Public Realm
Indicator
Accessibility to Parks and Open Spaces

Finding
The area analysis shows that the majority of residents within Camley street have good access to a wide range of small local or local sized parks and open spaces that are within a 5min walking distance.

Camley Street residents also have good access to larger scale parks such as Regents Park and Primrose Hill. These are located within a 15min walking distance to the most part of the neighbourhood.

There is only one small local park (Elm Village Open Space) actually located within the boundary area, but this is of good quality and has an adjoining community growing space and children's play area. The combined area of these three spaces is of approximately 0.3ha.

Other small green spaces include the green on Rossendale Way (of approximately 0.02ha), a small community garden at the junction of Camley Street and Goods Way and finally a small garden space located adjacent to the St Pancras Lock Cruising Club House. This is however a private garden with limited access.

There are two children's play areas within the neighbourhood area. One is located within the Elm Village Open Space and the second is on Crofters Way. Both spaces offer good quality play facilities for young children.

An additional observation is the large amount of amenity green space that exists throughout the neighbourhood and creates an overall sense of greenery. Some of these smaller amenity spaces are extremely well looked after and in excellent condition.

The tow path can also be considered as a linear open space providing good access to the canal water-way, biodiversity and wildlife. The tow-path represents an area of approximately 0.2ha

Theoretical Assumption
Using accessibility standards set out in the London Plan this mapping layer will give an indication of the current accessibility of green & open spaces within walking distance of residential areas in Camley Street. The layer will enable us to identify where there are deficiencies in access to particular types of green and open spaces, especially within the core residential areas of the neighbourhood.

*The London Plan sets standards for the accessibility of each category of open space. It requires that every Londoner should have a small or local park (less than 20 ha) within 400m of their home, and a district park (20-60ha) within 1.2km.\footnote{Mayor of London CABE Space, Open Space Strategies, Best Practice Guidance, September 2008}

Source
OS Base Mapping, Observational Study.
VII. Public Realm

Key

- Local Park
- 5min catchment
- District Park
- 15min catchment
- Play Spaces
VII. Public Realm

Indicator
Assessment of Open Spaces

Finding
Elm Village Open Space & Play Area
Crofters Way Play Area
Rossendale Way Green
St Pancras Cruising Club Garden
Co-op forecourt
Rossendale Way Communal Space (overlooking canal)
Tow Path
Amenity Spaces

Theoretical Assumption
The observational assessment gives an indication to the quality of green and open space provided and suggests where improvements could be made.

Scoring Methodology

A place check criteria has been applied to the green and open spaces around Camley Street in order to assess their value to the local community. A brief SWOT analysis has also been carried out to provide an indication for improvements.

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VII. Public Realm

Key

- Union Canal
- Civic Space
- Amenity Space
- Green Open Space/Park
- Play Areas
Elm Village Open Space and Play Area

The Elm Village Open Space is located just off Barker Drive between the Camden Garden Centre and the residential block of 120 Barker Drive.

Although the area is fenced off from the wider street-scape the space does face directly onto the highway and pavement area of Barker Drive. It is also over-looked by the residences 15 – 103 Barker Drive providing it with good natural surveillance provided from local residents.

The open space also includes a small community growing area which is situated behind the village green on an elevated strip of land. This space is run by Urban-Growth initiative which provides training in horticulture for local community groups. A number of raised planting beds, poly-tunnels and a green-house have been incorporated into the space.

The overall condition of the spaces is very good although some of the benches are quite old. Excessive fencing and railings detract from the look of the green space and impede any kind of spatial connections to the wider neighbourhood as the space feels very cut-off and disconnected. The space is regularly used by dog walkers which may explain the need for enclosure.

The combined area of the open space, play area and growing space represents approximately 0.3ha.
VII. Public Realm

Methodology

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SWOT Analysis

The main strengths of the Elm Village Open Space are its high level of maintenance and the overall quality of the landscaping and the multiple uses that it offers.

Weaknesses include the excessive amounts of fencing that render the space un-welcoming; as a result the open space also feels very separated from the wider public realm.

While there are clear reasons for the open space being fenced off from the adjacent road, the introduction of more aesthetically sensitive separations that would provide a better visual connection to the streetscape.
Tow Path

The tow path provides the Camley Street neighbourhood with access to natural open space and biodiversity along the canal waterway. It also acts as a pedestrian thoroughfare leading to Granary Square and the Kings Cross area.

There are a number of community facilities situated along the canal such as the Constitution public house which provides access to its beer garden from the canal, St Pancras Lock and Cruising Club. There is currently no access from the tow path to Camley Street Nature Reserve.

There is also an artistic outlet provided along the tow path where a number graffiti or street art murals have been painted.

The total area of tow path as a linear open space is approximately 2ha.
VII. Public Realm

**Methodology**

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**SWOT Analysis**

Strengths of the tow-path include the huge visual amenity and access to wild life that it provides and the canal waterway has huge biodiversity value for the neighbourhood.

The tow-path also gives great access to wider areas such as Granary Square and Kings Cross.

Possible weaknesses are the lack of direct access points from the neighbourhood and absence of street furniture such as seating and direct lighting.

Given the excellent community initiative in maintaining smaller green spaces around the neighbourhood there is a great opportunity for similar resident led activities along the canal. Schemes to provide further habitat and biodiversity such as planted reed beds could be explored, as well as public seating and a lighting installation that celebrates the neighbourhoods relationship with the canal.

Threats to the condition of the tow-path stem from anti social behavior associated with spaces that are subject to wider public access. There are small signs of vandalism.
Crofters Way Play Area

Crofters Way play area provides the neighbourhood with access to natural-play facilities. The play space is set in a soft landscaping environment using natural elements such as timber climbing structures to provide play opportunities. Planting and trees are also provided.

The play area is well overlooked by the surrounding residential buildings and is very secure with fencing running the entire perimeter of the space although more could be done to provide informal play to the surrounding spaces – residential street-scape.

The total area of the natural-play space is approximately 0.026ha or 260m²
VII. Public Realm

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SWOT Analysis

The Crofters Way play area provides the neighbourhood with important natural play opportunities. The soft landscaping and natural structures are imaginative and also provide visual interest.

As with the Elm Street play area the space feels extremely enclosed and cut off from the surrounding streetscape (residential courtyard). It is also very mono-functional, lacking connectivity to other types of spaces and, generally speaking, providing space that is only suitable for very small children.

Opportunities could lie in providing informal street-play areas around the space within adjacent courtyards and parking areas.

High vehicle traffic poses a threat to safety outside the play area.
VII. Public Realm

Amenity Spaces

Throughout the Camley Street neighbourhood there are large plots of green amenity spaces, amenity meaning that they do not necessarily provide any interactive role to the community but do have substantial visual value. These larger plots of amenity space run in a strip along the front of the Camley Street industrial quarter and front on to the public realm. Initiatives such as tree planting and general maintenance have been organised by the local community and business owners to uphold their appearance. Having said this, more could be done to integrate these spaces into the wider public realm provide more opportunities for community use.

A number of smaller ad-hock amenity spaces exist in and around the residential areas of the neighbourhood, these are a collection of raised and ground level planter beds, street shrubs and trees. In contrast to the industrial estate these spaces appear to have considerable community access and are in excellent condition. The small planter beds house a wide variety of plants, fruits and vegetables providing high amenity value to the surrounding streetscapes.

The combined total area of the larger amenity spaces is approximately 0.1ha
SWOT Analysis

The various plots and verges of amenity green space have significant value - adding interest and diversity to the streetscape, their main strength lies in the investment on behalf of the local community and the high level of maintenance provided.

Weaknesses lie in the un-developed potential of some of the larger green spaces (particularly along Camley Street); there is an opportunity here to promote active use.

These larger spaces could provide green spaces where public furniture such as seating could be provided to encourage use. A series of smaller spaces could be connected to provide linear open spaces.

Threats to these types of spaces come mainly from anti social behaviour such as fly-tipping. Open spaces that do not have any obvious ownership can be susceptible to criminality and misuse.

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Camley Street Natural Park

Camley Street Natural Park provides the neighbourhood with essential access to the natural environment such as,

- Woodland
- Wild meadow
- Marshland and reed beds
- Dipping ponds
- Rainwater ponds

The park also allows users to observe and encounter a wide range of wildlife. Entry to the park is free.

The park is situated to the south of the Camley Street area with only one point of access located on Camley Street adjacent to the car-park of the St Pancras Cruising club. For this reason the park is slightly disconnected from the core residential areas of the neighbourhood.

The Natural Park provides approximately 0.8ha of open space.
VII. Public Realm

### Methodology

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### SWOT Analysis

Camley Street Natural Park adds substantial value to the neighbourhood by providing access to a natural environment rich in biodiversity. It is composed of a variety of different spaces that are accessible to the public.

Unfortunately the park is not directly accessible from the heart of the neighbourhood or from the tow path, the main pedestrian thoroughfare.

A secondary entrance to the park closer to the core residential areas of the neighbourhood could be achieved through providing bridged access to the site.

Predominantly a nature reserve the park can not accommodate intense public use.
Other Public Spaces

There are a number of small public and semi-private spaces in the Camley Street neighbourhood. There is a small pocket park at the junction of Camley Street and Goods Way just opposite the nature reserve. The pocket space would appear to be the result of local initiative and it provides an excellent planting scheme as well as colourful seating. However, the space feels quite isolated. It is disconnected from the surrounding neighbourhood and does not have any obvious relationship with Camley Street Nature Reserve.

A small hard surfaced plaza area exists close to 103 Camley Street, just outside of the local supermarket (Co-op). The space is well furnished in public amenities such as seating, bins, bike storage and some street trees.

There is good access leading from Rosendale Way to a small semi-private space that is situated behind the residential units of the crescent on Rosendale Way. The space opens up to overlook the canal where a small viewing platform has been incorporated. The communal space is gated and locked.

On the opposite side of the main tow path thoroughfare, the St Pancras Cruising Club maintains a small private outdoor garden. The garden lockside is part of the leasehold St Pancras Cruising Club holds from Canals and Rivers Trust and the gardens are maintained monthly by club members.
Although the garden is primarily for the use of members and guests of the Cruising Club, access to the amenity is extended to passing boaters and is available for public hire if sponsored by one of the club members.

The combined total area of these public spaces in Camley Street is approximately 0.09ha.
VII. Public Realm

SWOT Analysis

The small pocket space adjacent to Camley Street Natural Park is one of the most original interventions within the area and it provides visual interest to an overwhelmingly dull area of the neighbourhood.

The pocket space is extremely disconnected from the core residential areas and has no visual ties to the Natural Park.

Potential improvements include connecting the space to a wider matrix of pocket spaces than run closer to residential areas and provide the space with more purpose or activity.

Proximity to heavy vehicle traffic and railway lines alienate use of the space.

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VII. Public Realm

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SWOT Analysis

As well as the more obvious role of providing an entrance space for the Co-op, the forecourt area also acts as a gateway or connection point between Camley Street and the canal. Perhaps because it is an access point the space has been designed in a very traditional style.

An improved design could seek inspiration from the canal itself. Also, the forecourt area does not provide any disabled access to the tow-path.

Opportunities exist in connection to the tow-path and potential community custodianship/involvement. The entrance point to the neighbourhood could be celebrated through artistic intervention (lighting, bespoke furniture, murals...)

Threats to the space are changes that come about as a result of future development.
SWOT Analysis

The Cruiser Club garden has the advantage of overlooking the canal and particularly St Pancras Lock.

The garden is not open to public use although it can be used by passing boaters.

The relationship with the wider Camley Street community could be strengthened to promote additional and more frequent use of the garden.

Maintenance of the garden is provided by members of the Cruiser Club; if use of the area were to be intensified, this would carry a significant cost implication.

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SWOT Analysis

Gated residential gardens provide the residents of Camley Street with community spaces that overlook the canal.

Gates are locked and access is not provided to all residents.

More use for the wider community could be encouraged.

Maintenance of the spaces would need to increase under intensified use.

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Surrounding Parks and Open Spaces

There are a number of open spaces which sit within easy walking distance of the Camley Street neighbourhood. Some of the closest and most directly connected to area are St Pancras Gardens and Granary Square.

Both of these open spaces are considered exceptional environments in their own right and are of substantial value to the Camley Street Neighbourhood.

As well as being a huge environmental resource and uniquely tranquil public space that residents can enjoy, St Pancras Gardens also provides cultural and historical interest to the area.

Granary Square is considered one of London’s best multi-functional public spaces.
Indicator
Sqm of green spaces per head of population

Finding
There are two green spaces located within the Camley Street Neighbourhood Plan area; these are Camley Street Natural Park (0.8ha) and Elm Village Open Space (0.3ha); in addition to these, but located just outside the NP boundaries, there is St. Pancras Garden (2.2ha).

If we considered these three green spaces, the average sqm of green spaces per head of population is about 27.5 sqm/person; this figure is considerably higher in comparison with both the existing provision of green spaces within the Borough (20 sqm/person) and the LB Camden recommended overall public open space standard (17 sqm/person).

Theoretical assumption
This finding assesses the local provision of green spaces for the Camley Street population; a good provision of green spaces is considered the base for an healthy lifestyle and it has direct impacts on the people’s wellbeing.

Source
LB Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study Update (Final Report 2008, Final Report June 2014),
Internet-based survey.
Indicator
Do you agree: ‘The Camley Street area provides residents with good green space’

Finding
Of the 312 people who responded to this question (220 after the weighting process), more than 50.0% either strongly agree or agree with this statement, meaning that they have good access to green spaces in the area.

Nevertheless, around one respondent out of four (26.4%) either strongly disagree or disagree with this statement; 20.3% is the proportion of respondents who either don’t have an opinion about or didn’t respond to this specific question.

Theoretical assumption
This indicator sheds lights on local residents’ and workers’ satisfaction with the current provision of good and accessible green spaces; this may inform the future policy proposals for the Camley Street and Elm Village area.

Source
Street Survey, hard-copy and online questionnaires (September 2015); residents, business owners and workers (weighted) responses.
VII. Public Realm

Indicator
Do you agree: ‘The privately owned green spaces in the Camley Street neighbourhood make up for any deficiency in public space’

Finding
The total answers to this question were 151 and almost half of the respondents, 47.7%, either strongly disagree or disagree with this statement; on the other hand, just 16.5% of the respondents either agree or strongly agree with this statement.

It’s worth noting that in this case many local residents either don’t express an opinion about or didn’t answer this question; this category makes up 35.8% of the total responses.

Theoretical assumption
This indicator highlights the role and impact that private green spaces have in the neighbourhood area, in relation to access and provision of high-quality green and public spaces.

Source
Street Survey, hard-copy and online questionnaires (September 2015); residents responses.
VII. Public Realm

Indicator
Do you have any comments you'd like to make about public spaces?

Finding
73 people responded to this open question and, on the right, you can see the outcomes of a keyword analysis.

Residents are aware that poorly designed open space can become a magnet for anti-social activity, so while its welcomed, people would like to see care taken as to their location and layout. People see green space as a key part of the social infrastructure and the lack of any appropriate space to, for example, have bbqs is highlighted.

In addition, there is a sense of there being an unequal distribution of open space, so, for example, people living in Barker Drive are well-served, but those living in Weavers flats have none. A hope is expressed that any re-development of the industrial zone will include provision of additional public open space to make up for perceived deficiencies. While the major open spaces in the area, such as St. Pancras Garden and the Camley Street Natural Park are cherished, they are seen as too distant and unsuitable for ad-hoc, informal community use. Also, the canal tow-path is seen as not fulfilling its potential as public realm on account of its inaccessibility and poor maintenance.

Theoretical assumption
This indicator focuses on local residents' satisfaction with the current provision of good and accessible public spaces; this will inform the future open space and public realm policy proposals for the Camley Street and Elm Village area.

Source
Street Survey, hard-copy and online questionnaires (September 2015); residents responses.