

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

RE-OPENING EUSTON

Drummond Street contributes to London's identity as a global multicultural city. It is home to a series of long established businesses, a diverse community and located on the doorstep of a major rail gateway into the capital.

The neighbourhood is facing significant challenges, HS2 construction works around Euston Station have displaced many customers and severed strategic connections and recently businesses have been further implicated by lock-down restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 health crisis. High operating costs, limited indoor space and no provision for outdoor service exacerbate already challenging trading conditions for local businesses.

In 2019 Euston Town worked with Camden Council officers, local businesses, cultural institutions and residents on a vision document to kick-start the economic-, cultural- and social- renaissance of Drummond Street. The recognition of the high street as a key civic space, a cultural destination as well as an important employment provider led to a 3-stage action plan. Stage 1 included a range of physical improvements to re-orientate Drummond Street towards the west. The purpose of this re-orientation was to help compensate for the severance of the street in the east that is the result HS2 construction works which are to continue for years to come. Stage 2 proposes further improvements including the pedestrianisation of the eastern stretch of Drummond Street. And stage 3 seeks to finally re-link the high street with the new railway station in the east in the long term.

Funding has now been secured through HS2's Business and Local Economy Fund and the Euston Town BID for implementation of the stage 1 proposals. Jan Kattein Architects, a leading high street regeneration specialist, were appointed by Euston Town in June 2020 and tenders for business support consultants and lighting designers are pending.

This planning application for the public realm component of the stage 1 works comprises proposals for five sheltered and green public seating areas to occupy a number of car parking spaces adjacent to the Drummond Street/ North Gower Street junction and the eastern stretch of Drummond Street between North Gower Street and Cobourg Street. The project supports Euston Town's efforts of 're-opening Euston', complements Camden Council's ambitions to implement pedestrianisation of the street and seeks to forward the transformation of Drummond Street into a People's High Street.

A number of public consultation events were held in connection with the preparation of the Drummond Street vision document in 2019. Further consultation was held in connection with parklet proposals for the high street in 2020 and businesses have input into the specific design proposals that form part of this planning application.

To accommodate the ongoing HS2 construction works, the seating areas have been designed with flexibility in mind. Each seating area comprises 1m wide x 2m deep pre-fabricated modules. When installed on site, the modules are bolted together to form a linear arrangement following the line of the curbstone. Where works require access to the road surface or services below, the modules can be un-bolted and a hand-operated hydraulic fork lift can be used to re-locate them, either temporarily for the duration of the works or permanently to a new site on Drummond Street (subject to any separate planning application).

The falls in the road are compensated via a series of adjustable feet on each module. The floors of the seating areas are constructed from timber decking which can be lifted to allow for cleaning / access to the road surface below. The superstructure comprises timber twin-columns with alternating single-pitch truss-structures above head-height. A clear twin-wall polycarbonate lining forms a minimal protective canopy.

All modules are fully accessible via an adjustable ramp with a shallow incline that bridges the gap between the seating area and the pavement surface. Flexible and stackable furniture accommodates planting and seating and can be re-arranged into various configurations.

To mitigate the risk of anti-social behaviour and associated impact on local residents, a management strategy has been put in place which relies on a partnership between Euston Town BID and local businesses. Businesses have committed to opening up seating areas in the morning and to close them at night. For this purpose, a series of sturdy twin-walled polycarbonate panels are locked in place around the perimeter of the seating areas to temporarily enclose the structures. Clear polycarbonate has been specified to prevent any dark/blind corners and to lessen the apparent bulk of the structures when closed.



The 'Drummond Street - Neighbourhood Vision' document was published in May 2019, following four months of investigations and dialogue with stakeholders.



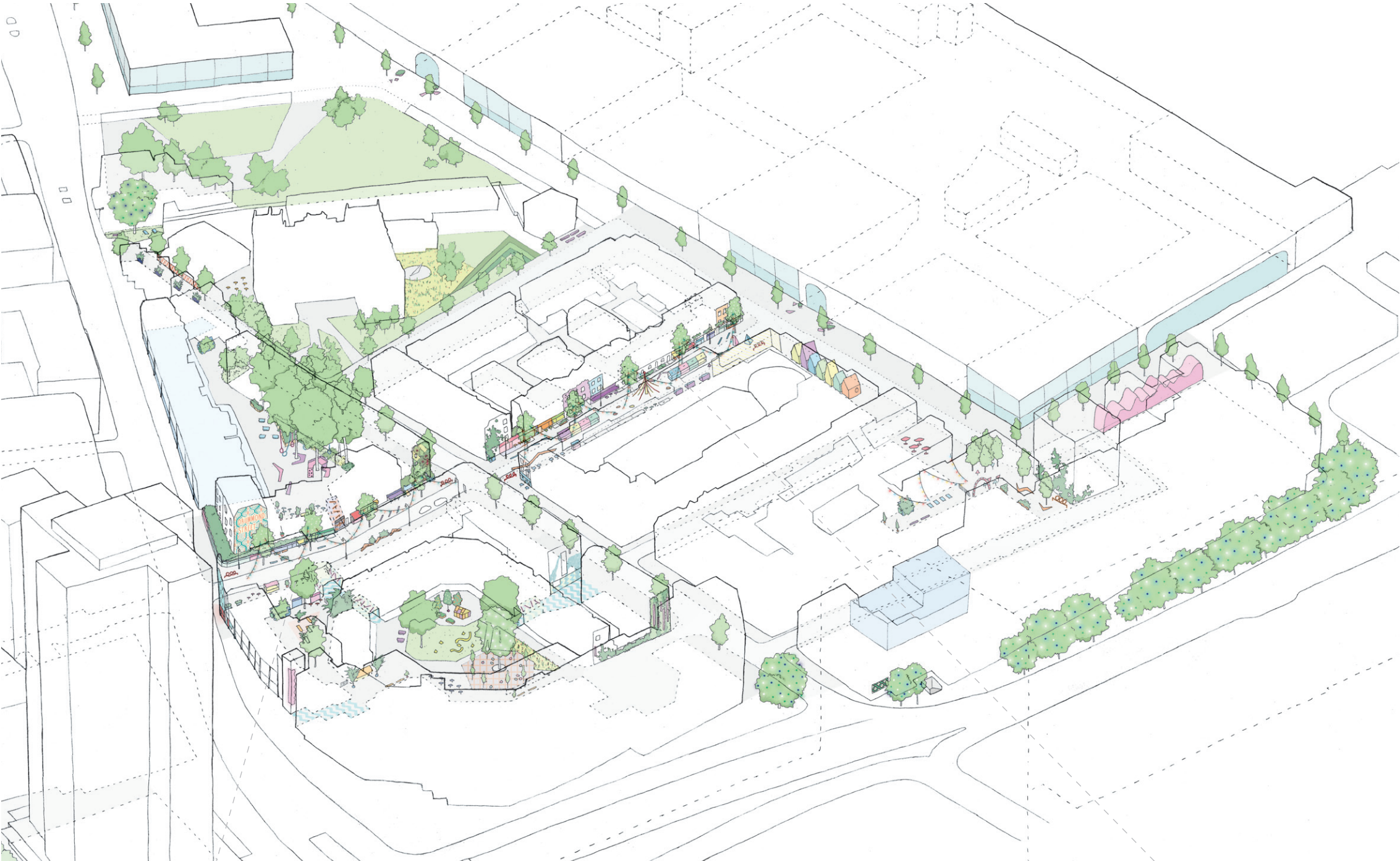
Local residents and traders were actively engaged in shaping the proposed transformation of Drummond Street.



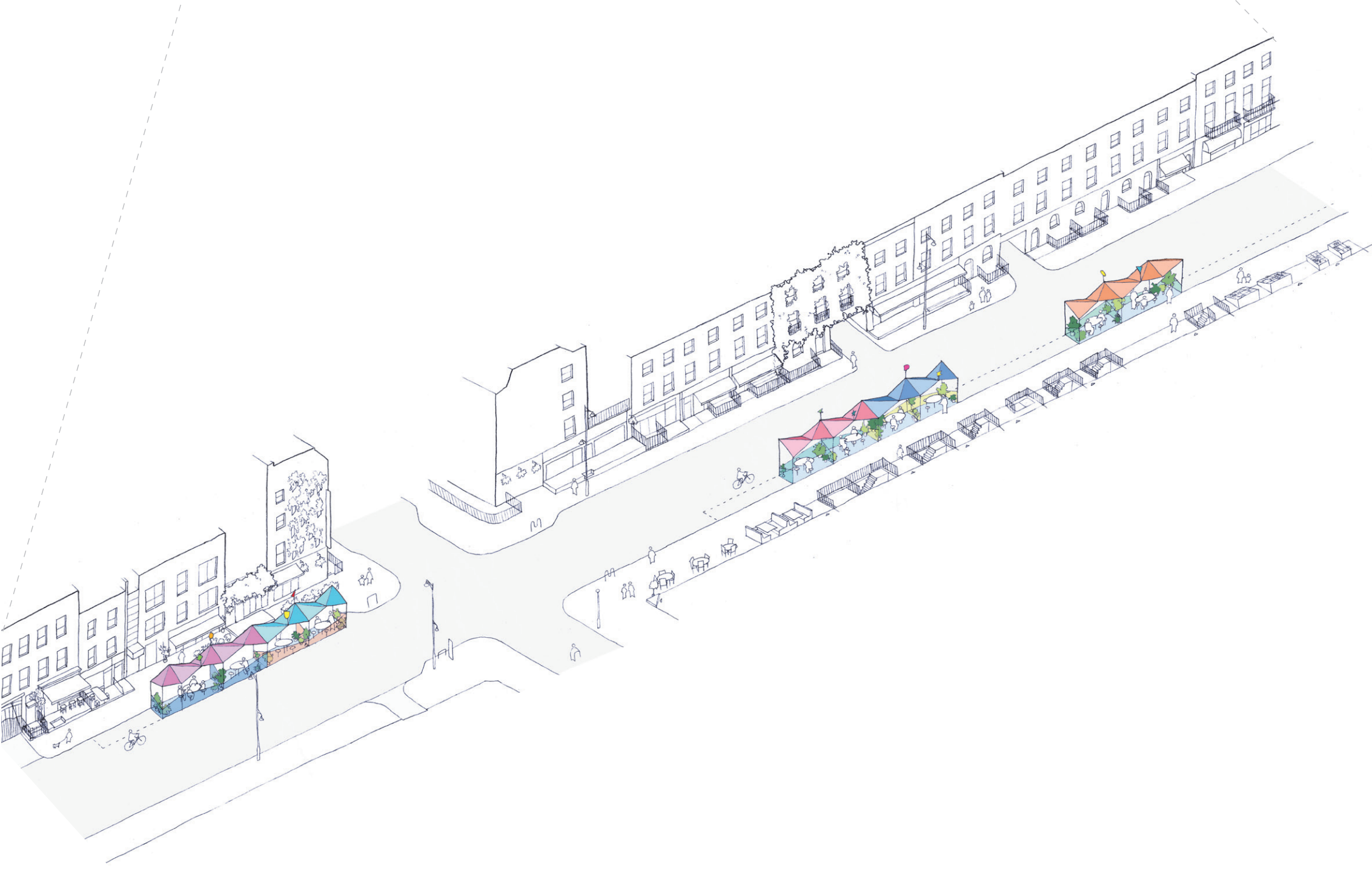
Existing narrow pavements offer limited potential for outdoor seating areas.



Following the example set by capital cities around the world, Westminster Council has recently opened up a high street in Soho to al fresco dining, to support a struggling hospitality industry.



The proposed interventions are part of a wider vision for inclusive transformation of the Drummond Street neighbourhood, a unique place situated within the Euston Growth Area. This vision is outlined within the Drummond Street Neighbourhood document (2019), which was used to secure funding and has received support from Camden Council and members of the local community since its publication.



Occupying some of the parking spaces, the seating areas seek to re-calibrate the imbalance between vehicular traffic / car parking and space dedicated to pedestrians on Drummond Street. A partnership with local businesses will support the management of the seating areas.



The long term goal is for Drummond Street to become a pedestrian-friendly people's high street, one that creates a welcoming and attractive platform for everyday street activities and regular community events.



The proposed seating areas help to deliver part of this vision now at a time when it is needed most, by contributing new public spaces to a neighbourhood with very limited access to public amenities.