



QMUL Mile End Campus Supplementary Planning Document

Consultation and Engagement Report

17/05/2021

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Introduction

Background and Context

- 1.1 The QMUL Mile End Campus Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a masterplan document which provides guidance to inform the future growth and development of the Queen Mary University London (QMUL) Mile End Campus.
- 1.2 It is the aim of the SPD to ensure that future development on the campus is considered in the context of a site-wide masterplan in order to enhance the quality of the estate while strengthening the public realm; providing appropriate building mass and height; improving pedestrian and cycle connectivity; enhancing the setting of heritage assets; integrating the campus more successfully with its surroundings; and creating a more welcoming campus environment. The SPD also considers how the growth of the campus can maximise community benefits, biodiversity opportunities and environmental sustainability.
- 1.3 The SPD provides guidance to several policies from the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031; as well as guidance on achieving the vision and objectives set out by the Local Plan for the Central sub-area.
- 1.4 In accordance with the Mayor's Strategic Plan, the SPD will support priority 1: People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities; 2: A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in; and 3: A dynamic, outcomes-based council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough.
- 1.5 The project team consists of LBTH officer and managers from Strategic Planning and Development Management; the masterplanners (Haworth Tompkins), transport consultants (Systra) and landscape architects (LDA Design).

Role of the Consultation and Engagement Report

- 1.6 The SPD is subject to statutory preparation procedures under Regulations 11-16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012. This Consultation and Engagement Report has been prepared to:

- provide an engagement framework that describes the main consultation methods that have been used;
- summarise the key issues raised by the community and stakeholders and;
- set out the Council's response to representations received, and how they have helped shape the SPD.

Consultation and Engagement

Approach

1.7 The approach to consultation was developed in conformity with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (2019), the Council's Consultation and Engagement Handbook and in collaboration with the Communications Team. The overarching aim of consultation is to provide an opportunity for involvement from a wide range of local community groups and individuals.

How we involved the community and stakeholders

1.8 There are several distinct stages to consultation and engagement activities to progress SPDs. The table below sets out the stages that applied to the SPD and identifies where and how the community and key stakeholders had the opportunity to get involved.

Table 1 – QMUL Mile End Campus SPD Consultation Stages

Stage	Purpose of communication	How the stakeholders had their say
Stage 1 – Project scoping	May-July 2020	This stage focused on agreeing the project vision, scope and methodology. Internal one-to-one meetings and briefing sessions.
Stage 2 – Evidence-gathering and initial consultation	July-October 2020	This stage focused on evidence base gathering; site visits and surveys; and initial consultation with internal and external stakeholders. The purpose was to notify all stakeholders of the project; and to establish key issues as early as possible. External stakeholders – meeting discussion and feedback; emails; consultation webpage and 'ideas board'. Internal stakeholders – meeting discussion and feedback; emails; briefing with lead member; Members Bulletin.
Stage 3 - Statutory Consultation	3 February to 17 March 2021	This stage focused on publicising the draft SPD and guidance and seeking feedback on them. External stakeholders – meeting discussion and feedback; emails; consultation webpage and 'ideas board'. Discussion and feedback from a Local

			<p>Community Event.</p> <p>Internal stakeholders – meeting discussion and feedback; emails; briefings with lead member, Mayor and Regeneration Board; Members Bulletin.</p>
Stage 4 – Adoption of SPD	May – July 2021	This stage focused on disseminating the findings of the Statutory Consultation and deciding on adoption of the guidance and recommendations.	Briefing to members, corporate and directorate leadership teams.

- 1.9 Throughout the SPD preparation process, consultation techniques and activities were carried out to ensure an effective and efficient engagement. This was particularly important due to the inability to hold in-person events as a result of the COVID-19-related restrictions. Some of the methods employed included:

Meeting with elected members and presenting to Boards

Regular engagement with the Lead Member for Planning and Social Inclusion to ascertain community priorities and aspirations, and to ensure these were reflected in the SPD. The SPD was also presented at Mayor briefings and the Regeneration Board.

Internal stakeholder meetings

Internal stakeholder meetings were held with council officers from across LBTH teams and directorates to inform on the progress of the document and seek feedback. This includes the following teams: Development Management, Placeshaping, Biodiversity, Energy, Enterprise, Community Safety, Highways, Health Impact Assessment, Parks and Open Spaces, Asset Management, Waste and Infrastructure/S106.

Other one-to-one meetings were held with various officers for more focused discussions on design, asset management and parks and open spaces.

External stakeholder workshops and meetings

External meetings held with various external stakeholders and statutory consultees, including QMUL, Mile End Hospital, TfL, Canal and Rivers Trust and Historic England to inform on the progress of the document and seek feedback.

Community Event

An open-invite community meeting was held on 24 February 2021 to inform on progress and gain feedback on the draft document. The event was advertised through social media and letter drops to local residences (see below). 25 people attended the event and we've received a good level of feedback from attendees.

On-line updates

The Council's website and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn were regularly updated to inform people of the consultation process and progress of the document. The consultation webpage for the SPD includes a dedicated SPD email address and an online 'comment board'.

Letter drops

500 letters were sent to nearby residential properties for both initial and formal consultation stages, informing them of the document and the upcoming consultation.

Posters

Posters were erected across the Borough's parks between January and February 2021 providing information on the SPD and the consultation. In relation to the Mile End Campus, this included 6 posters in Mile End Park and another 6 posters in Victoria Park.

Consultation Programme

Approach

- 1.10 The consultation activities were broken down into six stages. The sections below outline the role of each stage of the SPD development process as well as key stakeholder groups, methods employed and timeframes for each.

Stage One – Project Scoping

- 1.11 The purpose of the communication at this stage of the project was to agree the project vision, scope and methodology. An inception meeting was held with the wider project team to agree the project vision, scope and methodology, using the scope of the SPD's Project Initiation Document (PID) as a guide.

Table 2 – Stage 1 QMUL Mile End Campus SPD Consultation Details

Stakeholder groups	Methods	Description	Dates
Project team	Report	Project Initiation Document (PID) shared ahead of inception meeting.	July 2020
Project team	Meeting	Inception meeting held including presentation and discussion.	July 2020

Stage Two – Evidence-gathering and initial consultation

- 1.12 The purpose of the communication at this stage of the project was to gather input on the existing character of the Mile End Campus and wider neighbourhood; and to understand key opportunities and constraints that would inform the masterplanning process. The specialist consultants, from transport and landscape architecture, also carried out their own evidence-gathering work during this stage.
- 1.13 Initial consultation was also carried out at this stage, with the aim being to ensure that internal and external stakeholders were aware of the document; and again, to understand key issues from the perspective of various stakeholders before the core masterplanning work was underway.

Table 3 – Stage 2 QMUL Mile End Campus SPD Consultation Details

Stakeholder groups	Methods	Description	Dates
External stakeholders (organisations)	Emails; Meetings; Webpage and media campaign.	Emails sent to all external stakeholders including landowners, statutory bodies (i.e. Historic England and TfL), and local groups, such as the Friends of Mile End Park. Meetings held with key stakeholders such as QMUL, Mile End Hospital and TfL to introduce the project in more detail and discuss key issues. Consultation webpage set up for the SPD which was promoted by social media updates. The webpage included a 'comment board' and a dedicated SPD email.	August – October 2020
External stakeholders (Local residents)	Letter drop; Webpage and media campaign.	Letter drops to local residents providing information on the project and the consultation webpage. Consultation webpage set up for the SPD which was promoted by social media updates. The webpage included a 'comment board' and a dedicated SPD email.	August – October 2020
Internal Stakeholders	Meetings; Emails; Briefings;	Internal workshop held with a range of LBTH officers and managers from across directorates. Lead member briefing.	September-October 2020

	Members Bulletin.	Mention in council's external newsletter and Member's Bulletin;	
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Stage Three – Statutory Consultation

- 1.14 The statutory consultation period for the draft QMUL Mile End Campus SPD lasted for six weeks from 3 February to 17 March 2021.
- 1.15 In order to reach the widest possible audience in a context where due to COVID-19-related restrictions, no in-person events could be held, and instead, a range of online engagement methods were used.
- 1.16 Similar to stage 2, focused online meetings with internal and external stakeholders were held, this time reaching a greater range of statutory consultees, including for example, the Canal and Rivers Trust and Historic England. The latter of the two opened a formal ‘pre-app’ on the SPD.
- 1.17 An ‘open-invite’ community event was held and advertised on social media and through letter drops to local residents. Overall, 25 people attended the event including local residents, university staff, and representatives from local groups such as the Friends of Mile End Park.
- 1.18 All events were hosted using Microsoft Teams where attendees could ask questions/make comments or write them using the chat function.
- 1.19 A new webpage was set up for the formal consultation using the council’s Let’s Talk Tower Hamlets platform. The page contained a detailed explanation about the SPD and background to the project, the draft SPD to be downloaded, as well as links to the online Community Event. Overall, the consultation webpage was viewed 685 times.

Table 6 – Stage 5 QMUL Mile End Campus SPD Consultation Details

Stakeholder groups	Methods	Description	Dates
External stakeholders (organisations)	Emails; Meetings; Webpage and media campaign; Posters in parks.	Emails sent to all external stakeholders including landowners, statutory bodies and local groups, such as the Friends of Mile End Park. Meetings held with key stakeholders such as QMUL, Mile End Hospital, TfL, Canal and Rivers Trust and Historic England to introduce the draft SPD and discuss key issues. Consultation webpage set up for the SPD which was promoted by social media updates. The webpage included a 'comment board' and a dedicated SPD email.	11th January – 21st February 2021
External stakeholders (Local residents)	Letter drop; Webpage and media campaign; Posters in parks.	Letter drops to local residents providing information on the project and the consultation webpage. Consultation webpage set up for the SPD which was promoted by social media updates. The webpage included a 'comment board' and a dedicated SPD email.	11th January – 21st February 2021
External stakeholders (all)	Meeting	Open-invite Local Community Event advertised on the consultation website, social media and through the letter drops.	24 February 2021

Internal Stakeholders	Meetings; Emails; Briefings; Members Bulletin.	Internal meeting and other focused meetings held with a range of LBTH officers and managers from across directorates. Emails received from various officers following the meetings. Briefing to Lead Member, Mayor and Regeneration Board. Mention in council's external newsletter and Member's Bulletin;	11th January – 21st February 2021
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Stage Six – Adoption

1.20 Following a review of the representations received through the statutory consultation process, the SPD was amended. The preparation for adoption includes a briefing to members and corporate and directorate leadership teams on the outcome of the consultation and the recommendations for the way forward.

Table 7 – Stage 6 QMUL Mile End Campus SPD Consultation Details

Stakeholder groups	Methods	Description	Dates
Political, Corporate and Directorate Leadership	Briefing	Mayor's Planning Meeting, Lead Member one-to-one, CLT and DLT to brief on the outcome of the consultation and recommendations for the way forward.	March-June 2021

Consultation and Engagement Feedback

Overview and Summary

- 1.21 This section of the Consultation and Engagement Report summarises the feedback received through the consultation on the SPD. This includes representations and comments submitted, and the Council's response to these. The comments and representations received through the consultation process have been used to finalise the SPD.
- 1.22 Set out below is a summary of the consultation and engagement carried out for the SPD in total, and the responses received:
- 47 written responses received via email, the Let's Talk Tower Hamlets website and letters. These responses were from local residents, local groups, landowners and statutory consultees;
 - In total, there were 12 external meetings and 7 internal meetings held;
 - There were 25 attendees to the 'open-invite' community event.
- 1.23 A summary of the key issues that were raised in the representations are detailed in the table below.

Table 8 – QMUL Mile End Campus SPD Consultation Feedback Summary

Key Issues	Council Response
General comments	
Landowners raised that additional analysis is needed to reflect the socioeconomic value that QMUL delivers in its own right, being a higher education provider.	No change. The SPD already contains sufficient information in regards to the role of QMUL in the borough. As a council-led SPD, it is not appropriate to include any further detail on the role of the university.
Local connections and permeability	
Support from all consultees in regard to improved local connections through the campus to increase the permeability of the local area. Particular support for a new bridge connection over the canal to enhance links to Mile End Park; and a new connection under the railway to Meath Gardens to the north.	Support welcome. Improving local connections, wayfinding, and opening up the campus for the benefit of the local community are key objectives of the SPD.

<p>Queries from Canal and Rivers Trust, residents and other local groups in regard to the need for a new bridge link over the canal in this location, given the bridge link to the north of the railway. Potential for new bridge to further clutter the canal and result in adverse heritage, environmental and security impacts to the canal/campus. Will also add to pedestrian congestion issues at key pinch points on the towpath.</p> <p>Clarification requested in regards to the stakeholder responsibility for the delivery of the bridge.</p>	<p>Clarity provided that the bridge connection is only a 'potential future opportunity' based on the local connections masterplanning work, and any such bridge would be subject to further testing and consultation.</p> <p>In regards to the responsibility of the bridge, as a potential future opportunity, in not considered to be within the scope of the SPD to outline this detail.</p>
<p>QMUL and Mile End Hospital requested that a new connection between the campus and hospital should be removed, given the sensitivities of hospital patients.</p>	<p>Noted. The connection has been removed, although the principle of potentially enhanced connectivity between the two estates remains.</p>
Community cohesion	
<p>Local residents raise that more community cohesion needed between the university and the local community.</p>	<p>It is recognised that more needs to be done to improve the 'connection' between the university and the community, and as set out in Section B of the document, there are several ways to achieve this. The SPD is seen as way to help facilitate this cohesion as future development proposals on the campus come forward, perhaps through planning obligations.</p>
<p>Support from local residents in regard to the 'opening up' of the campus as there is a general feel of being unwelcome on the estate.</p>	<p>This is a key issue recognised by the project team on site visits, and this has fed through to the main SPD objectives. I.e. there is recognition that to be a public facing university, more needs to be done to change the perception of public accessibility on the campus, while recognising the need to ensure effective security management.</p>
<p>It was raised by all consultees that there was a significant opportunity to provide new canal-side amenity space accessible to be public.</p>	<p>Support noted and reflected in the SPD's case studies. This includes an additional development option for the canal-side which seeks to provide a new canal-side open space.</p>

<p>Landowners raised that care is needed in the SPD not to suggest that growth in academic floorspace should be matched by an expansion in community engagement and the amount of space that can be used by the community. This is not in alignment with policy.</p>	<p>No change. It is a key aim and ambition of the SPD that the significant growth envisaged on the campus should be matched by a suitable level of community benefits. It is therefore considered that the text set out in the SPD is appropriate in terms of describing this aim.</p>
Heritage	
<p>Comments recognised that there is a significant opportunity to celebrate the rich heritage of the campus, the canal and surroundings. The Novo Cemetery in particular should be discussed at greater depth in the SPD, as well as the heritage value of the Regent's canal and archaeological potential of the campus.</p>	<p>Noted. The protection and enhancement of heritage assets is a key aim of the SPD given the importance of the heritage context in and around the campus.</p> <p>Further text refinement to provide policy clarification on heritage; detail surrounding the archaeological potential of the campus; the Novo Cemetery; and the Regents Canal Conservation Area Appraisal which specifically identifies the key canal buildings and structures of heritage significance.</p>
Development quantum and heights	
<p>Concerns were raised by some residents and the Canal and Rivers Trust that that development quantum's, heights and mass particularly along the canal-side, could result in overly-dominant buildings, reducing the openness of the canal, overshadowing the waterway, and causing harm to heritage assets.</p> <p>Historic England raised the same issue in regards to the 'Civic Heart' development area and the impact to heritage assets.</p>	<p>Noted. Development quantum and building heights are indicative and subject to more rigorous testing during the application process.</p> <p>Clarity provided that the case study massing diagrams are indicative only. Furthermore, references to development quantum or building heights have been removed in order to ensure the SPD contains the appropriate level of prescriptiveness.</p> <p>A second development option for the canal-side area has been developed which seeks to step back massing away from the canal; and create a new publically-accessible park/amenity space fronting the canal.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that the level of set back achieved in both canalside options, at around 12-20 metres from the canal-edge, would be a significant improvement in contrast to the current situation where there is very little set back from the canal (c. 3 metres).</p> <p>Further clarity provided in the principles and supporting text in regards to the breaking up of massing along the canalside in order to prevent a wall of development along the canal. Recognition also that the breaking up of the</p>

	<p>mass can be achieved through the architecture – i.e. visual interest and design quality.</p> <p>In regards to the Civic Heart, it is considered through the masterplanning process, and the strategic and accessible nature of Mile End Road itself, that there is opportunity for a local height point along Mile End Road, subject to architectural quality and further testing in the application process in regards to heritage impact etc.</p>
<p>Landowners requested more clarity in regards to tall buildings and the application of the LBTH Local Plan Tall Buildings Policy, especially in the context of the newly-adopted London Plan tall buildings policy. This is in regards to the definition of a tall building.</p>	<p>No change. It is considered that sufficient detail is provided in relation to tall buildings, and in any case, each individual application would be assessed against Local Plan and London Plan policy.</p>
<p>Landowners raised that building heights in certain areas are insufficient, such as the student accommodation in the Residential Quarter, where building heights are too low to meet the projected need of student accommodation.</p>	<p>No change. From an urban design perspective, given the location of this particular development site in the north of the campus, and its proximity to a nearby residential uses and Mile End Hospital, the indicative building heights and massing are considered to be appropriate.</p>
Residential amenity	
<p>A local resident raised daylight and sunlight concerns in relation to neighbouring properties.</p>	<p>The proposals set out in the SPD have not been subject to technical daylight and sunlight tests. This level of assessment would be carried out at application stage.</p>
<p>Concerns raised by local residents and landowners in relation to security issues resulting from the ‘opening up’ the campus, given prevalence of anti-social behaviour in the local area.</p>	<p>It is accepted that whilst it is important aim of the SPD to ‘open up’ the campus and make it more welcoming to the public, maintaining security is very important in order to ensure the safety of staff, students and the public. Additional text has been included in the SPD focusing specifically on this issue, looking at ways security measures can be well-designed and sensitively-integrated into the public realm.</p>

Environment	
General support for increased biodiversity across the campus, but calls for greater emphasis in this issue, particularly along the canal.	Enhancement of biodiversity is a key theme running throughout the SPD, and also recognised as a community benefit throughout. Detailed comments on biodiversity improvements provided by Canal and Rivers Trust and LBTH Biodiversity have been incorporated.
Planning obligations	
Recognition needed that development should mitigate site specific issues; indicative obligations should be outlined; submission of campus-wide strategies/mitigation for every development proposal is unreasonable.	No change. It is understood that planning obligations are required to mitigate site-specific issues, however, as the SPD shows, the cumulative level of development expected across the campus is strategic in scale. Therefore, it is the ambition that development proposals on individual plots are presented in the context of a campus-wide plan, thus giving officers the comfort that the cumulative picture is considered. It is not the scope of the SPD to identify indicative obligations at this stage.