



Assessing the impact of the Tottenham High Road Strategy

First phase of evaluation:

Summary report

December 2021

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Social Life and the New Economics Foundation (NEF) were commissioned by Haringey Council in 2019 to assess the socio-economic impact of the Strategy for Tottenham High Road. Delivery of the Strategy is being supported by three programmes: the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund, MHCLG's Future High Streets Fund and the Historic England High Street Heritage Action Zone, funded by Historic England. Together, these will bring a programme of projects and interventions aimed to support the High Road - its traders and businesses and the people who live, work and visit the area - to thrive.

The Tottenham High Road Strategy focuses on the length of the High Road between Seven Sisters station and just north of Bruce Grove. The research split this into two areas, Seven Sisters and Tottenham Green; and Bruce Grove.

This report sets out the benchmark before the main planned interventions have been completed. The research took place in summer and autumn 2021 in a time shaped by the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic and its health, social and economic consequences. The report paints a picture of the High Road at a time when the restrictions after the lockdown of early 2021 had ended but the pandemic had not.

The evaluation framework was developed from the Theory of Change developed by NEF and Social Life in late 2019, and indicators that Haringey Council have agreed with funders. The framework includes indicators that fall into three categories: experience of the high road; social integration and belonging; and resilience and sustainability.

A number of research methods were used to gather the baseline data for this evaluation:

- **308 interviews** with residents, visitors and people working in the area on the High Road
- **70 interviews** with traders
- **18 interviews** with stakeholders
- **Two youth focus groups** involving around 30 young people at the College of North and East London
- **Observations** of the use of five locations where regeneration interventions are planned
- **Detailed site surveys** of two key locations along the High Road.

The intention is to repeat this after the programme is complete in 2022, 2023 and 2024 to gather directly comparable data to assess the impact of the investments.

This baseline research shows that Tottenham High Road has evolved and adapted in the face of the pandemic. There was broad consensus across the different groups engaged in the research about the issues facing the High Road, particularly safety, traffic, the weak social offer and particular problems facing individual businesses. However, there are clear social strengths in the area, especially the strong sense of identity and belonging.

Comparison with national data illustrates some of the social strengths of the area and how belonging, perceptions of the way that people from different backgrounds get on and intentions to remain resident in the area are stronger than would be expected across Seven Sisters and Tottenham Green, and Bruce Grove.

Seven Sisters and Tottenham Green emerge as a more positive area to trade and live in or visit the High Road on some indicators, although on many questions the scores were similar.

Scores were higher for Seven Sisters and Tottenham Green street interview responses to questions about safety, spending time in the area with friends and family, sense of influence over the area, and feeling that changes will benefit local residents.

Seven Sisters and Tottenham Green traders gave more positive responses than Bruce Grove traders to questions about belonging and feeling that people from different backgrounds get on with each other.

Stakeholder interviews collected data for the High Road as a whole. These highlighted how the High Road is perceived in several ways; as being a deprived and disinvested space; as a thoroughfare; as being unsafe; and finally, as a busy multicultural shopping area. The discussion around social infrastructure underscored that the High Road is not currently a social space and that there are few places that cater for socialising, particularly for young or older people. There was consensus that people and different communities generally get on with each other in the area, however they do not necessarily interact with each other. Stakeholders had a lot to say around participation and agency as they were often activists in the community themselves. The historical legacy weighs on communities and there was agreement that while there has been improvement from the past, lack of trust with authorities is still pervasive, there is a general sense of fatigue around participation and multiple barriers to participation still exist.

COVID-19 has impacted attendance of various community led activities as well as the footfall on the High Road and it has been a challenge to get numbers back to pre-pandemic level. However, positively, more partnership and collaboration across sectors have taken place and mutual aid networks were also initiated to support people in need, heightening a sense of community.

Finally, past development in the wider Tottenham area, adjacent to the area covered by the Strategy for the High Road, had mixed reviews by stakeholders. White Hart Lane stadium was consistently criticized as a development that negatively impacts local communities, while Tottenham Hale developments are more appreciated. Generally, there is a sense that not enough has happened on the High Road and that post 2011 riots investments have gone unnoticed, heightening community frustration. There is a fear that more investment will lead to gentrification and while all stakeholders agree investments are necessary, they also want local communities to be protected from displacement.

The baseline data

The table below shows the scores for the High Tottenham Road Strategy indicators. When the research is repeated after the programme has ended this will enable an assessment to be made of the social value of the programme, and its impact on the everyday lives of people who live in, work in, trade in and visit Tottenham.

Indicators	Questions	Street interviews (% positive responses)		Trader interviews (% positive responses)	
		Bruce Grove	Seven Sisters & Tottenham Green	Bruce Grove	Seven Sisters & Tottenham Green
1 Experience of the High Road					
Increase in visitor satisfaction	- how satisfied area you with it as an area to shop?	70%	64%	56%	56%
	- how satisfied area you with it as an area to socialise?	53%	55%	38%	59%
	- is there anything that would make people use Bruce Grove OR Tottenham Green/Seven Sisters more?	Top 3 responses: increased diversity of businesses, other, nothing	Top 3 responses: increased diversity of businesses, improved safety, other	Top 3 responses: new shops, safer, stop intimidation/loitering	Top 3 responses: improve parking, more shops, safer/refurbish /more amenities (joint)
Increased pride in the area	- how would you describe this area to someone who isn't familiar with it?	Top 3 responses: busy, overall positive, multicultural	Top 3 responses: overall positive, busy, multicultural	Top 3 responses: overall negative, overall positive, safety concerns	Top 3 responses: overall positive, multicultural, safety concerns
	- would you recommend it to other people? - for shopping, for socialising, for any other reason?	for socialising 33%, for shopping 49%	for socialising 46%, for shopping 51%	for socialising 42%, for shopping 58%, for trading 64%	for socialising 46%, for shopping 51%, for trading 63%
	- how satisfied are you with the Bruce Grove OR Tottenham Green/Seven Sisters area overall?	70%	75%	64%	69%
Safety: this was not an indicator in the framework used for the first round however it has emerged as a consistent theme of concern for all the different groups. It features as a second level outcome within the Theory of Change for the Future High Streets Fund	- how safe do you feel walking alone in this area after dark?	52%	59%	41%	43%
Increased local spending	- how often do you shop in the Bruce Grove OR Tottenham Green/Seven Sisters area? / - how satisfied are you with this area as a place to do business?	Top 3 responses: 2-3 times a week 39%, once a week 19%, daily 17%	Top 3 responses: 2-3 times a week 30%, daily 23%, once a week 16%	65%	72%
	- what do you shop for in the area?	Top 3 responses: food/groceries, everyday essentials, other	Top 3 responses: food/groceries, everyday essentials, other	na	
Physical design that encourages social interaction	reported through observations and site survey	Site survey: score 0.0	Site survey: score 0.5	na	
Increase in footfall	On average, how often do you come to Bruce Grove OR Tottenham Green/Seven Sisters ?	Top 3 responses: daily 40%, 4-5 times a week 20%, 2-3 times a week 19%	Top 3 responses: daily 46%, 2-3 times a week 21%, 4-5 times a week 17%	na	

Indicators	Questions	Street interviews (% positive responses)		Trader interviews (% positive responses)	
		Bruce Grove	Seven Sisters/ Tottenham Green	Bruce Grove	Seven Sisters/ Tottenham Green
2 Social integration and sense of belonging					
Sense of belonging to an area	- do you feel that you belong in this area?	83%	86%	79%	85%
	- do you feel at ease in the area	73%	81%	68%	73%
	- plan to remain resident in the area	78%	70%	na	
Increased social integration: relationships between groups	- do you think this is an area where people from different backgrounds get on?	90%	91%	82%	91%
	- do you spend time in this area with people you know - like friends and family? If so where?	69%	75%	na	
	- do you spend time in this area with people from different backgrounds? If so where?	75%	76%	na	
Increased social integration: participation	- do you think you can influence decisions affecting the area?	38%	46%	58%	73%
Increased social integration: equality	reported under impact of change				
3 Resilience and sustainability					
The impacts of COVID-19: not reporting on a specific indicator but the impact of the pandemic is too significant to be ignored	- in what way do you think the area has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?	Top 3 responses: no change, businesses closed, other	Top 3 responses: no change, attitudes have changed, it's changed generally	Top 3 responses: quieter, more loitering/nuisance, no change	Top 3 responses: no change, quieter, more crime
	Has the business been able to contribute to the local community since lockdown started	na		64%	33%
Business mix in area (e.g. retail, food and drink etc)	Thinking about the business in the area, do you think there are enough food shops, what would you like to see MORE/LESS of? Food shops, restaurants/cafes, bars/clubs, pubs, betting shops, independent shops, clothes stores, beauty shops, high street brands, other	3 top responses for MORE: independent shops, clothing shops, restaurants/cafes	3 top responses for MORE: independent shops, clothing shops, restaurants/cafes	3 top answers for MORE: high street brands, independent shops, clothing shops	3 top answers for MORE: other (mix of factors), independent shops, clothing shops
Increased social integration: equality	- do you feel that the changes in the area will benefit you and your family?/ - do you feel that the changes in the area will benefit local businesses?	69%	66%	85%	87%
	- do you feel that the changes in the area will benefit local residents?	69%	80%	70%	81%
Creation / safeguarding of space for shared community and business activities	reported in stakeholder views				
Good quality design that meets local needs	reported by site survey	Site survey: quality of the built environment 0.5; quality of public realm 0.5	Site survey: quality of the built environment 0.5; quality of public realm 0.5	na	

About Social Life

Social Life is an independent research organisation created by the Young Foundation in 2012, to become a specialist centre of research and innovation about the social life of communities. Our work is about understanding how peoples' day-to-day experience of local places is shaped by the built environment - housing, public spaces, parks and local high streets - and how change, through regeneration, new development or small improvements to public spaces, affects the social fabric, opportunities and wellbeing of local areas.

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Report commissioned by Haringey Council

