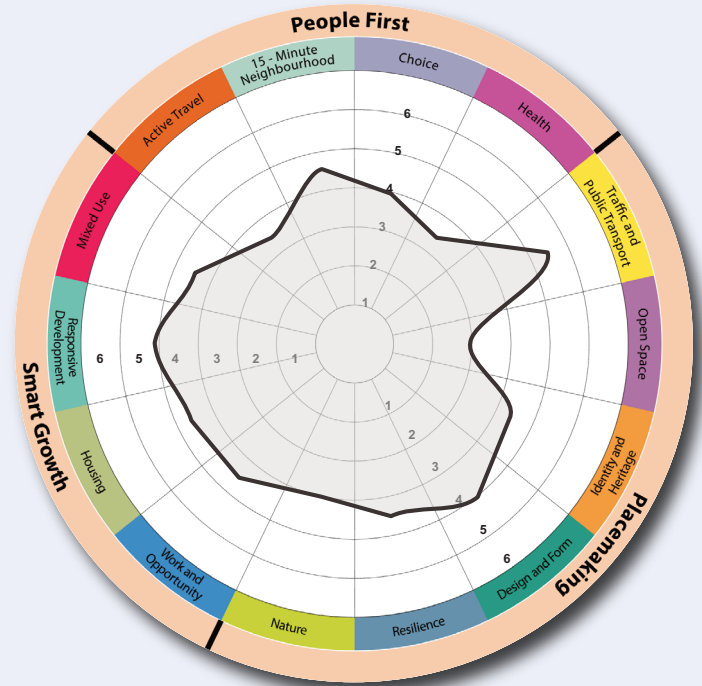
An Area Strategy for Balham

Area Performance

Area performance considers the 14 elements that make up the People First, Placemaking and Smart Growth criteria to provide a simple framework to help guide placemaking objectives as set out in the Area Strategies of the Plan. There's no *right* outcome for area performance as each place is unique. However, it allows you to think about the 14 elements of a place and the complex issues within places, allowing local people, decision-makers and others a common platform to assess needs and potential. The 14 elements are highlighted in the diagram and explained further in the draft Local Plan.

Balham is a cohesive community that supports a People First approach as it performs well as a 15-minute neighbourhood that helps lifestyle choice for the community. This can be reinforced by promoting active travel, such as walking and cycling. Placemaking outcomes support public transport connectivity and good open space provision which is attractive to all. Balham has a good identity and form. Development has delivered on Smart Growth with local employment, housing range and diversity of use performing reasonably.

To find out more about the Balham Area Strategy, the place performance criteria and definitions please see section 10 of the draft Local Plan.



See page 166 of the draft Local Plan.

Character and Opportunity

Balham is characterised by Victorian and Edwardian terraces that contribute positively to the street scene, with a sense of diversity, variety and colour. There is a feel of individuality to buildings (e.g. shop fronts along Hildreth Street), yet these create a coherent overall unity.

Balham developed following the opening of the railway in 1856. The station stimulated development of the fields lying behind the early ribbon development along Balham Hill and Balham High Road, creating new residential estates. This development and the commercial growth of the centre was further accentuated by the introduction of a tram in 1903, and then the extension of the Underground in 1926.



Today, Balham is an established and accessible urban centre that forms a local destination for eating, drinking and shopping. The town centre is focused on four roads: Balham Station Road, Balham High Road, Bedford Hill and the pedestrianised Hildreth Street, which create a triangular shopping circuit with a Sainsbury's supermarket at its heart and Waitrose close by. Balham benefits greatly from Hildreth Street, which hosts a popular street market and has an emerging café culture. The centre is well provided for community facilities.

There is a high incidence of post-war infill development, some of which are unsympathetic. There is also evidence of gradual deterioration of the built form towards Tooting Bec underground station. The area also suffers from the lack of street trees.

Balham is greatly enhanced by positive landmarks on corner plots, including the Bedford and Devonshire pubs. Historic interest is also provided by the Du Cane Court, a distinctive 8 storey 1930s residential block and churches: St Mary's Church and Polish Church of Christ the King.



The presence of rail and underground stations enable excellent access to public transport in Balham. Although Balham benefits from excellent public transport accessibility, the area is dominated by car parks. These features negatively affect the street scene and attract a lot of cars to the main road. Balham High Road is busy and generally difficult to cross. The area is served by Cycle Superhighway 7, however there are issues with the quality of the cycle lane, and there is also insufficient provision of local cycle lanes.



Vision

- Restore the town centre's character by supporting improvements to existing frontages and creating well-located new homes and offices.
- Provide an inclusive and connected public realm/open space and encourage urban greening to create a pleasant and people-focused urban environment.
- Support measures to reduce the dominance of cars and improve opportunities for active travel.
- Support development at key gateways to the centre that create a stronger definition.
- Make efficient use of the allocated site at the eastern end of the town centre.





Balham Area Priorities

People First

- Bedford Hill Place and areas adjacent to Balham Library present desirable locations for the expansion of Balham's cultural offer.
- Development should promote more space for pedestrians, especially on routes to Balham Station and by providing better waiting areas for bus passengers on Balham High Road.
- Measures to widen pavements along Balham High Road will be supported. These should integrate high quality public realm and street trees in order to improve the pedestrian experience and reduce the perceived dominance of vehicle traffic.
- New development will be expected to provide loading and servicing off street where possible, and on side roads where not, in order to reduce congestion.
- Improvements to Cycle Superhighway 7 on A24 corridor and other local cycle lanes will be supported.
- Proposals should deliver and/or fund cycle parking provision where there is a deficiency.

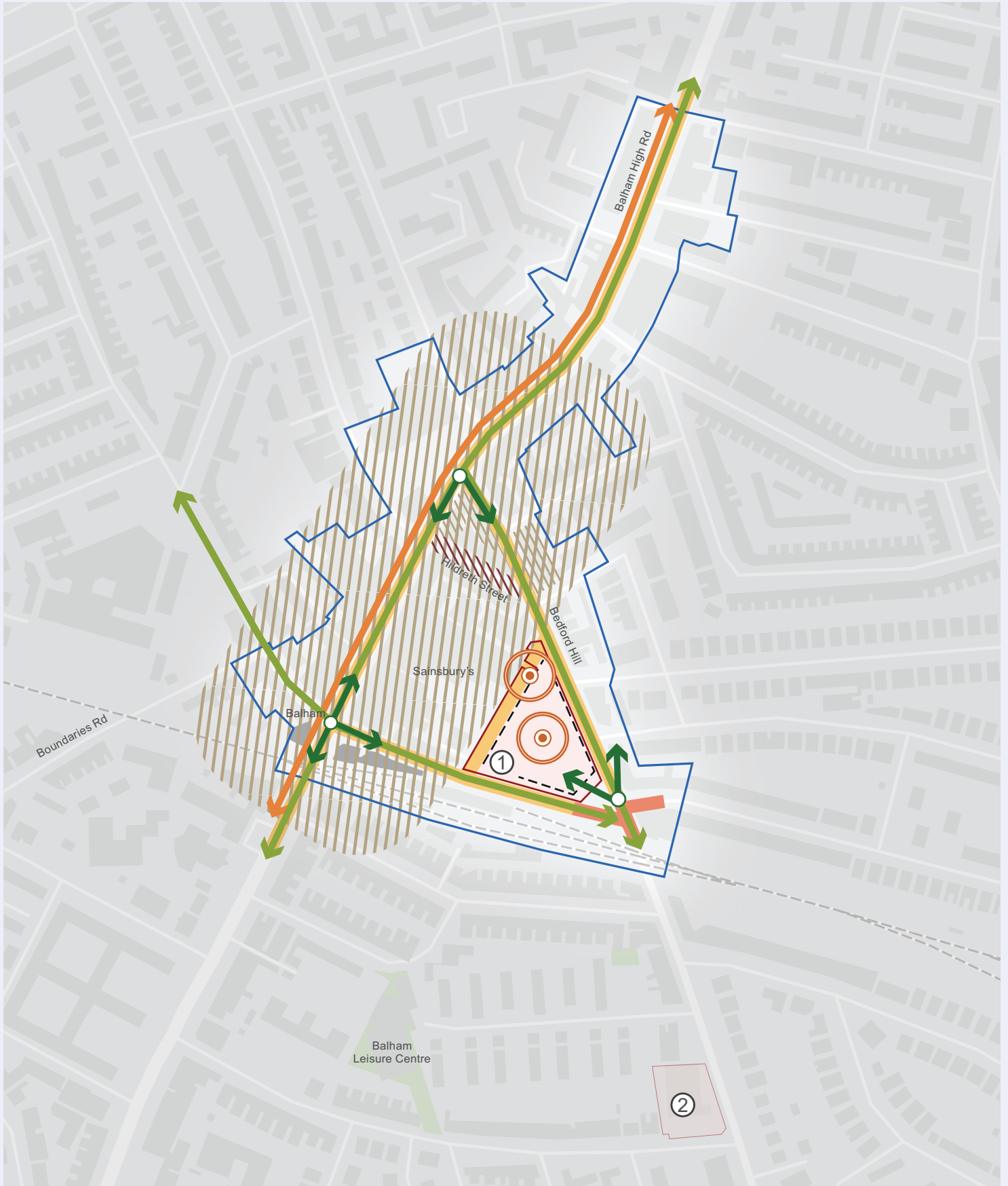
Placemaking

- Promote a stronger definition to the northern, southern and eastern ends of the town centre with development proposals to the eastern end of the town centre aiming to reduce the dominance of existing surface car parking. Development proposals to the southern end of the town centre should aim to distinguishing between the identities of Tooting Bec and Balham.
- Opportunities to repair, improve and unify existing frontages are encouraged, particularly to the south of Balham High Road. Where historic shopfronts and features are present, these must be retained.
- Appropriate development, particularly for office and residential use, that restores the consistent building line and height along Balham High Road will be supported.
- Where appropriate, development proposals should make provision for new street trees.
- Proposals on Hildreth Street should contribute to the pedestrian environment and the public realm to support the operation of a street market.
- Loss of open space will be resisted and opportunities to create additional open space and public realm enhancements will be supported.








Smart Growth

- To ensure that future growth enhances the unique townscape qualities of the area, the strategy aims to provide at least 130 homes between 2023 and 2038, (in addition to those which will already be completed prior to 2023), and to promote additional growth which enhances existing character.
- Retain a strong retail core which is focused on the area of Balham High Road to the north of the station.
- Proposals for cafes, restaurants and 'twilight' evening uses will be encouraged; particularly on the pedestrianised Hildreth Street.
- The protection of existing and provision of affordable new offices, as part of the mixed use redevelopment of allocated sites is expected.




Balham Area Strategy Map




Public realm and active travel

-  Suggested location for new public open space
-  Existing route
-  Active travel enhancement
-  Suggested public realm improvement
-  Cycle Superhighway
-  Suggested building frontage
-  Valued view and vista




Growth location

-  Site Allocation Boundary
- ① Sainsbury's Car Park, Bedford Hill, SW12 (Ref: BA1)
- ② Balham Health Centre, 120 - 124 Bedford Hill, London, SW12 (Ref: OUT1)
-  Main shopping area
-  Hildreth Street (pedestrianised street with al fresco cafés, restaurant and independent shops)

Transport infrastructure

-  Balham Railway Station

Background information

-  Metropolitan Open Land
-  Other open space
-  Balham Town Centre

How can you help?

The council is inviting comments from all kinds of local stakeholders, residents, businesses, community and amenity groups, landowners and developers.

As a local expert, we are particularly interested in hearing your thoughts on the Area Strategy for Balham.

To participate, visit [wandsworth.gov.uk/localplanreview](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/localplanreview)



What happens next?



The council will review all of the feedback submitted as part of the consultation, and this will help to inform a revised version of the draft Local Plan (known as the 'Publication' version). There will then be a further opportunity to provide comments on that version of the Local Plan, which is expected to be held in the autumn of 2021.

Timetable

1. **Monday 1 March 2021** - Public Consultation on the 'Pre-publication' Draft Local Plan (the current version) ends.
2. **Spring/Summer 2021** - The council analyse and consider the responses from the consultation, which are used to inform a revised 'Publication' Draft Local Plan.
3. **Autumn 2021** - Further public consultation on the 'Publication' Draft Local Plan.
4. **Spring 2022** - The Publication Draft Local Plan and representations received in the consultation are submitted to the Secretary of State, who appoints an independent Planning Inspector to examine the Plan for 'soundness'.
5. **Summer / Autumn 2023** - If the Inspector is satisfied with the new Local Plan, it is adopted by the council and comes into force.

See the full plan and comment online:
[wandsworth.gov.uk/localplanreview](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/localplanreview)

