



Open Space Study

Euston Area Plan

London Borough of Camden

Final report

Prepared by LUC

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 LUC was commissioned by London Borough of Camden (LBC) in 2021 to undertake an Open Space Study (OSS) to support the update of the Euston Area Plan (EAP). National planning policy requires that up to date assessments of open space need are undertaken to support the development of local policies and plans. Studies should determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is required “which plans should then seek to accommodate”.

1.2 A borough wide open space study was prepared for the borough in 2014. Camden has adopted open space standards within its 2017 Local Plan. Further detail on their application is included within Camden Planning Guidance: ‘Public Open Space’. However, due to the scale and nature of growth in and around the Euston area, further work must be done to understand the existing provision to help understand what future open space provision should be delivered as part of development in the area.

1.3 The EAP was adopted by LBC in 2015 and sets a shared vision for Euston in 2031. It was developed with a range of stakeholders including HS2 Ltd., Network Rail, Transport for London (TfL) and the Greater London Authority (GLA). The EAP was also adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the London Plan. In line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF), LBC completed an assessment of the existing EAP, and a decision was taken to update the EAP to reflect the changing circumstances that are affecting the area. The assessment of the existing plan highlighted the following key issues which need to be considered as part of an updated EAP:

- The High Speed Rail Act 2017 has authorised construction of the first phase of HS2.
- The landowners of the station site have committed to the comprehensive development of the whole site. Lendlease has been appointed as the major development partner based on different viability assumptions to

those in the EAP. There is also further clarity on potential development capacity and phasing.

- Background information and the evidence base to inform capacities and design constraints are now eight years out of date and designs have evolved.

1.4 A new National Planning Policy Framework has also been adopted, which will need to be considered as part of the update and development of the evidence base. LBC has also produced a draft planning brief to guide development above and around Euston station and tracks. A period of consultation was held on the draft document early in 2020. Work on the planning brief is currently on hold to focus on the development of the EAP and ensure a robust framework by which to assess development at Euston. Any recommendations arising from the OSS can therefore also inform the finalised version of the planning brief.

1.5 The main objectives of the Euston OSS are to:

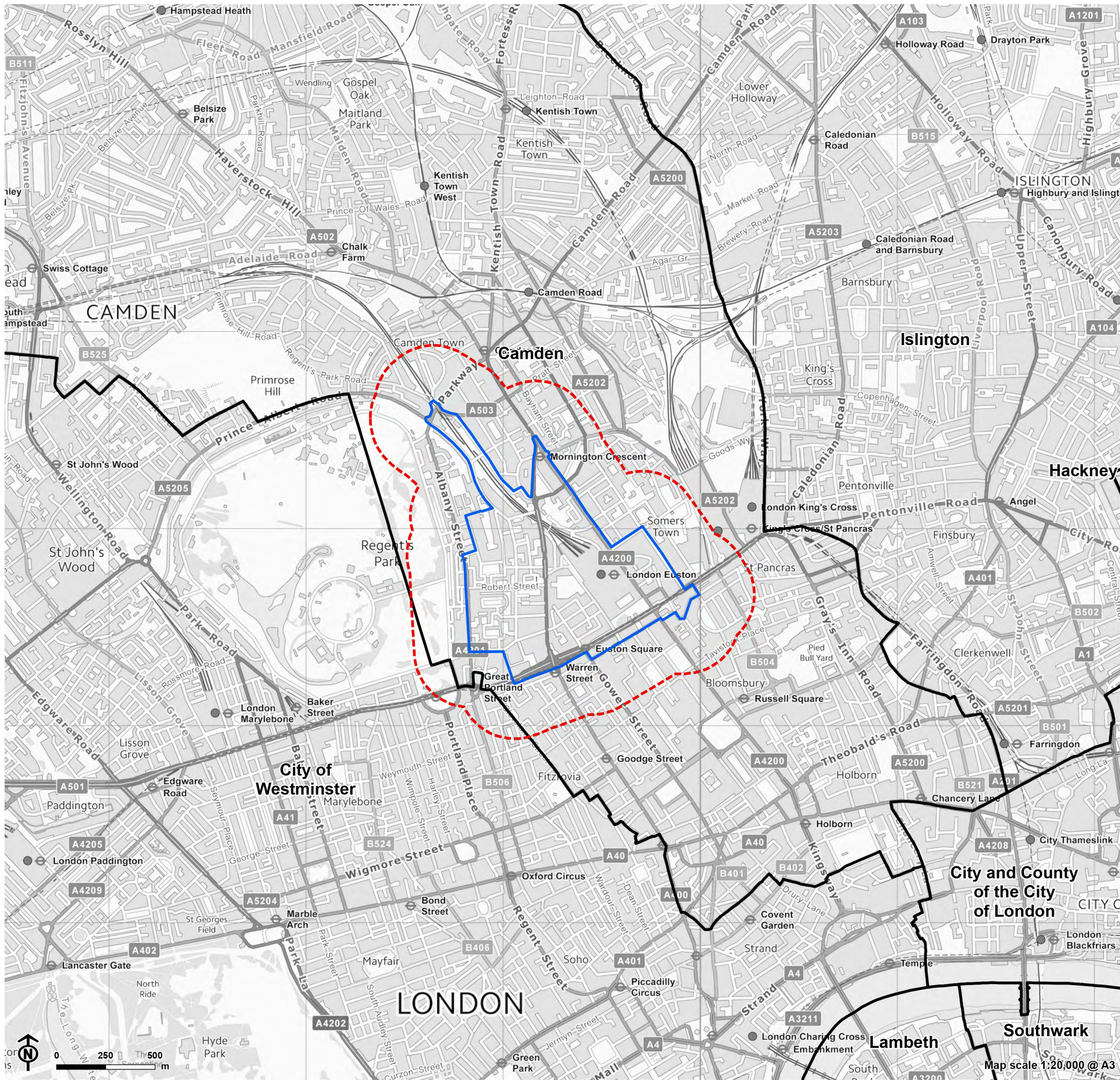
- Update the evidence base for open space and play space to inform an updated EAP.
- Audit and assess the quantity, quality, value and accessibility of open space across the EAP area.
- Undertake an assessment of projected future open space requirements, taking into account future growth.
- Set out the current and future 'need' for open space.
- Provide recommendations on priorities for future open space requirements.

1.6 The study area covers approximately 2.46km² (246ha) and includes the whole EAP boundary. For the purposes of the OSS, a buffer has been extended approximately 280m from the EAP boundary to reflect the wider use and accessibility of open space. See Figure 1.1. The 280m straight-line distance is used as a proxy for 400m walking distance and has been used to ensure provision within walking distance of the study area is taken into account. It

should be noted that accessibility to sites outside of this buffer has not been considered as part of this study. Analysis of accessibility, and the sites residents have access to, therefore focuses on the EAP. Further work would need to be done to develop a fully comprehensive understanding of open space provision for residents within the wider buffer.

Figure 1.1: Study Area

- Euston study area
- 280m study area buffer
- Local Authority boundary



1.7 Euston rail station is located within the centre of the study area, with Kings Cross/St Pancras rail station slightly to the east. Open spaces within the study area range from historic squares such as Tavistock Square and Gordon Square to the south of Euston Road, amenity space within housing estates, and Regent's Park, to the west. The study area is unique in terms of the population and diverse communities of residents, and the number workers and visitors that pass through. Significant sections of the local population experience disadvantage, with several Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the 10-20% most deprived LSOAs in England. Negative impacts on the living environment, arising from construction phase of HS2, are also likely to be significant for many residents.

1.8 The importance of open space to the health and wellbeing of local communities is well recognised. This includes providing opportunities for exercise, relaxation, improved social cohesion, contribution to local character and economic development. There are also many wider environmental functions and benefits of open space which also need to be recognised as part of planning and development, including:

- Enhancing air quality
- Biodiversity
- Heat mitigation
- Flood prevention
- Contribution to climate resilience

1.9 To be sustainable, development within the area will need to ensure the open space needs of local communities are met into the future.

Methodology

1.10 The methodology for the assessment of open space in Euston reflects the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) and has been informed by recognised guidance on planning for open space and play

space. The methodology follows four key steps. A summary of the key steps and where each step features in the report is set out below. Further details on the methods for each step are included within individual chapters with supporting information included within appendices where required.

Step One: Understanding Strategic Context

1.11 (set out within Chapter 2).

1.12 This step reviews the national and London wide policies that underpin the need to undertake the study and reviews the current approach to open space and play space planning in Camden.

1.13 A review of the social and health context and key issues demonstrates the wider need for open space provision within the study area.

Step Two: Gathering Community Insight

1.14 (gathered through public engagement, Chapter 3 and Appendix C).

1.15 Sets out the key findings from online community engagement that has been undertaken to inform the study. The results have helped to establish how open space is valued by the local community and has informed the review and application of quantity, quality, value and accessibility standards.

Step Three: Auditing Local Provision

1.16 Assessing the quantity and types of open space within the study area (set out within Chapter 4).

1.17 Undertaking on site quality and value audits of open space and play space within the area (Chapter 5 and Appendix E).

Step Four: Reviewing Local Standards and Identifying Current and Future Needs

1.18 Brings together the information gathered from the previous steps. Several types of open space standards are applied, and the implications for the study area are reviewed.

- Quantity standards are reviewed and applied within Chapter 4.
- Quality and value standards are reviewed and applied within Chapter 5.
- Accessibility standards are reviewed and applied within Chapter 7.

Step Five: Recommendations

1.19 Key findings, current and future open space needs identified as part of previous steps are set out in Chapter 8.

Chapter 2

Strategic Context

2.1 The following section provides the strategic context for the study, including:

- Planning policy context. This includes setting out the rationale for the study and how the study has been informed by, and can help meet, policy requirements related to open space and play.
- The context for planned infrastructure, housing and employment growth in and around area, and the relevance for open space provision.
- Understanding the wider needs for open space in the area, including the areas changing population, and social and environmental context.

Planning Policy Context

National Policy

2.2 The Governments 25-year Environment Plan (25 YEP 2018), parts of which have been given a statutory footing through the 2021 Environment Bill, sets out several actions that relate to delivering social benefits through the provision of open space. The 25 YEP sets out support for habitat creation, multi-functional urban drainage systems (SuDs), and natural spaces close to where people live and work. It views the planning system as a key mechanism for delivering its ambitions.

'We want to establish strategic, flexible and locally tailored approaches that recognise the relationship between the quality of the environment and development.'

2.3 The rationale for undertaking an assessment of open space and play space in Euston is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF). The NPPF recognises the importance of access to high quality open spaces for the health and wellbeing of communities and outlines the relevance of consideration of open space, sport and green infrastructure provision to the development of a Local Plan.

2.4 This results of this study may be used to help address requirements set out in Paragraph 98. This clause requires that planning policies and decisions are based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities, including quantitative and qualitative deficits and surpluses. Information from assessments should determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is required “which plans should then seek to accommodate”.

Green Infrastructure Framework for England

2.5 Whilst Paragraph 98 of the NPPF requires that up-to-date assessments of open space need are undertaken to support the development of policies, national policies and guidance are not prescriptive as to how assessments should be undertaken. However, the emerging Green Infrastructure Framework for England usefully sets out the key principles for how to gather an evidence base for open space needs (as a key component of the wider GI network).

2.6 The Natural England (NE) National Green Infrastructure Framework has been developed to support local authorities meet requirements in the National Planning Policy Framework relating to Green Infrastructure **[See reference 1]**.

‘Green Infrastructure (GI) is a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.’
(National Planning Policy Framework, 2021)

2.7 The full GI Framework is yet to be published, this will include National GI Standards, the GI Design Guide and GI Case Studies. However, elements of the Framework have been published including 'GI Principles' and a GI mapping database. Of most relevance to the study the GI mapping database shows the application of 'Access to Natural Greenspace Standards' which have been applied to 'Natural Green Spaces and Playing Fields', and may inform a local approach to assessing the level of access to green space.

2.8 Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework sets out 15 GI Principles, which are based on:

- Why Green Infrastructure is important (Why).
- What good GI looks like (What).
- How to do good GI (How).

2.9 Five principles are set out for how to do good GI, including 'Evidence', which this study addresses with regard to open space provision in Euston. NE GI Framework sets out that evidence can come in many forms and can generally be split between:

- Quantitative (e.g. population facts and figures, data on wildlife and habitats, maps of existing extent and location of GI, social statistics, and trends, environmental targets, economic monitoring data, information on the economic and health value of GI).
- Qualitative (e.g. peoples survey responses, description of landscape character, condition surveys, drivers or policy needs).

2.10 This approach to gathering the quantitative aspect of local evidence, current and future needs through this study has included:

- A review local context (Chapter 2) with regards to:
 - Population and trends
 - Social and health statistics (including deprivation)

- Environmental context (including data related to air quality and environmental designations etc.)
- Planned infrastructure and housing growth
- A review of the existing extent and location of open space (Chapter 4 and Chapter 6).

2.11 The approach to gathering the qualitative aspect of local evidence through this study has included:

- A review of key national, London and local policy requirements and guidance with regard to open space and play (Chapter 2).
- Gathering community insight through consultation (Chapter 3).
- An assessment of the quality and condition of open spaces by undertaking detailed sites audits Chapter 5 and Appendix E.
- Assessing the relative value of different open spaces and types of open spaces by undertaking detailed sites audits Chapter 5 and Appendix E.

2.12 The framework sets out some specific areas of information which will usually need to be collated and reviewed in detail as part of an evidence base for open space (such as parks and other greenspaces). This includes:

- Quantity
- Quality
- Functionality/benefits
- Accessibility

2.13 This study addresses the key evidence requirements noted above in several ways.

2.14 Quantity: As noted above this study has recorded the extent and location of different types of open space (Chapter 4). Relative provision per person across the area has also been assessed (i.e. m² per person) for the current

population and taking account of likely future population growth. This study has helped to set out the open space needs for current and future populations. Open space provision has been tested against current borough wide open space quantity standards, identifying quantitative deficiencies (Chapter 6). The study does not propose new quantity standards for open space or play. The study compares current provision against community insight, and whether residents are satisfied with the current quantity of open space that they have access to.

2.15 Quality: As noted above, detailed audits have been undertaken to assess the quality of open spaces across the study area (utilising a numeric scoring system). Sites have been compared against a proposed quality standard, which has been developed using recognised guidance for quality assessment in parks (e.g. Green Flag) and sense checked against community perceptions (Chapter 5 and Appendix E). This information can be used to highlight where qualitative deficiencies occur and provide an overview of the relative quality of open spaces across the study area.

2.16 Functionality/benefits: Open spaces within the study area have been categorised according to a set of typologies, which are based on the primary function of each site (further detail provided in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4). Functionality and benefits are also both encompassed within detailed audit criteria related to Value (utilising a numeric scoring system) (Chapter 5 and Appendix E). Value encompasses site information relating to the type and level of facilities, opportunities for different types of recreation, environmental functions (such as biodiversity/range of habitats, flood mitigation etc), heritage. Sites have been compared against a proposed value standard, which has been developed using recognised guidance for quality assessment in parks (e.g. Green Flag) and sense checked against community perceptions (Chapter 3). This information can be used to provide an overview of the relative value of open spaces across the study area.

2.17 Accessibility: Deficiencies in access to different types of open space has been assessed by applying access catchments to sites within the study area (Chapter 7). Potential adjustments to Camden's existing accessibility standards have been tested. Adjustments have been informed by community insight

(Chapter 3) and the publication of recent national guidance (including NE GI Framework).

Other Relevant National Policies and Guidance

2.18 NPPF Paragraph 99 sets out the only circumstances in which open space can be developed for different uses. It clarifies that existing open space should not be built on unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

2.19 The NPPF provides a mechanism by which local authorities can protect some open spaces through 'Local Green Space' designations (Paragraph 101). These areas should be managed by policies which are consistent with those for Green Belt.

2.20 Planning Practice Guidance provides further detail on the development and implementation of policies within the NPPF. Guidance of most relevance includes:

- Guidance for open space, sport and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space.
- Planning Practice Guidance 'Natural environment'.

London Policy

2.21 The London Plan (2021) is the overall strategic plan for London. London local authority Development Plans are required to be in ‘general conformity’ with the London Plan.

2.22 Policy G4 requires that assessments are undertaken to identify areas of public open space deficiency. The London Plan sets out a methodology for the categorisation of open space which should be used as a benchmark for undertaking assessments. As set out in the NPPF and NE GI Framework, development plans should consider the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space. Plans should ensure that green and open space included as part of development remains publicly accessible.

2.23 Other key policies that are of most relevance to open space and play provision include:

- Policy S4 Play and informal recreation sets out the standards and characteristics of play space that should be delivered as part of development which will likely be used by children.
- Policy G1 Green Infrastructure states that area-based strategies should identify GI assets, their function and potential function and identify opportunities for addressing environmental and social challenges through strategic Green Infrastructure interventions.
- Policy G6 Biodiversity and access to nature sets out that development plans should seek to address deficiencies in access to nature. Deficiency areas are defined as areas that are not within 1km walking distance from accessible Metropolitan or Borough grade Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- Policy G5 Urban Greening sets out requirements for significant development to deliver urban greening through London’s Urban Greening Factor (UGF).

2.24 The London Plan gives examples of typical open space typologies in London (Table 8.1, London Plan 2021), but notes that other open space typologies may be included to reflect local circumstances. The London Plan typologies have partially informed the categorisation of sites. A review of the primary functions of each site has informed the development of the typologies that have been adopted for this study. The proposed approach for this study broadly aligns with the Camden's current approach (further detail is provided in Chapter 4).

Local Policy

2.25 We Make Camden is Camden Council's Corporate Strategy. It sets out a vision and ambitions for the future of the borough. Robust evidence to identify current and future open space needs in the Euston area will support the council in achieving the We Make Camden Ambitions:

- Camden is a borough where every child has the best start in life.
- Camden's Local economy should be strong, sustainable, and inclusive.
- Camden actively tackles injustice and inequality, creating safe, strong and open communities where everyone can contribute.
- Camden communities support good health, wellbeing and connection for everyone so that they can start well, live well and age well.
- Everyone in Camden should have a place they call home.
- Camden should be a green, clean and vibrant, accessible and sustainable place with everyone empowered to contribute to tackling the climate emergency.

Camden Local Plan (2017)

2.26 Policy A2: Open Space. The Council will 'protect, enhance, and improve access to Camden's parks, open spaces and other green infrastructure'. Requirements are set out to 'secure new and enhanced open space and ensure

that development does not put unacceptable pressure on the borough's network of open spaces'. The policy sets out the importance of protecting both designated Public Open Space indicated on the policies map (shown as Local Plan Open Space on Camden's interactive policy map [\[See reference 2\]](#)), as well as public and private open spaces and land on housing estates 'with the potential to be used as public open space'.

2.27 Open space policy will also likely interact with other requirements, most notably:

- A1 Managing the impact of development
- A3 Biodiversity
- CC1 Climate change mitigation
- CC2 Adapting to climate change
- CC3 Water and flooding
- CC4 Air quality
- CC5 Waste
- D1 Design
- T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport
- T2 Parking and car free development
- T3 Transport infrastructure
- T4 Sustainable movement of goods and materials

2.28 The following Camden Planning Guidance may also interact with requirements for open space:

- Access for All (2019)
- Air Quality (2021)
- Amenity (2021)
- Artworks, statues and memorials (2019)

- Biodiversity (2018)
- Design (2021)
- Planning for Health and Wellbeing (2021)
- Public Open Space (2021)
- Transport (2021)
- Trees (2019)
- Water and Flooding (2019)

Open Space Standards and Evidence Base

2.29 The open space evidence base for the 2017 Camden Local Plan is set out within the Camden Open Space Sport and Recreation Study (2014). The 2014 study identified 293 separate open spaces within the borough. The total quantity of open space equates to a borough average of 1.8ha of open space per 1,000 residents. The study notes that the distribution of public parks varies significantly between wards.

2.30 A summary of local open space standards that were proposed as part of the 2014 study is provided below. As set out in the study, the purpose of the proposed standards was to ‘afford adequate levels of provision for each type of open space within the Borough based on the existing needs and future needs of the Borough up to 2025’. The proposed ‘open space’ standard set out within the 2014 study refers to public parks, amenity green space, cemeteries and churchyards, civic spaces/pedestrianised areas and outdoor facilities/playing fields. It should be noted that the standards set out below were not ultimately adopted in policy. Adjustments to the proposed standards have been made and included within Camden Planning Guidance.

2.31 Analysis of accessibility for the 2014 study was undertaken using a basic ‘straight line buffer’ method which did not take account of access routes on the ground. This approach has been superseded by more detailed network analysis

using a spatial model developed by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL). Further detail is provided in Chapter 7.

Open Space

- Quantity standard: 1.3ha per 1,000 population.
- Accessibility standard: Access to formal and informal play provision for children and teenagers within 400m from home.
- Quality standard: Further detail provided within 2014 study.

Public Parks

- Quantity standard: 0.6ha per 1,000 population.
- Accessibility standard: Metropolitan or Regional Park – 3.2km, District Park – 1.2km, Pocket Park, Small Local Park or Local Park – 400m.
- Quality standard: Green Flag ‘Good’ quality standard.

Children’s Play Area

- Quantity standard: 0.65m² of provision per child (equates to 0.01ha per 1,000 population)
- Accessibility standard: 400m.
- Quality standard: Fields in Trust ‘six acre standard’ guidance to be used to assess range and quality of provision.

Natural Greenspace

- Quantity standard: 1ha of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation per 1,000 population
- Accessibility standard: Site of Metropolitan or Borough Grade Importance (Grade I or II) within 1km distance from home.

- Quality standard: Further detail provided within 2014 study.

Allotments

- Quantity standard: 0.02ha per 1,000 population
- Accessibility standard: 800m.
- Quality standard: Further detail provided within 2014 study.

2.32 Borough wide quantity (area) needs up to 2025 identified as part of the 2014 study to address deficiencies were as follows:

- Open space generally: 329.6ha
- Public Parks: 13.6ha
- Children's Play Areas: 4,600m² of additional formal play provision to alleviate deficiencies
- Natural Greenspace: Additional needs noted as 'N/A'
- Allotments: 2.1ha additional allotment land

2.33 The 2014 study identifies deficiencies and additional needs up to 2025 within 'sub-areas' considered within the 2014 study that overlap with the area of the current study. It is important to note that several open spaces within the area have either been lost permanently or will remain inaccessible for the foreseeable future. At the time of the 2014 study the key deficiencies were identified in and around the current study area:

- Regent's Park:
 - Allotments: Below the proposed quantity standard.
- Somers Town:
 - Public Parks: Below the proposed quantity standard, small areas experience deficiencies in access.
 - Allotments: Below the quantity standard, small areas experience deficiencies in access.

- Central London Area (including Bloomsbury and King's Cross Wards):
 - Public parks: All wards are below the proposed quantity standard, small areas in Bloomsbury Ward experience deficiencies in access.
 - Allotments: All wards are below the proposed quantity standard, small areas in Bloomsbury Ward experience deficiencies in access.

2.34 Further detail on the application of Camden's Local Plan policies relating to open space are set out within Camden Planning Guidance: Public Open Space 2021. Existing policies and guidance set out:

- Which developments are expected to make provision for open space and play facilities.
- The amount and type of open space that is expected and how this is calculated.
- Expectations relating to design, quality, play facilities and wider implications related to green infrastructure provision.
- Financial contributions that would be required in lieu of provision.

2.35 Where development is required to make provision for open space, the following quantity standards apply. A separate approach is taken for residential development, student accommodation and commercial development:

- Residential (all types) = 9m² per occupier.
- Commercial development = 0.74m² per worker.
- For student accommodation = 9m² per single room and 18m² per double room. Multiplied by a factor of 0.75 recognising that use is often not year-round.
- Where a development provides outdoor sports facilities, this can contribute towards the 9m² per occupier standard. Although this is subject to a balanced mix of public open space being provided.
- The Mayor of London's standard for play (10m² per child) is supported and will be sought for developments of over 100 dwellings or more. However, the 9m² already includes an allowance for formal and informal play

provision, the council will therefore expect an additional 6.5m² of play provision rather than the 10m² standard.

- Developments are also required to provide private amenity space for use by residents and workers, which will not count towards a scheme's public open space contribution.
- A quantity standard for allotment provision is not set out, however the guidance proposes a that a 'benchmark' of 0.9m² per person is provided.

2.36 Camden's planning guidance on public open space also sets maximum distance of provision from development. The maximum distances from development to public open space is set out below.

Maximum Distance from Development to Public Open Space

- Public amenity open space: 280m (proxy for 400m catchment to account for indirect routes)
- Formal recreation area: 1.2km
- Natural greenspace: 1km walking distance from a publicly accessible Borough or Metropolitan Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- Play Space Provision:
 - Under 5's: 100m
 - 5-11 year olds: 400m
 - 12 years and above: 800m
- Natural greenspace: 500m
- Allotments and community gardens: Any

2.37 Camden's public open space planning guidance provides further clarity on the type and quality of open space that should be provided. Whilst examples

are given of the different typologies of open space that may be provided, the guidance recognises that public open space needs to be multi-functional: 'The mix of different types of open space will vary according to the needs, opportunities and characteristics of the site, its occupants and the surrounding area.' The following list summarises the key points from the guidance:

- Public open space means open space that is fully accessible year-round. Although some restrictions may apply to sensitive nature conservation sites.
- The priority is to create green spaces. Public open space dominated by hard surfacing will generally not be supported unless a particular need is justified. Areas of natural green space will be provided wherever possible.
- The priority for play provision is to deliver new areas of formal, equipped play facilities. Generally, informal open space provision will only be expected where it has been demonstrated that equipped provision would not be appropriate. Proposals should address the needs of different age groups, be inclusive for all children, and allow children from different parts of a development to meet and socialise.
- The council will seek to address the lack of provision in the borough for young people of 12 years of age and over and will expect play provision to meet the needs of a cross section of age groups. This includes formal provision (e.g. sports facilities) and informal provision (e.g. safe and secure meeting places).

2.38 The guidance also notes the importance of housing estate land and how it is to be recognised as part of development proposals. Applicants will be required to 'confirm how much useable space currently exists within the housing estate and set out the function and value of the individual parcels of open space'. The council will seek to retain all open space with amenity value, unless it is proposed to re provide the open space elsewhere and that this is located to meet the needs of the residents it was originally intended to serve. The guidance also recognises that there are significant opportunities to enhance the function and benefits provided by housing estate land.

Euston Policy

Euston Area Plan

2.39 Strategic Principle EAP 4: Environment and open space within the existing EAP sets out requirements for development to deliver a range of benefits for the environment and health and wellbeing, this includes:

- An enhanced green infrastructure network.
- New open spaces.
- Enhancements to existing open spaces to make them safer, more accessible and to improve the character of the area.
- A contribution to health and wellbeing and amenity value for residents, visitors and workers.
- Address noise, air quality issues, the heat island effect and contribute towards urban drainage.
- Enhancements for biodiversity.

2.40 EAP Chapter 4. Places within the existing EAP sets out current requirements for open spaces, indicating specific locations where this would be required.

Draft Euston Area Planning Brief

2.41 The Euston Area Planning Brief (in draft stage at the time of writing) will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to the EAP. It will provide more detailed guidance for the delivery of homes, jobs, open space and other facilities. It will also help communities, businesses and developers understand how the policies might be implemented. At draft stage, the key objectives relating to open space are included within Chapter 5: Open space and environment.

- EOS 3 Open space should be people led.
- EOS 4 Location and design of open space should reflect its intended function.
- EOS 5 Open space should have a reciprocal relationship with its context.

2.42 The findings of the Euston OSS can be used to update the policies within the EAP and provide an up to date evidence base to feed through to refinements of key objectives within a finalised Euston Area Planning Brief.

Infrastructure, Housing and Employment

Euston Rail Station

2.43 The major influence on the regeneration of the area is the redevelopment of Euston rail station and plans need to take account the transport function of the area as a key consideration. The growth in transport infrastructure will have a notable effect on open space provision in the future, in terms of general impacts and pressures of use. Changes to the number of workers in the area and general people traffic will impact when and how open spaces are used. Ongoing development of major infrastructure will also result in temporary and permanent changes to access and pedestrian travel routes across the area.

2.44 Network Rail are considering options to regenerate the existing Euston station. The station is a key transport hub for long distance and commuter services to the north. Work is ongoing to determine the approach to refurbishing the station to ensure future work contributes to the provision of new homes, jobs and community facilities. Whilst the details of the proposals are yet to be refined, the approximate start date will be after 2033.

2.45 The proposed Crossrail 2 scheme would have station entrances at Euston. The proposed scheme is a high speed south-west to north-east rail link. The trains would increase peak period capacity for approximately 100,000 more people. The scheme is subject to government decision and requires approval by Parliament. The development of the proposals is currently on hold, although safeguarding activities are still being undertaken.

2.46 HS2 will be the first of the major infrastructure projects that are planned at Euston to be delivered. HS2 opening has an expected completion date of the middle of the 2030s. Several open spaces have been lost as a result of works undertaken by HS2. These are mainly to the west and south of the Euston station development site. Several of these were areas of grassland integrated within built up areas such as those adjacent to Stanhope Street, Granby Terrace and Harrington Street. Other open spaces that have been lost include:

- Hampstead Road Open Space.
- St James Gardens.
- Euston Square Gardens (east and west), which are only temporarily lost during construction. The site is due to be re-provided in the same location following completion.
- BHS Garden. Whilst not owned by Camden, it was designated in Camden's Local Plan as Public Open Space.

2.47 Residents in and around the vicinity of HS2 works have been considerably impacted in several ways. The loss of open space in terms of quantity has been significant and is likely to have increased pressure and visitor activity in nearby open spaces. Other impacts from construction activity include noise, potential impacts on mental health and restrictions to access routes, further impacting easy access to open space in some localities. The development of the station, once complete, will provide multiple benefits and also has the potential to improve access routes and connectivity across the area, including to areas of open space. A series of open space mitigation works (enhancement and new open space (HS2 replacement open space)) are required to be delivered. Open space is due to be re-provided to address the temporary and permanent losses of sites as a result of the construction work.

Housing and Employment

2.48 Future growth in housing and employment will largely arise from the delivery of the EAP. The current understanding is that the EAP will deliver:

- Between 15,000 and 2,700 new homes.
- Between 125,000m² and 227,000m² of new employment/economic floorspace. Providing between 7,500 and 13,700 jobs (based on an assumption of 100% office space).
- Additional retail floorspace focused around the station.
- Education, health and other community facilities to support new development.

Understanding the Wider Need for Open Space in Euston

2.49 The following section reviews the social and environmental characteristics of the Euston area to further understand the ‘need’ for open space.

Population and Social Context

2.50 The GLA 2020-based housing led projections show the population for the whole of Camden for 2022 to be 276,041. 51% of the population are estimated to be male and 49% female [\[See reference 3\]](#).

2.51 The mean age in the borough is 38.3 years. All wards that overlap the OSS boundary have relatively young population profiles. King’s Cross is the youngest ward in the borough by mean and median age. St Pancras and Somers Town ranks 2nd youngest in Camden for both mean and median age. Regent’s Park ranks 3rd youngest by mean age. Bloomsbury ward has a very

distinct student profile and has a notably high population within the 18-22 year old age bracket [\[See reference 4\]](#).

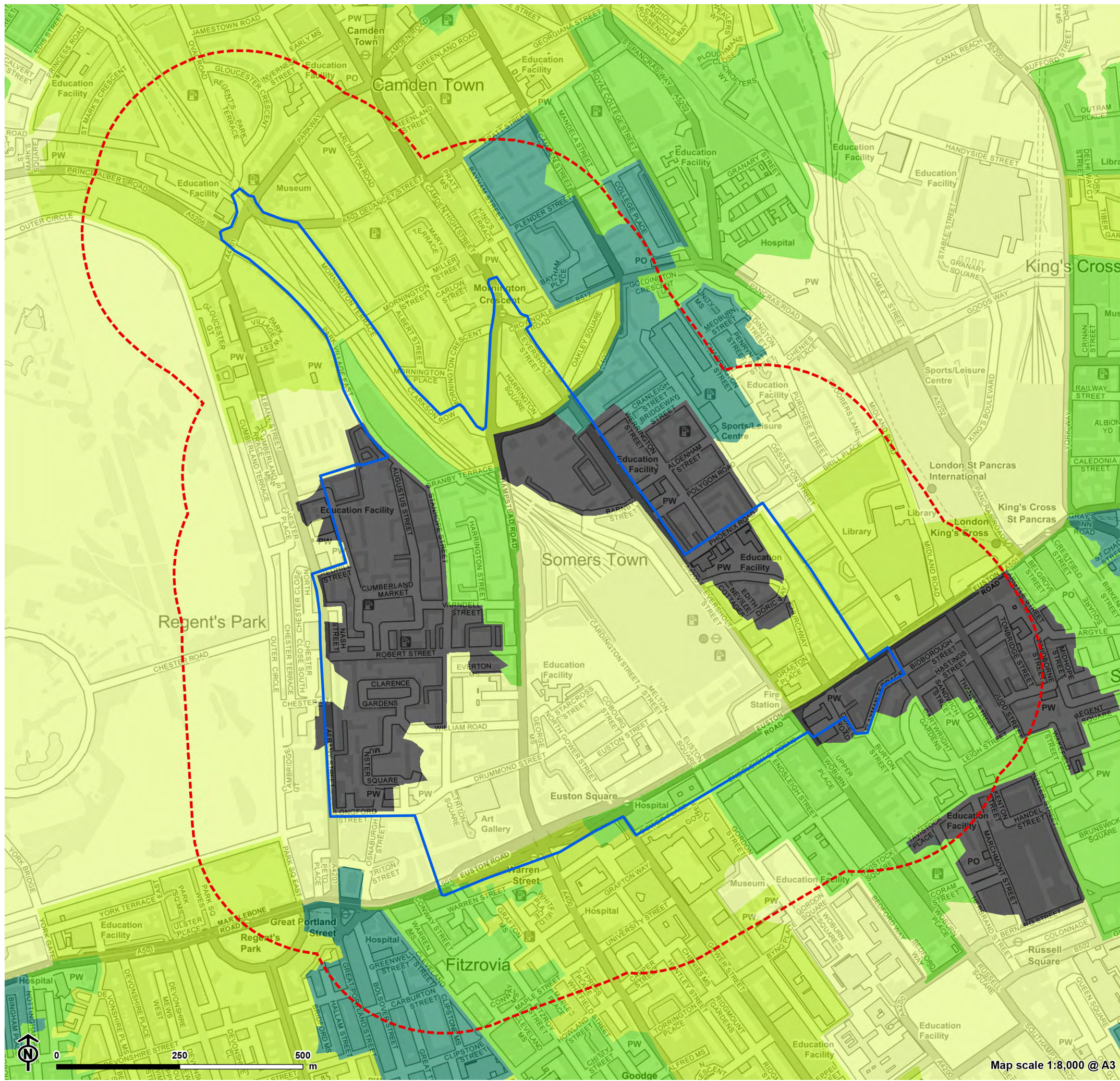
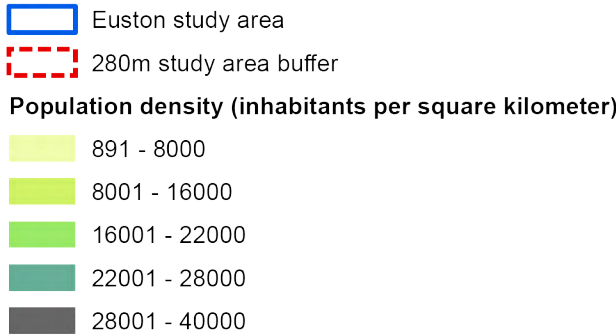
2.52 Data shows that a lower percentage of the population in the borough are from BAME groups when compared to the London average; 34.6% (Camden), compared to 42.5% for London as a whole [\[See reference 5\]](#). The 2011 census indicates that the percentage BAME population for wards that overlap the OSS boundary are higher than the borough and generally higher than the London average. King's Cross (49.2%), St Pancras and Somers Town (49%), Regent's Park (44.3%), and Bloomsbury (40.4%).

2.53 At the time of the 2011 census, Bangladeshi residents formed the largest minority ethnic group in seven Camden wards. Black African is the largest minority in six wards, Other Asian in four wards. Chinese formed the largest minority ethnic group in one ward. There were no wards in Camden where White groups were a minority [\[See reference 6\]](#).

2.54 The average population density of the whole borough is 114 persons per hectare (p/ha) [\[See reference 7\]](#). Population density within the study area is highest in LSOAs within St Pancras and Somers Town Ward to the east of St Pancras station; across areas of the Regent's Park Estate between Hampstead Road and Albany Street; and in the south east of the study area within King's Cross Ward, see Figure 2.1.

2.55 High population across the study area reflects the high levels of social housing. It should be noted that most residents within high density areas will unlikely have access to a private garden. ONS data indicates that around 73% of dwellings around Regents Park Estate, and around 79% of dwellings in Somers Town do not have access to private gardens. This compares poorly in relation to the average of 12% nationally without access to a private garden [\[See reference 8\]](#). Whilst access to private open space does not negate the need for public open space and play space, the relatively low percentage of those without access to a private garden within the area re-enforces the need to ensure good quality public open space is provided and that this is easily accessible near to where people live.

Figure 2.1: Population Density



Map scale 1:8,000 @ A3

Changing Population

2.56 As a central London borough, Camden experiences a high degree of population ‘churn’. Camden has the 6th largest population churn in the UK due to in- and out-flow migration. In the year to mid-2019, ONS estimated a total migration in-flow to the borough of 40,700 people and a total outflow of 34,300. A sizeable proportion of movement is the annual transfer of students to and from Camden (international and UK).

2.57 The population of the borough increased by around 24.2% over the ten years since 2011 (census data) up to 2021, from 220,069 to 273,371. The population of the whole borough is expected to increase by a further 7.3% between 2022 and 2033 [\[See reference 9\]](#). The GLA 2020-based housing led projections show that projected changes to the population figures up to 2033 for wards that overlap the OSS boundary vary significantly. It is estimated that the populations of St Pancras and Somers Town ward and Regent’s Park ward will increase by a significantly higher percentage than the borough as a whole. King’s Cross and Bloomsbury are expected to experience only a slight increase in population up to 2033. See Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: GLA 2020-based housing led projected population increase (2021-2023) by ward

Wards	2022	2023	Percentage Increase
St Pancras and Somers Town	20,767	25,424	22.4%
Camden Town with Primrose Hill	15,419	16,338	6.0%
Regents Park	15,526	24,092	55.2%
King’s Cross	14,588	14,761	1.2%
Bloomsbury	12,658	12,937	2.2%
Camden Borough	276,041	296,132	7.3%

2.58 A large proportion of population growth within the study area will be as a result of future development within the boundary of the Euston Area Plan. The proposed updates to the EAP refreshes the target for the delivery of housing reflecting constraints and reduced availability of land. The proposed updates to the Plan continues to seek to accommodate most of the growth above the station and tracks and identifies capacity for between 1,500 and 2,700 homes. The amount of non-residential floorspace that will be delivered is expected to be in the region of 125,000-227,000m², which will equate to between 7,500 and 13,700 jobs.

2.59 Camden's dependency ratio (mid-2022), which measures the relative burden of the young and old in comparison with the working age population is 34% (compared to 57.41% for England) but is expected to rise to 41.5% by 2041 [\[See reference 10\]](#).

2.60 The number of people in Camden under the age of 18 overall is expected to decrease by around 13% between 2022 and 2033. The estimated percentage change in the under 18 population between 2022 and 2023 for wards that cross the study area ranges from a 34% and 23% decrease (Bloomsbury and Camden Town with Primrose Hill respectively) to a 14% increase (St Pancras and Somers Town). Regents Park ward is estimated to see a 2% increase in the number of under 18 residents between 2022 and 2033. See Table 2.2.

2.61 Conversely, the number of people over the age of 65 in Camden is expected to increase considerably between 2022 and 2033. Residents between the age of 65 and 90 are expected to increase by an estimated 41% between 2022 and 2023. For some wards that cross the study area, the increase in the number of residents over 65 is estimated to be higher than the borough average. This includes St Pancras and Somers Town, which is expected to see a 53% increase up to 2033. Regents Park ward is expected to see a 38% increase in the number of residents over 65 up to 2033 [\[See reference 11\]](#). See Table 2.3.

Table 2.2: Percentage change in under 18 years population by ward (2022-2023)

Wards	2022	2023	Percentage Change
St Pancras and Somers Town	3,401	3,866	+14%
Camden Town with Primrose Hill	2,075	1,600	-23%
Regents Park	2,373	2,429	+2%
King's Cross	1,895	1,541	-19%
Bloomsbury	968	639	-34%
Camden Borough	43,034	37,501	-13%

Table 2.3: Percentage change in 65-90 years population by ward (2022-2023)

Wards	2022	2023	Percentage Change
St Pancras and Somers Town	1,743	2,661	+53%
Camden Town with Primrose Hill	2,079	2,994	+44%
Regents Park	1,696	2,347	+38%
King's Cross	1,305	1,920	+47%
Bloomsbury	1,616	2,282	+41%
Camden Borough	35,602	50,116	+41%

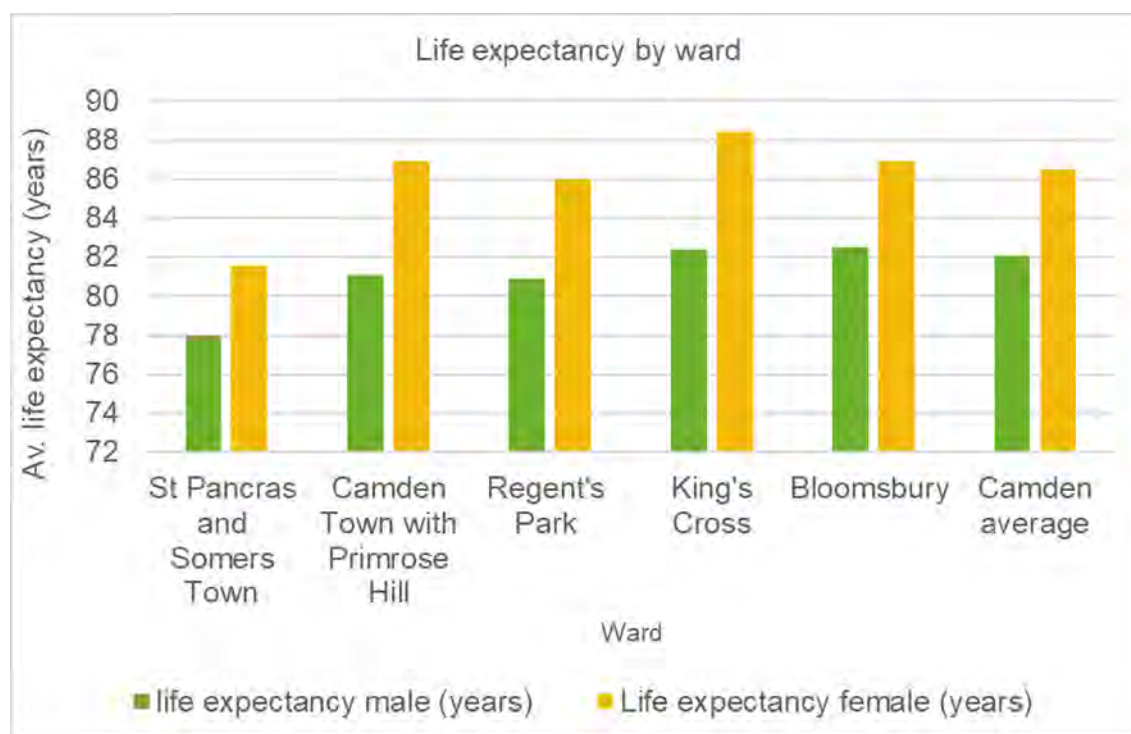
Deprivation and Health

2.62 The borough as a whole performs relatively well against many health indicators for England. Under 75 mortality rate from all causes is lower when

compared to the England average. 281 per 1,000 (Camden) compared to 326 per 1,000 (England). Those killed or seriously injured on the road and estimated diabetes diagnosis rate is higher than the England average.

2.63 Average life expectancy in Camden is 82.1 years for males and 86.5 years for females. Whilst average life expectancy at birth borough wide is better than the England average (male: 79.8 years, female: 83.4 years), inequality in life expectancy across the borough is amongst the worst in England. Average life expectancy varies between the wards that overlap the study area. Male and female life expectancy in St Pancras and Somers Town is significantly lower than the Camden average and lower than nearby wards. See Figure 2.2. Camden residents on average spend the last 20 years of life in poor health [See reference 12].

Figure 2.2: Life expectancy



2.64 The Sport England Active Lives Survey (2019-20) [See reference 13] indicates that Camden residents generally undertake similar levels of physical activity when compared to England and the London region. 65% of respondents

in Camden undertake at least 150 minutes of physical activity a week, compared to 64% (London) and 63% (England). It should be noted that for the whole of England levels of physical activity vary notably between the most deprived and the least deprived areas; 69.4% (at least 150 minutes a week) in the least deprived areas, compared to 53.9% in the most deprived areas.

2.65 The survey highlights that Camden performs relatively well compared to London and England on survey questions related to wellbeing (scale of 1-10). The Camden average rating for 'life satisfaction' for 2019-20 was 7.17, compared to 7.03 for London and 7.11 for England. The Camden average rating for 'anxiety' was 3.51 compared to 3.69 (London) and 3.46 (England).

2.66 Despite the relatively good performance of the borough against several national health indicators, Camden's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment indicates several key issues for the borough as a whole:

- Camden has the 3rd highest diagnosed rate of serious mental health illness in London.
- Camden has the highest estimated dementia diagnosis rate in London at 90%; compared to 73% (London) and 69% (England).
- Cancer, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory disease remain the leading cause of death in the borough. Diabetes and high blood pressure are common in Camden and significantly contribute to early death.
- 21% of children in reception and 36% of children in year six in Camden are overweight or obese.
- An estimated 6% of people in Camden are classified as severely frail.

2.67 The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas (Lower-layer Super Output Areas or LSOAs) across England. The IMD are based on seven domains of deprivation, including 'Income', 'Employment', 'Education, Skills and Training', 'Health and Disability', 'Crime', 'Barriers to Housing and Services and 'Living Environment'.

2.68 The 2019 IMD shows that, in Camden, deprivation is more concentrated in the south east of the borough. The largest pockets of deprivation are seen within and around the study area. Several LSOAs are among the 10-20% most deprived and 20-30% most deprived LSOAs in England. LSOA E01000950 within Regent's Park ward is the 2nd most deprived LSOA in Camden [\[See reference 14\]](#). King's Cross and Regent's Park ward have significantly higher proportions of children living in poverty when compared to the rest of Camden. St Pancras and Somers Town ward has the highest proportion of children experiencing poverty in Camden (just under 40% of children are from low income households) [\[See reference 15\]](#).

2.69 Figure 2.3 shows the IMD (2019) across the study area and surrounding wards. Figure 2.4 shows the health and disability domain, Figure 2.5 the living environment domain and Figure 2.6 the barriers to housing and services domain.

Figure 2.3: Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) by Decile

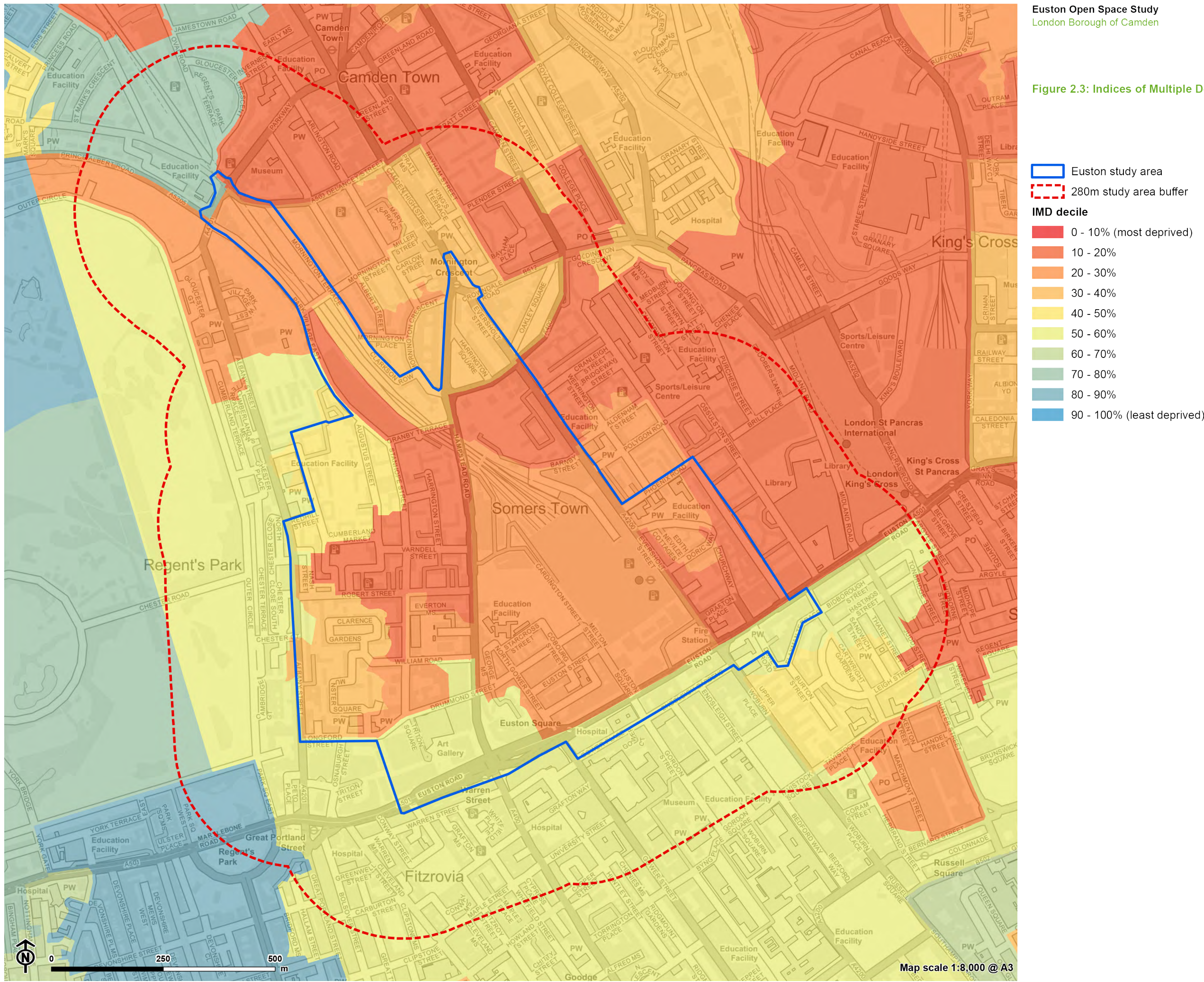
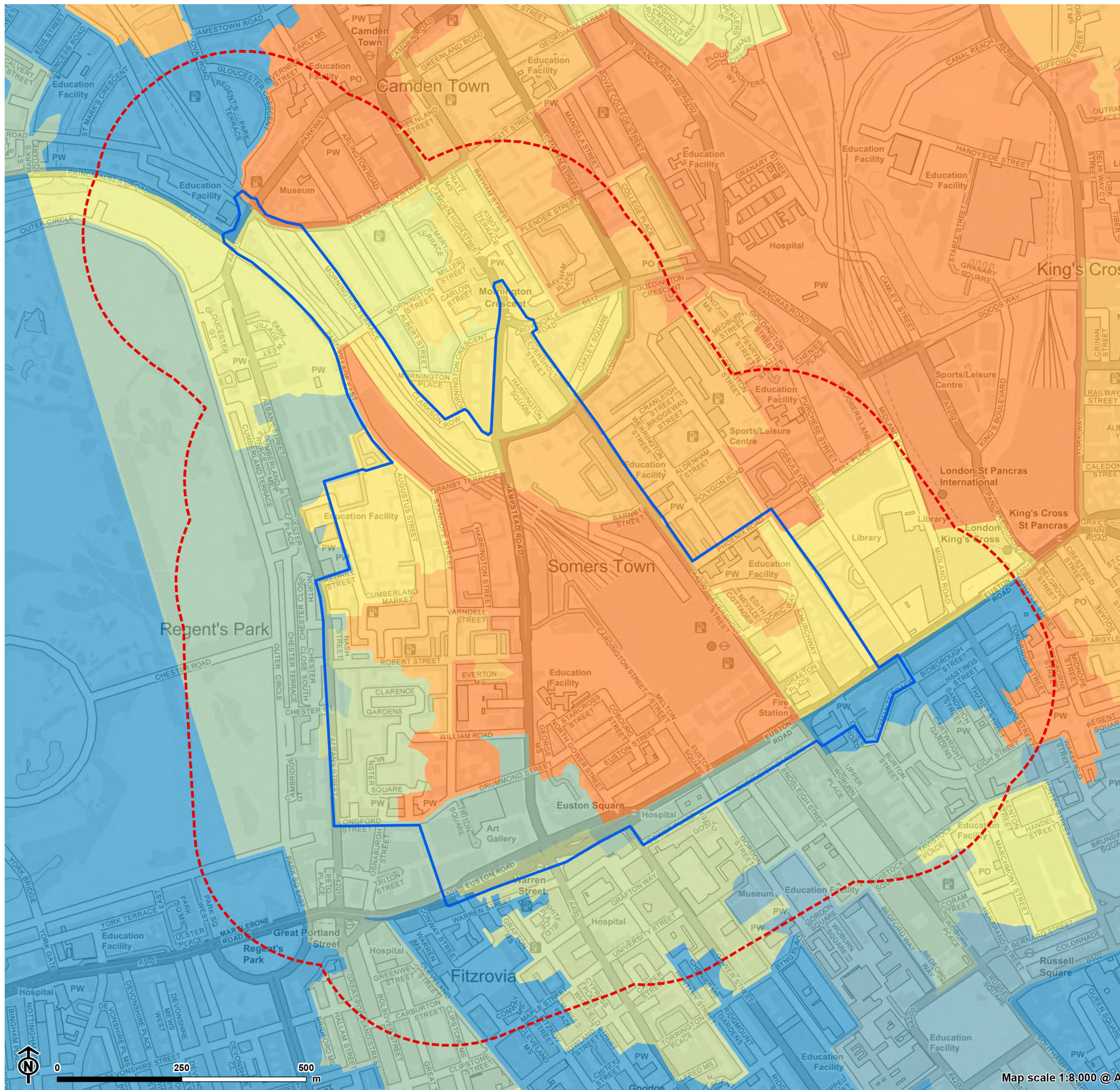


Figure 2.4: Health and Disability Deprivation



- Euston study area
- 280m study area buffer
- Health and disability deprivation decile**
- 0 - 10% (most deprived)
- 10 - 20%
- 20 - 30%
- 30 - 40%
- 40 - 50%
- 50 - 60%
- 60 - 70%
- 70 - 80%
- 80 - 90%
- 90 - 100% (least deprived)

Map scale 1:8,000 @ A3

Figure 2.5: Living Environment Deprivation

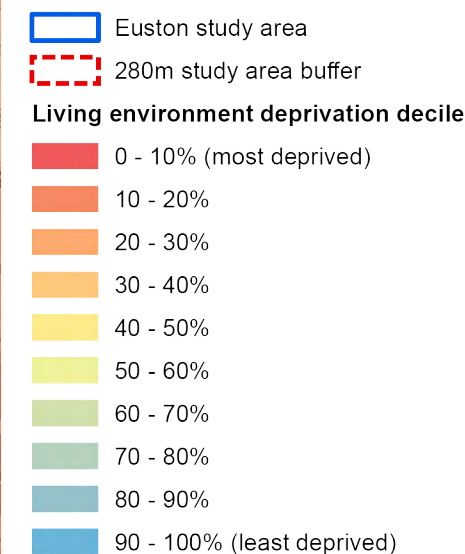
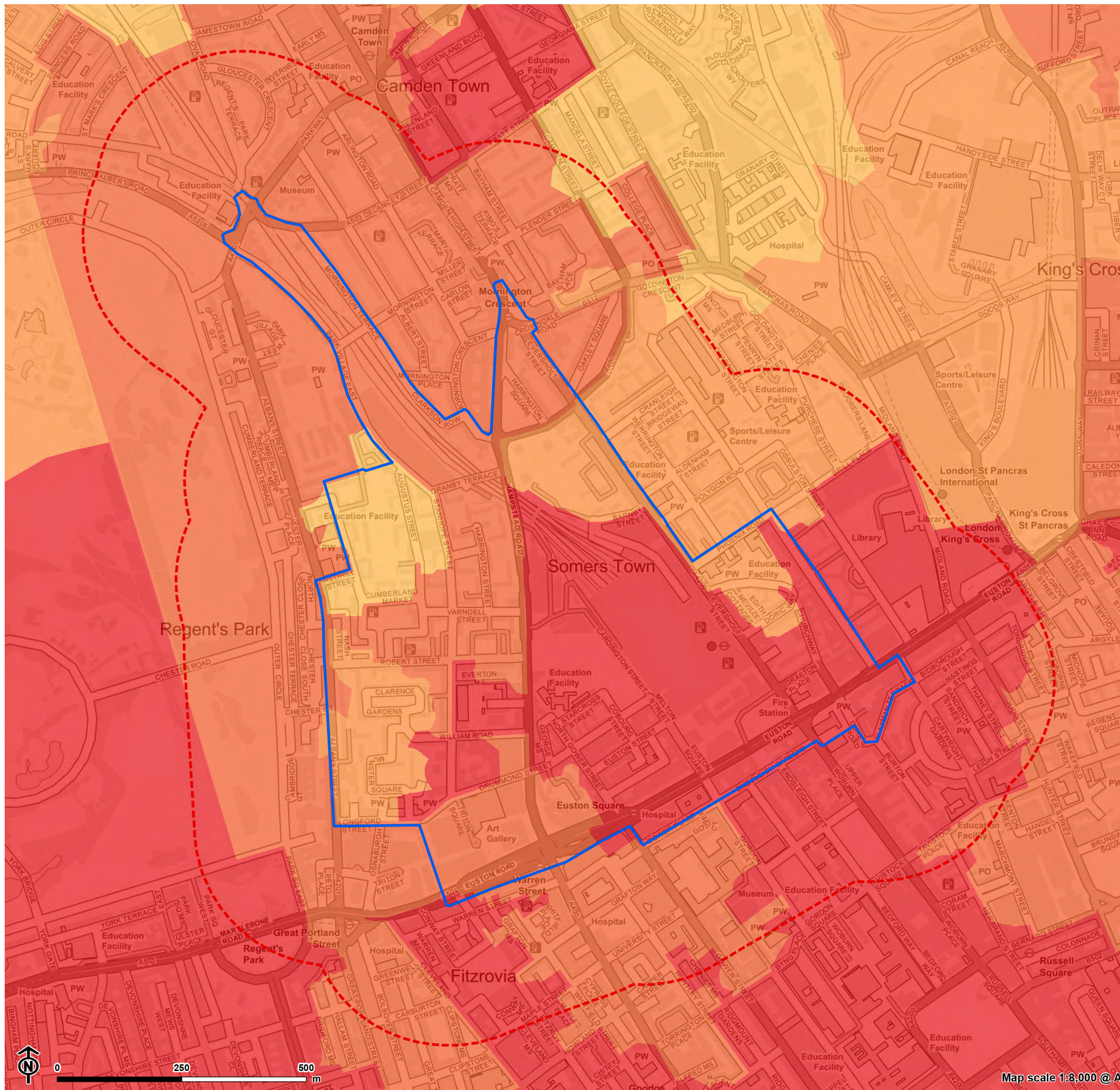
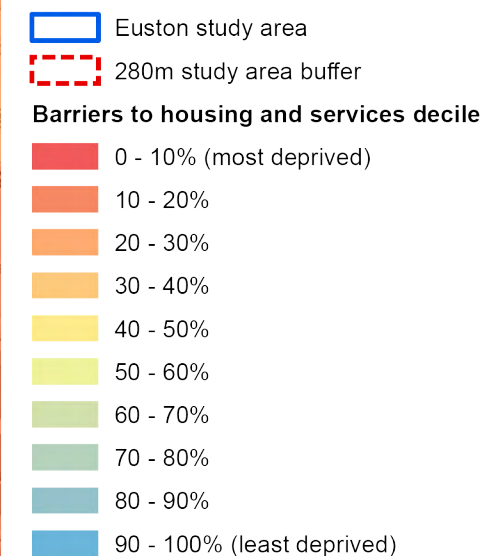
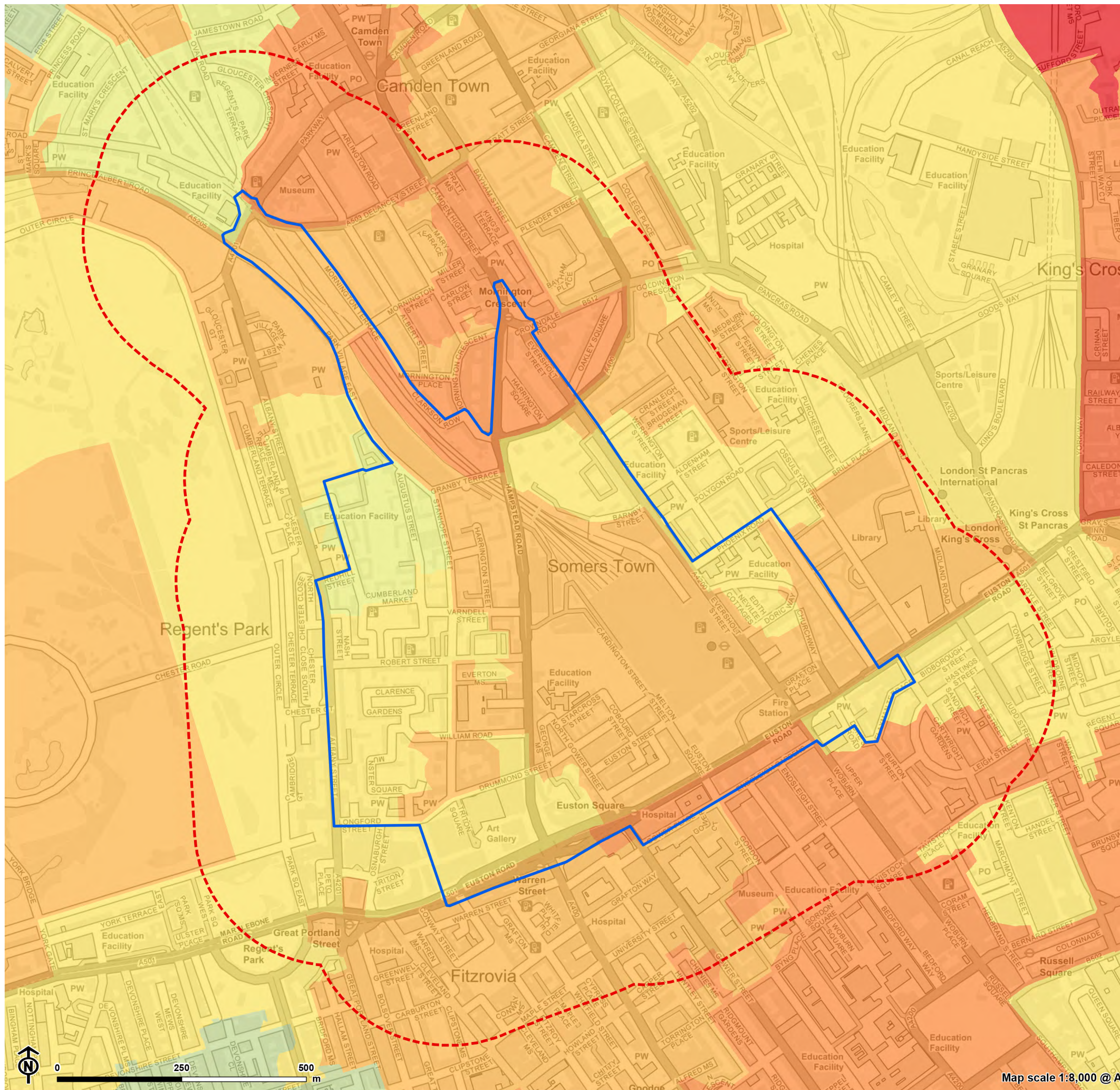


Figure 2.6: Barriers to Housing and Services



Environmental Context

2.70 High quality and value open space is multifunctional and able to provide multiple benefits. Well-designed open space can help to alleviate and mitigate against poor air quality, reduce issues associated with surface water flooding, and help to increase biodiversity. The standards and expectations with regard to new and existing open space will need to recognise the wider environmental context and drivers for open space provision in the area. Mitigating and adapting to the changing climate is, and will continue to be, a key thread in designing, delivering and maintaining a network of open spaces for local communities. The GLA has published climate risk mapping to analyse climate exposure and vulnerability. The maps overlay key metrics to identify areas within London that are most exposed to climate impacts with high concentrations of vulnerable populations. The mapping presents relative 'overall climate risk' from one (low) to five (high) over a 350m hexagonal grid. The study area generally falls within the highest or second highest overall climate risk, with lower risk areas being concentrated directly around larger open spaces such as Regent's Park. This contrasts with larger areas in the north of the borough which are shown as having medium to low overall climate risk [\[See reference 16\]](#).

Air Quality and Flood Risk

2.71 Air quality is a significant issue in some areas within Camden. High concentrations of particulates are associated with several large roads that cross the study area, with the south being most affected by poor air quality. Figure 2.7 shows the highest concentrations of PM2.5 (as one measure of poor air quality) along Euston Road (A501), Hampstead Road/Tottenham Court Road, Gower Street (A400) and Eversholt Street (A4200).

2.72 Some areas within the study area are at risk from localised surface water flooding. Figure 2.8 shows area that are at most risk (yearly probability). Notable areas at most risk include north and west of St Pancras Station, Euston Road (west of Euston Square station), and Crowndale Road/Pancras Road.

2.73 The provision of high quality, multifunctional open space can help to address and mitigate health and other impacts related to air quality and flood risk. The delivery of future open space or enhancements will ideally consider location to maximise environmental benefits in this regard. This may include the incorporation of multifunctional Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) features that can also provide recreation areas when not saturated. Also, appropriate planting which can act as a buffer and filter sources of air pollution and provide areas that are better protected from negative health impacts. The current value of sites with regards to wider environmental functionality and benefits has been considered as part of this study through site audits. This provides a starting point for identifying areas and locations for enhancement.

Figure 2.7: Environmental Context: Air Quality

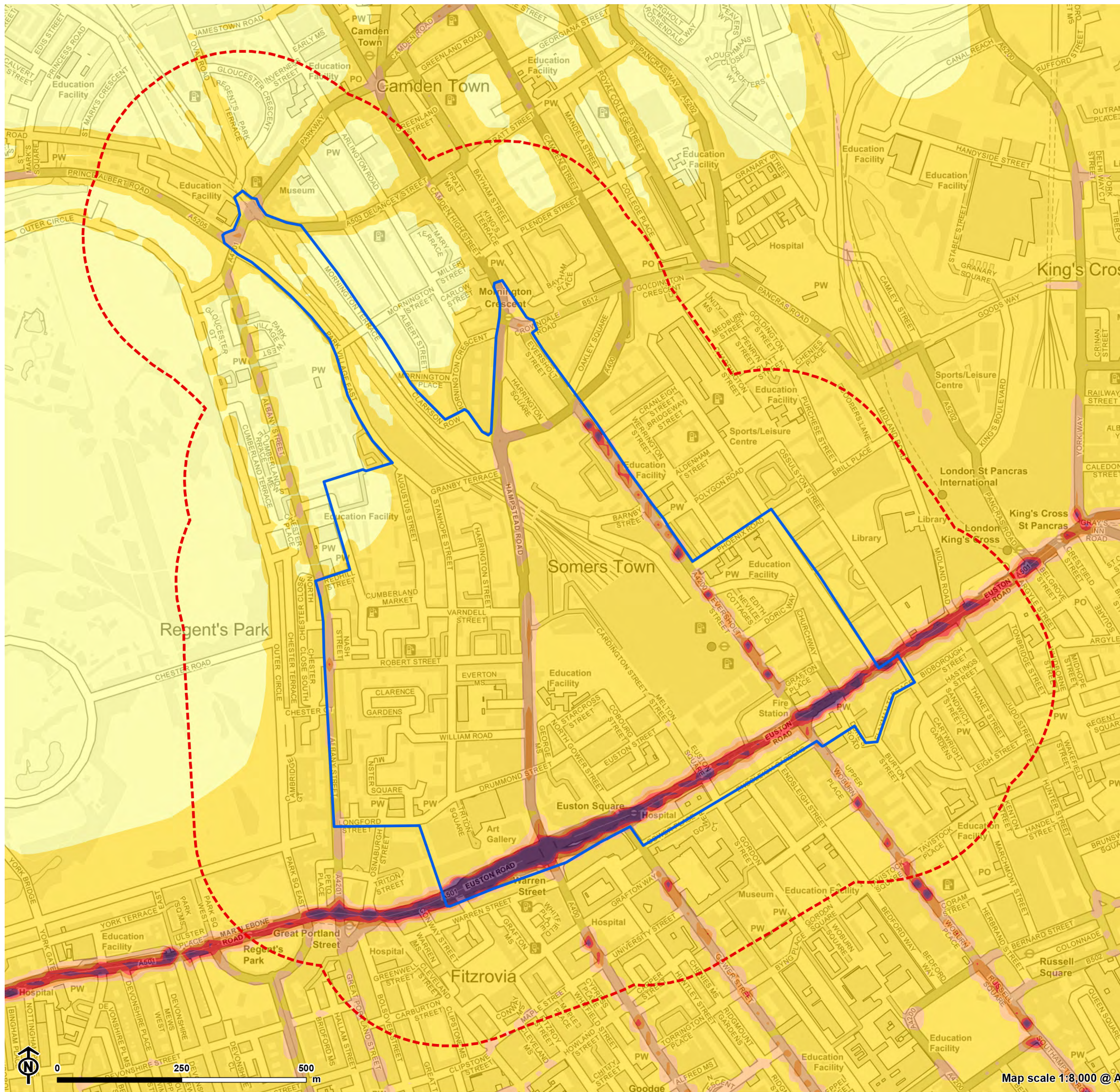
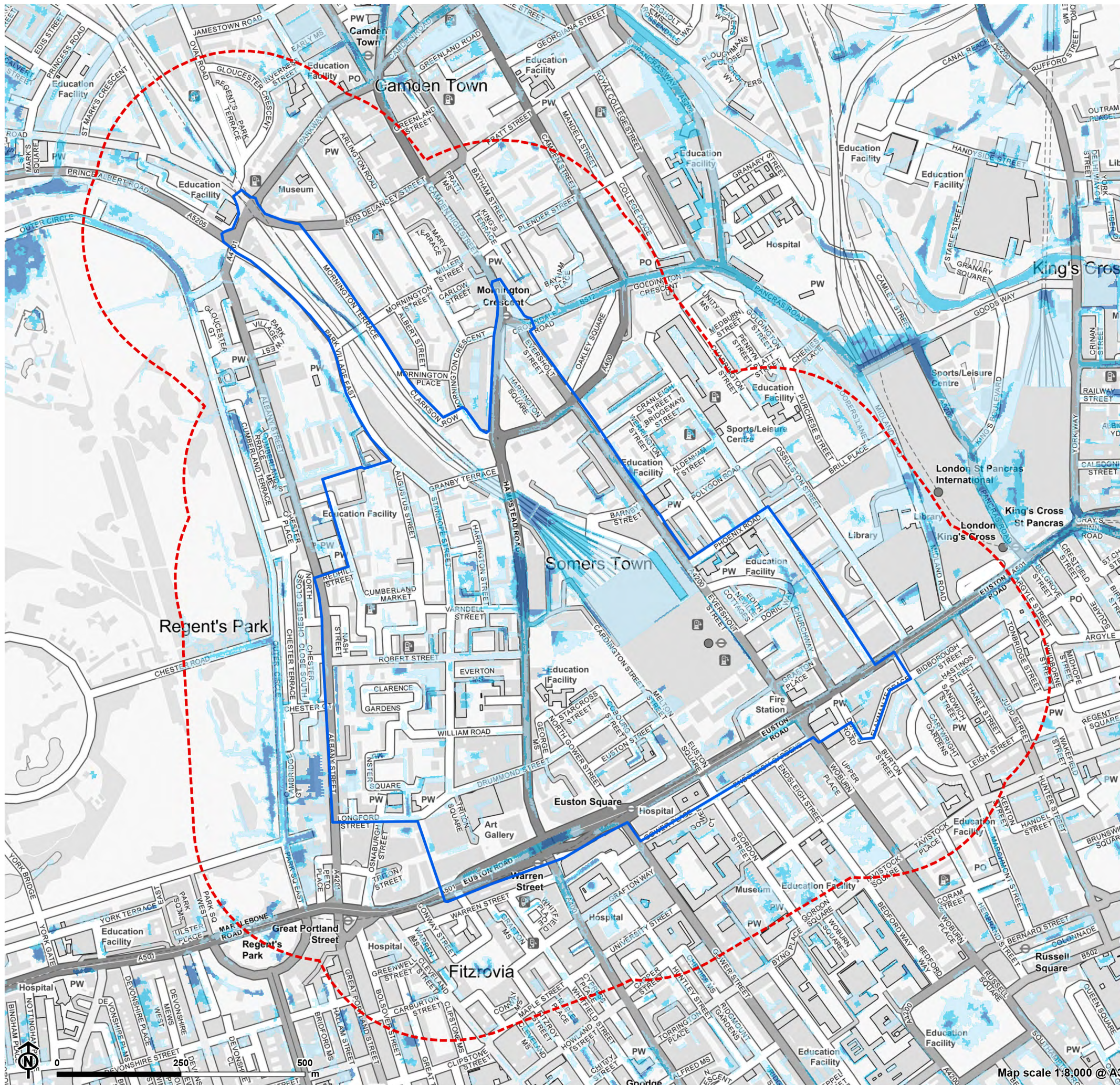


Figure 2.8: Environmental Context - Flood risk



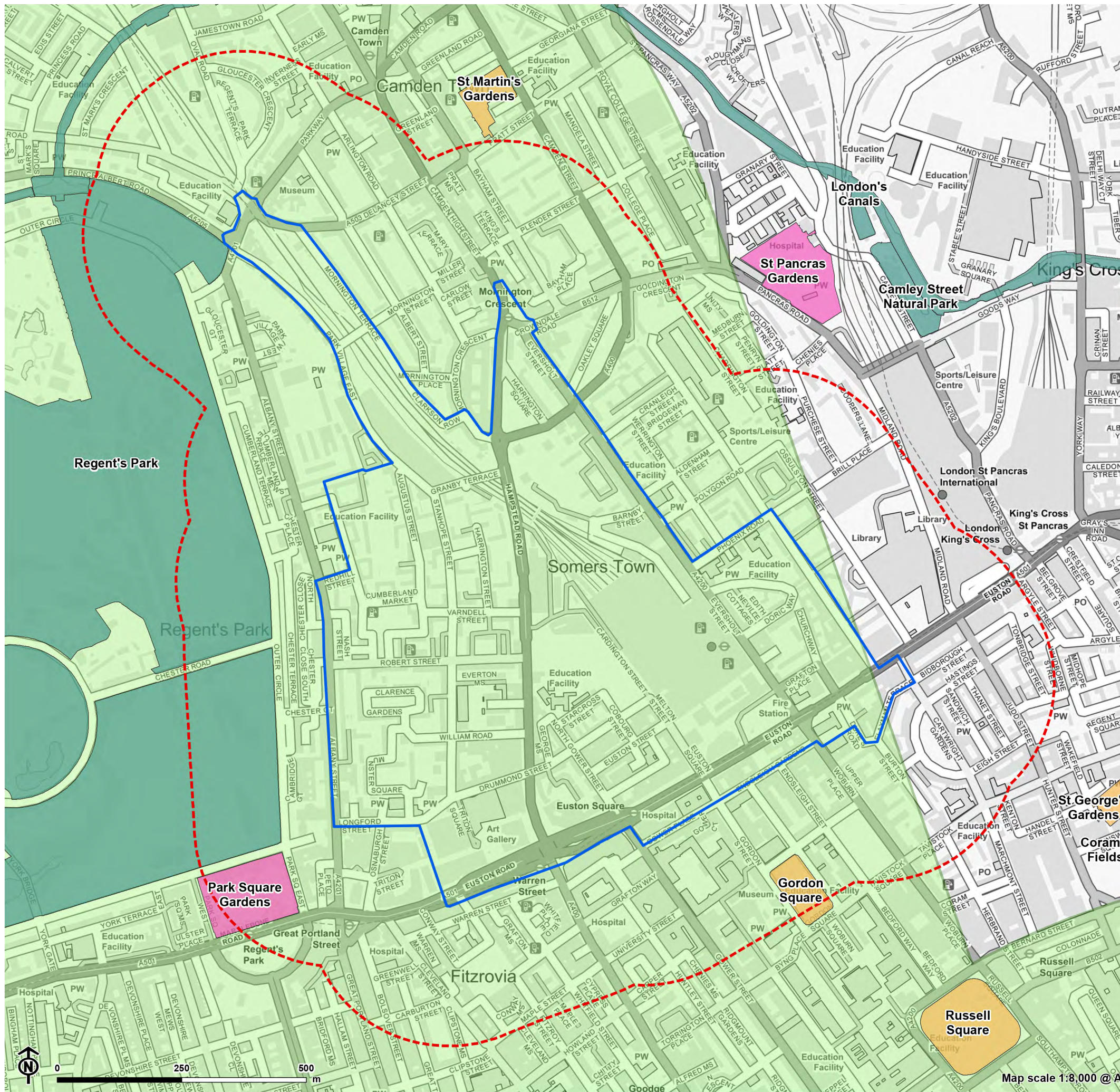
- Euston study area
- 280m study area buffer
- Risk of Flooding from Surface Water**
- 3.3% yearly probability
- 1% yearly probability
- 0.1% yearly probability

Map scale 1:8,000 @ A3

Biodiversity

2.74 Two open spaces included within the study area are designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC); Regent's Park (Metropolitan Grade SINC) and Gordon Square (Local Grade SINC). St James's Garden which has been lost as a result of HS2 construction work was a Local Grade SINC. SINC sites just outside the study area boundary include St Martin's Square (Local), St Pancras Gardens (Borough Grade II) and Regent's Canal (Metropolitan). The majority of the study area is included within Bug life's B-Lines network. B-Lines are areas that have been identified as priority areas to restore wildflower rich pollinator habitat. See Figure 2.9.

Figure 2.9: Environmental Context - Biodiversity



- Euston study area
 - 280m study area buffer
 - B-lines
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (by grade)**
- Metropolitan importance
 - Borough importance
 - Local importance

Map scale 1:8,000 @ A3

Heritage and Landscape

2.75 Many of the boroughs designated open spaces are located within Conservation Areas or are designated heritage assets themselves. Policy A2 with Camden's Local Plan recognises that open space can positively contribute to a Conservation Area's character and the setting of heritage assets. Conservation Areas (CAs) that overlap the study area boundary include Camden Town CA to the north east, Regent's Village CA to the north west and Bloomsbury CA to the south. Euston Square Gardens, which has been temporarily lost due to HS2 and is due to be re-provided, is located within Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

2.76 Several open spaces are designated London Squares under the London Squares Preservation Act (1931). The Act limits the use of London Squares to 'ornamental pleasure grounds or grounds for play, rest and recreation'. The only buildings allowed are those which are 'necessary or convenient for, and in connection with, the use and maintenance of such squares'. London Squares within the study area include:

- Cartwright Gardens
- Fitzroy Square/Fitzroy Square Gardens
- Amptill Square
- Gordon Square Gardens
- Harrington Square Gardens
- Oakley Square Gardens
- Tavistock Square Gardens

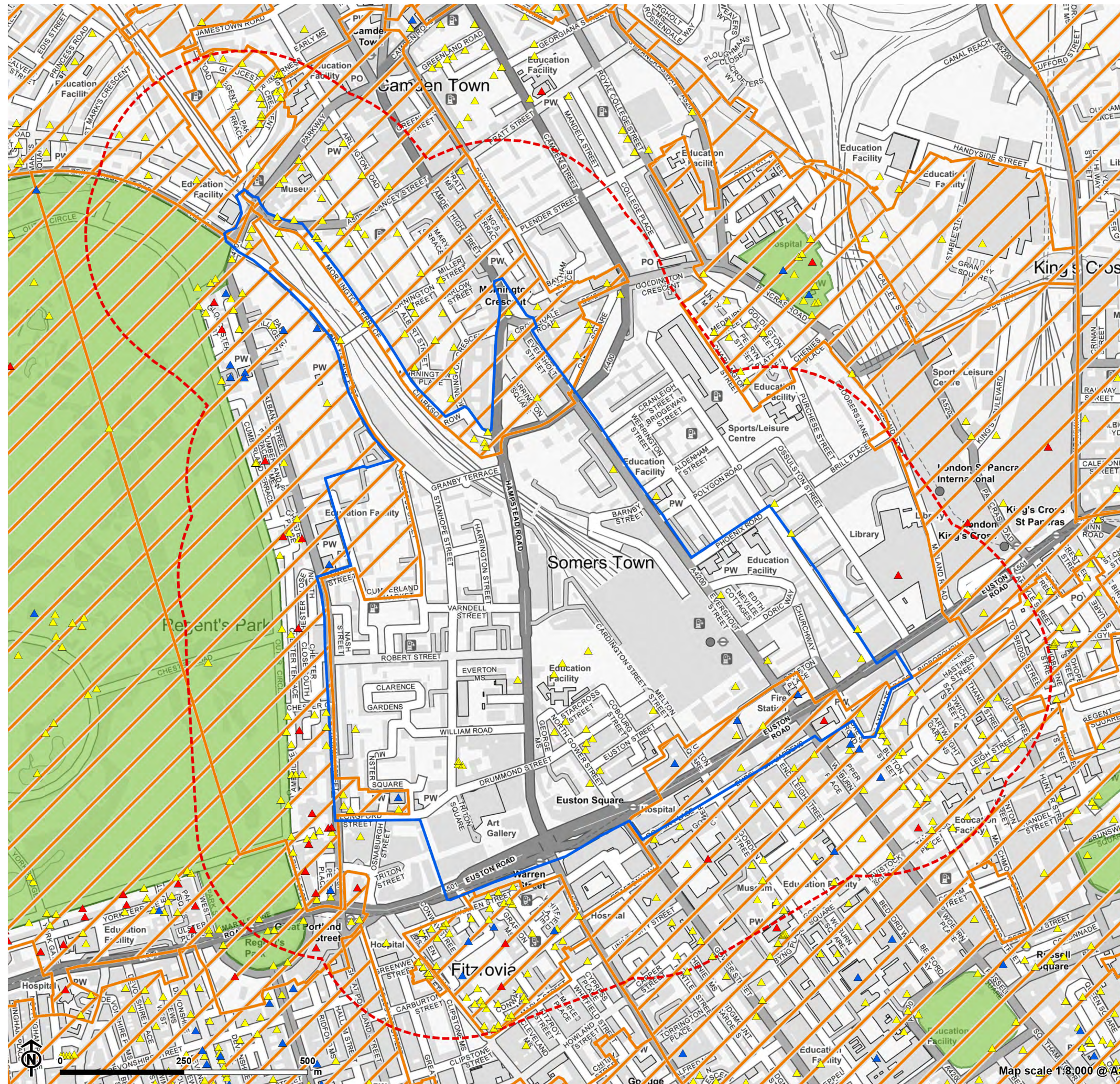
2.77 Regent's Park (Grade I) is listed on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic interest in England. St Pancras Gardens is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden and located just to the east of the study boundary.

2.78 Regent's Park, the eastern edge of which is located in the west of the EAP OSS study area, is designated as Metropolitan Open Land and is of London wide significance for its openness and structural role in providing important breaks in the built-up area.

2.79 There are a large number of listed buildings and built features (Grade I, II and II*) included within the study area. Many of these are located within Conservation Areas and some within open spaces.

2.80 Heritage and landscape designations are shown on Figure 2.10.

Figure 2.10: Environmental Context - Heritage & Landscape



- Euston study area
- 280m study area buffer
- Conservation Area
- Registered Parks and Gardens

Listed Building (by grade)

- I
- II*
- II

The listed buildings shown on this figure are accurate as of the 26.05.2022.

Map scale 1:8,000 @ A3

Key Considerations: Strategic Context

2.81 A range of national, London and Local policy and guidance both provides a rationale for the preparation of the study and guiding principles for some aspects of the methodology.

2.82 London Borough of Camden have existing standards for open space that are applied through policy. The existing approach has been considered during the development the methodology for the current study. This includes testing the likely open space quantum that may be required because of growth in the Euston Area Plan. This study does not include proposals for a comprehensive set of new standards (for quantity, quality, value and accessibility), however, changes to national policy and guidance suggest that amendments to the current approach may need to be considered in the future. Whilst changes to policy would need to be informed by further borough wide assessment, alternative approaches to assessing accessibility and quality/value have been tested for the Euston area.

2.83 There are a range of stakeholder priorities and aspirations for Euston that are set out within several strategies and policy documents. These have been informed by a range of community consultation. These pieces of work highlight and strengthen the need for high quality multi-functional open space and public realm within the area.

2.84 Camden as a whole performs poorly compared to the rest of London on a range of health indicators, and performance against health indicators (such as average life expectancy) varies significantly between wards that are included within the study area. This results of this review suggests a range of current open space needs which are considered throughout the remainder of the study and may need to be prioritised during future work:

- The delivery of spaces that encourage active recreation and opportunities for sport.
- Spaces that are 'playable' and offer a range of different types of play opportunities to encourage healthy lifestyles from a young age. Spaces

should be child friendly whether they provide equipped play facilities or not.

2.85 The Euston area is undergoing considerable change in terms of population growth and development of infrastructure in the area. The population is diverse in terms of socio-economic background and there has historically been a high degree of population 'churn' due to in and out migration flows and a large student population. The growing and changing population suggest a range of future open space needs which are considered throughout the remainder of the study and may need to be prioritised during future work:

- The area has an ageing population and there will be a greater need to provide for older users. Accessibility to and within open spaces will need to be inclusive and easy. Access to high quality sites close to home (even if small in size) will likely prove an important part of the mix of open spaces that will need to be provided.
- Intergenerational play and active spaces that cater for a wide age ranges will likely be beneficial and encourage active recreation amongst older residents.
- The number of children under the age of 18 is likely to decrease in some locations or only see a moderate increase up to 2033. Seeking to increase play provision or prioritising enhancements in areas which are expected to see the greatest increase in child population may need to be a priority in the future.

2.86 The area suffers from a range of environmental issues which may be partially addressed or mitigated through additional open space or improvements to existing open space, including poor air quality and noise. The impacts of a changing climate will increase the need for open spaces to provide multiple functions such as collect and reduce surface water run off and to provide areas of shade.

2.87 There are few sites designated for biodiversity within the study area, (although Regent's Park is a Metropolitan Grade SINC), and designated biodiversity sites have been lost as a result of recent development works. The

area suffers from a lack of ecological connectivity between surrounding designated sites, and it will be important to understand the importance of 'access to nature' in open spaces for the local community.

Chapter 3

Community Insight

3.1 The following section sets out the key findings and implications of the community insight that has been gathered to inform the study. A more detailed summary of results is included within Appendix C.

3.2 In summary, the purpose of gathering community insight was to:

- Set out the value of open space and its contribution to the quality of life of residents and workers in Euston.
- Understand perceptions of the quality of open space across the study area and to what extent the quality of sites may need to be improved. This has been considered alongside a range of other factors to establish proposed benchmark standards for quality and value.
- Understand perceptions in relation to the current quantity of different types of open space to inform any recommendations for future quantity provision and any future review of standards.
- Understand how far people are generally willing to travel to open space in Euston, which has been considered alongside other factors in understanding accessibility to open space and deficiencies in the area.

3.3 The results will be used to develop recommendations on the types of open space which will need to be provided in the future, and the characteristics and attributes of open space which should be achieved as part of new open space (HS2 replacement open space) and enhancement programmes.

Methods of Engagement

3.4 Two key strands of public consultation were undertaken to inform the preparation of the EAP OSS. Both were hosted via a central engagement hub on the online platform, Commonplace. The consultation comprised:

- An online questionnaire, which focused on gathering general information on how respondents use and value open space in and around the Euston area.
- An online engagement map, which provided the opportunity for respondents to provide information on specific sites they use. This information comprised both what people value about sites and any specific issues or barriers that are experienced.

3.5 The consultation was promoted widely amongst residents, businesses and interest groups that are active in and around the Euston area. The main strands of promotion for the two-part survey comprised:

- Distribution and display of flyers at local community, facilities, businesses, and residential areas within and around the study boundary.
- Email notification to 120 community groups, business groups and individuals.
- Promotion amongst internal LB Camden partners, who were asked to promote amongst contacts.
- Notification information included on rent statements, focusing on contacting residents living in and around the study area location.
- Ongoing publicity via LB Camden's Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- Commonplace social media campaign, promoting the survey. Promotion via the existing Euston Engagement Hub, hosted by Commonplace.
- Direct notification to 887 subscribers to LB Camden's Planning Policy Consultation.

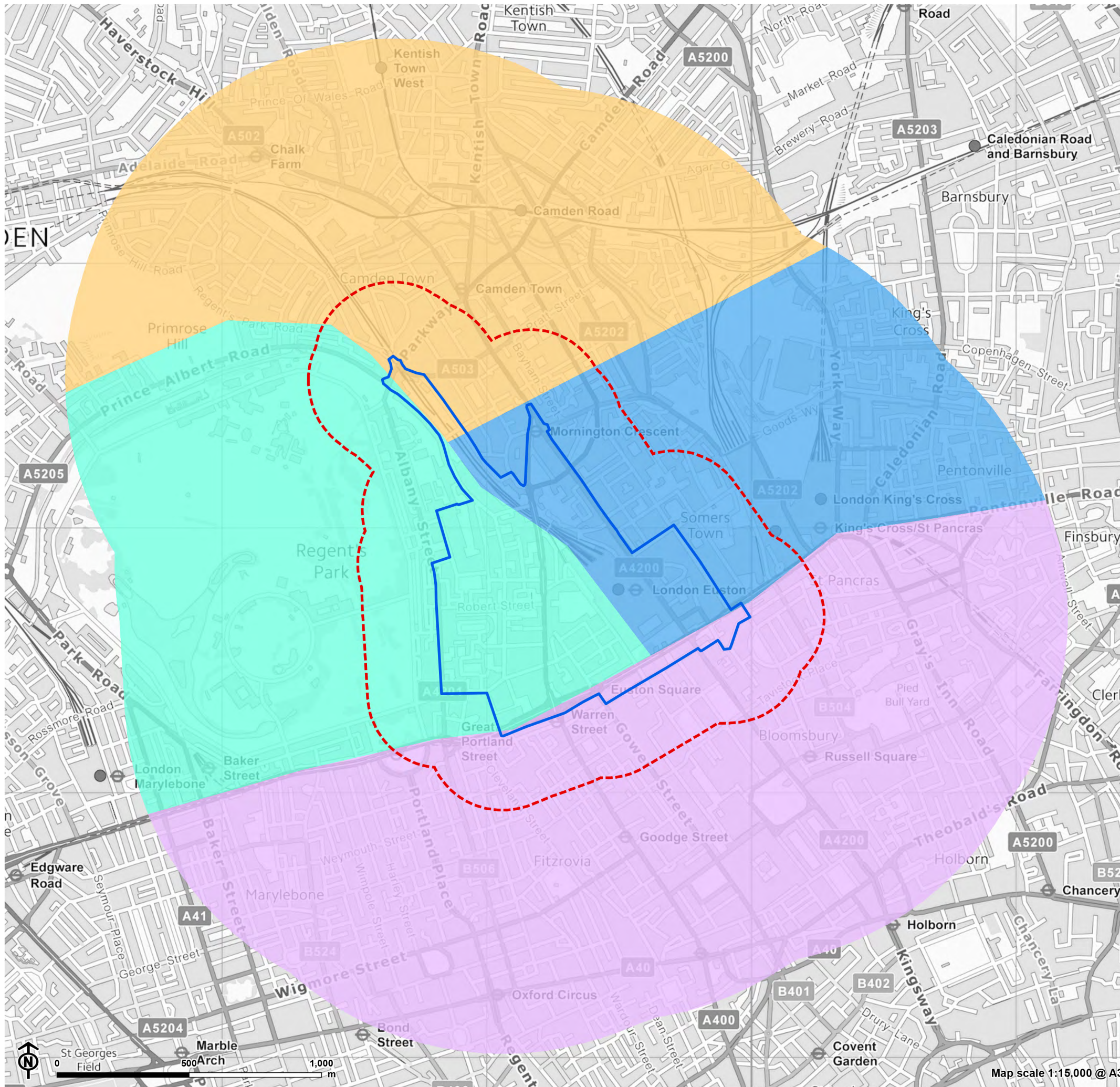
3.6 Both strands of consultation were live for a period of six weeks from the week commencing the 12th of July 2021.

Response Rate

3.7 The online questionnaire received a total of 87 responses. For the purposes of analysis of some questions, it has been useful to compare responses across different geographic areas across the study area. Five consultation analysis zones were established; north, east, south, west and beyond 1.2km (1.2km representing approximately 15 minute+ walk time from the EAP boundary). See Figure 3.1. A breakdown of responses is set out in Appendix C.

3.8 The online engagement map received a total of 83 responses. It should be noted that some respondents chose not to answer all questions.

Figure 3.1: Consultation Analysis Zones



- Euston study area
- 280m study area buffer
- Consultation analysis zones**
 - North
 - West
 - East
 - South

Community Insight: Key Findings

3.9 Community insight has been considered when reviewing standards for quantity, quality, value and accessibility, and in identifying current and future open space needs. Whilst the findings are valuable and can inform an understanding of how the community values and perceives open space provision in the area, it should be recognised that the results of community engagement exercise forms one of several key considerations and the information has been considered alongside all other data gathered and reviewed as part of the study. Further discussion on how the results have been considered when reviewing and applying standards is included within subsequent chapters. The key themes are set out below under the relevant open space standards that are addressed throughout the study.

Value and Use of Open Space

- Open space in Euston is valued for a wide range of reasons. Most notably open space is valued for enhancing local character, for environmental benefits, providing access to nature, for peace and quiet and for mental health benefits.
- Visitors to open space in Euston use spaces frequently and there is a high demand for open space in the area. Respondents mostly indicated they use open space every day, or several times a week.
- A low proportion of respondents have access to a private garden, which likely significantly increases the value of local green spaces for these individuals in providing the only option for accessing recreational outdoor space.
- A notable proportion of respondents consider that sites do not provide the facilities they need. Poor amenity has been noted as a key issue, with over 40% of respondents indicating this affects their enjoyment of sites and discourages use of open space.

Quality

- There is a high level of dissatisfaction with the overall quality of open spaces and play spaces in the Euston area. Most respondents consider sites to be either very poor or poor. The main issues identified include sites being poorly maintained and sites feeling unsafe.

Quantity

- People feel there is not enough open space for a range of activities. Respondents most notably highlighted that they feel there is not enough space to enjoy 'peace and quiet', access nature, not enough space that provides 'environmental benefits', and not enough space to maintain mental wellbeing and physical health. The results strongly indicate there is a need for additional open space in the area and that the open space network as a whole needs to be able to successfully accommodate a wider range of activities.
- Loss of open space. The responses highlight that the loss of certain open spaces in the Euston area in recent years has been felt strongly by many residents. It should be noted that the study has been prepared prior to the programme of planned re-provision of open space which has been committed through HS2 works.

Accessibility

- Respondents identified a wide range of physical barriers which impede good, easy access to open space. Key barriers include a lack of good road crossings, routes being too busy and the railway line. The results also likely reflect the disruption and impact of HS2 construction works, with higher numbers of responses from respondents in the west analysis area reporting barriers arising from long or indirect routes.
- Easy and quick access to open space is important. The results suggest that many visitors to open space in Euston are willing travel between five and fifteen minutes to reach an open space. Respondents were most likely

to indicate they are willing to travel up to five minutes to reach an open space. However, the survey did not gather information on the types of sites they are willing to travel this distance to and the study has identified that many sites in the area are small. The results of the survey, audit of sites and updated national guidance suggests that reviewing the approach to assessing accessibility to open space in the area would be beneficial.

Chapter 4

Quantity Assessment

4.1 The following section sets out:

- The processes that have undertaken to update the open space data covering the study area.
- The application and categorisation of open spaces by typology.
- The application of the proposed size hierarchy and hierarchy for equipped play facilities.
- The current provision of open space and play space within the study area. This includes the quantity of open space by typology, size and access category; across the study area as a whole and within analysis areas.

Reviewing and Updating Baseline Data

4.2 In order for an assessment of open space provision to be robust, it is essential that analysis is underpinned by accurate spatial data. The study area has been subject to considerable change in recent years and the existing data has been verified and updated to reflect current open space provision as accurately as possible. The key data made available to undertake the assessment comprised:

- Camden green space service data
- Camden Local Plan data
- Camden play and sport data
- Camden housing estate boundaries (to identify areas of functional open space within housing estate land)
- High quality aerial imagery

4.3 An open space data set was compiled from the data sets listed above. Open spaces that are known to have been lost or modified through infrastructure works or other development were adjusted as needed. Local Plan data was scrutinised to ensure that open space within school sites were not included within the dataset. Any publicly accessible sites that clearly do not provide an offer of functional open space (i.e. very small parcels of incidental grassland around housing estates) were removed from the dataset. Open access data was also referred to (such as OS Public Greenspace) to ensure all relevant sites were considered for inclusion.

Verifying and Updating Site Boundaries

4.4 Each site was reviewed for boundary accuracy and checked against OS mapping and aerial imagery held by Camden council. This data was sense checked on the ground during the onsite audit and reviewed with Camden council officers utilising local knowledge of the sites.

Developing a Site Data Base

4.5 The compiled open space data set was populated with key information for each sites, with attributes added for:

- Site name and unique site ID number
- Access information (whether the site is fully accessible)
- Typology (more information included below)
- Secondary typology (more information below)

Categorisation of Sites by Typology

4.6 Each site has been assigned a primary typology based on key characteristics and functionality. The types of open space identified in Euston are set out and described below:

- **Parks:** Fully accessible opportunities for informal recreation and play, organised sports and other activities. More multi-functional than other open space with a range of habitats and facilities for visitors; offering space for quiet relaxation and a range of amenities. Parks may also provide opportunities for children's play, teenage facilities and/or outdoor sports facilities.
- **Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space:** A primary function of providing access to nature, wildlife conservation, management for biodiversity and environmental education.
- **Amenity Green Space:** Opportunities for informal activities close to where people live or work. Amenity Green space provides a less formal green space experience than park sites, generally with fewer amenities and facilities, and lower biodiversity value.
- **Provision for Children and Teenagers:** Equipped facilities providing varied opportunities for play, sport and recreation for children and teenagers.
- **Civic Space:** Areas of open space, generally more closely integrated into to the built environment than other typologies. Civic Spaces are generally located around key community hubs and areas of activity, providing landscaped areas to meet, sit, benefit from shade and areas of quiet within the built environment. These spaces generally have less extensive areas of vegetation, such as areas of grass, and focus more on hard landscaping with trees and other planting incorporated within it.
- **Allotment and Community Garden:** Opportunities for the community to garden grow their own produce.

Approach to Mapping Multifunctional Open Space

4.7 Open space can perform a range of functions and it is important that this is reflected in an assessment of open space in Euston. ‘Secondary typologies’ that occur within wider sites have been identified and captured through mapping the boundary of these areas within the data set. Within Euston, secondary typologies generally comprise equipped play facilities and other provision such as outdoor gym equipment and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs). These areas are mainly identified and defined by a boundary fence or an appropriate area that delineates the extent of a play space.

4.8 When calculating total quantities of provision for children and teenagers, this will include both ‘standalone’ equipped play facilities, as well as those occurring within a wider site.

4.9 When categorising sites within an appropriate size hierarchy and applying accessibility catchments, the total site area (including secondary typologies) is used.

Developing a Hierarchy

4.10 In order to develop a framework for analysis and to set appropriate standards, a detailed site hierarchy has been developed. For the purposes of this study, a combination of site typology and the size of each site has been used to categorise each site. This approach recognises that open spaces of different sizes would be expected to provide a different ‘offer’ for user and likely accommodate a varying level and range of facilities. For instance, site users will be more likely to travel further to reach a larger site, that may provide a more significant and varied ‘offer’ (i.e. more features and facilities), than a small area of amenity green space with no facilities. The hierarchy has been informed by guidance set out within the London Plan (2021), which sets out the following size categories:

- Regional provision (guideline size: 400ha)
- Metropolitan provision (guideline size: 60ha)
- District provision (guideline size: 20ha)
- Local provision (guideline size: 2ha)
- Small provision (guideline size: under 2ha)
- 'Pocket' provision (guideline size: under 0.4ha)

4.11 A separate hierarchy is also proposed for play sites in the Euston, this has been informed by Camden's existing approach (as set out in Camden Planning Guidance) and London Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation (2012).

4.12 The development of a hierarchy enables a strategic analysis of open space provision across a geographic area, through accessibility analysis and application of a set of quality and value benchmarks related to each typology and level of the size hierarchy. It is possible that some small sites (grouped within the lower size thresholds i.e. 'pocket' or 'small' provision), either due to being well equipped, or due to the presence of a unique feature, may offer a draw similar to a larger site with a less compelling 'offer'. This is especially relevant in Euston where many sites are small in size. Separate quality and value benchmarks have been set for each typology and level of size hierarchy (see Chapter 5), providing the opportunity to reflect the level of facilities that can reasonably be expected within sites of a certain size. It should also be noted that play provision is considered separately, and a separate size hierarchy (and set of accessibility, and quality and value standards) is proposed. Separate analysis of play also helps to reflect situations where small sites (for example sites that include play features as a secondary typology) potentially have a wider draw for some users due to the presence of features that facilitate specific activities and provide affordances for specific recreational activities.

Euston Open Space Study Hierarchy

4.13 The proposed hierarchy to be applied for the purposes of Euston Open Space Study is set out below.

Parks

- Metropolitan Parks (guideline size: 60-400ha)
- Local Parks (guideline size: 2ha)
- Small Local Parks (guideline size: 0.4-2ha)
- Pocket Parks (guideline size: less than 0.4ha)

Natural and Semi-natural Green Space

- Small Local Natural and Semi Natural Green Space (guideline size: 0.4-2ha)

Amenity Green Space

- The division of Amenity Green Space into a hierarchy was not deemed appropriate for the purposes of this assessment. This typology predominantly provides a 'local' level of provision close to where people live and work regardless of size.

Civic Space

- The division of Civic Space into a hierarchy was not deemed appropriate for the purposes of this assessment. This typology predominantly provides a 'local' level of provision close to where people live and work regardless of size.

Allotment and Community Garden

- The division of Allotments was not deemed appropriate for the purposes of this assessment as this type of open space performs the same function regardless of size.

Hierarchy for Equipped Play Facilities

4.14 Formal, equipped play provision has been categorised in line with Camden's current approach, as set Camden Planning Guidance. Categorisation of play space reflects the fact that formal play spaces will often cater for different age groups. For example, some play spaces will contain age-appropriate equipment for children under five years and will not offer sufficient challenge and the range of equipment and facilities required for older age groups. Equipped play facilities have been categorised as follows:

- 0-5 years play
- 5-11 years play (will likely also provide some opportunities to play for those between the ages of 0-5)
- 12+ play (play offer for all age groups and those able to venture further from home and play more independently, will likely also provide some opportunities to play for younger age groups)
- Other play and recreation (including Multi Use Games Areas, basketball hoops and outdoor gym equipment)

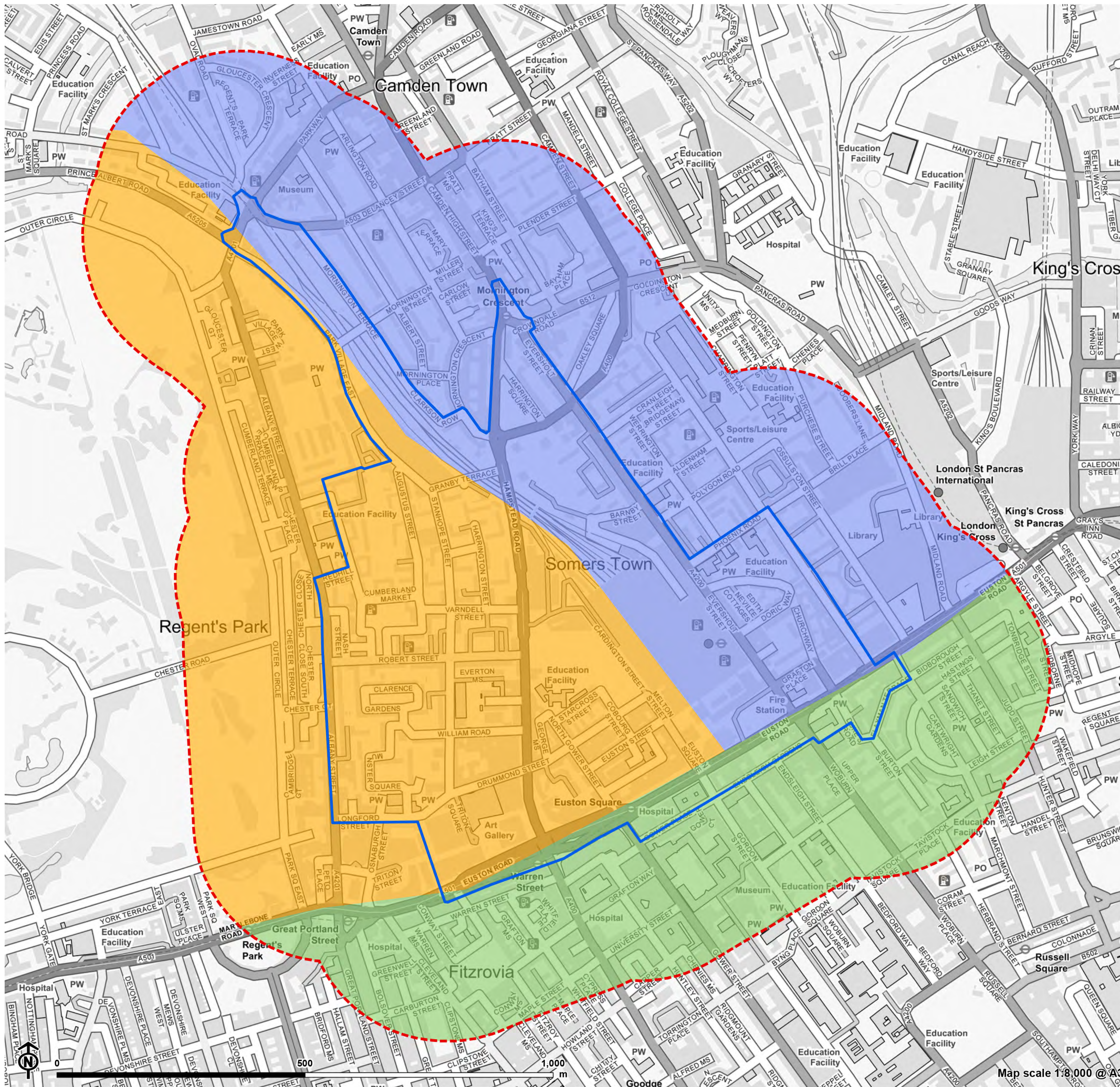
Current Provision

4.15 Following the assignment of primary typology and hierarchy, an assessment can be made of the current quantity of open space and play space within the study area. The assessment covers an area extending 280m from the Euston Area Plan boundary. A few small open spaces cross the study area boundary and are partially outside the study boundary. Where this occurs the

total open space area is included within the quantity assessment. The only exception to this approach is for Regent's Park, where only the area within the study area is included.

4.16 For the purposes of comparing variation in open space provision across Euston, three analysis areas have been established. The boundaries of the analysis areas have been informed by key landscape features including the railway line and major roads that cross the area, and present key potential barriers to access. The analysis areas that are referred to throughout the rest of the study are shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Open Space Analysis Areas



- Euston study area
- 280m study area buffer
- Analysis areas
 - East
 - South
 - West

4.17 Table 4.1 breaks down the provision of all open space by primary typology and hierarchy, regardless of the level of public access (further detail provided below). This provides an overview of the site sizes that occur and an indication of the number of sites within each typology and level of the hierarchy. Play as a secondary typology is included within the total area calculation of the sites they occur within, while play sites that occur as a primary typology ('standalone' equipped play facilities) are listed separately.

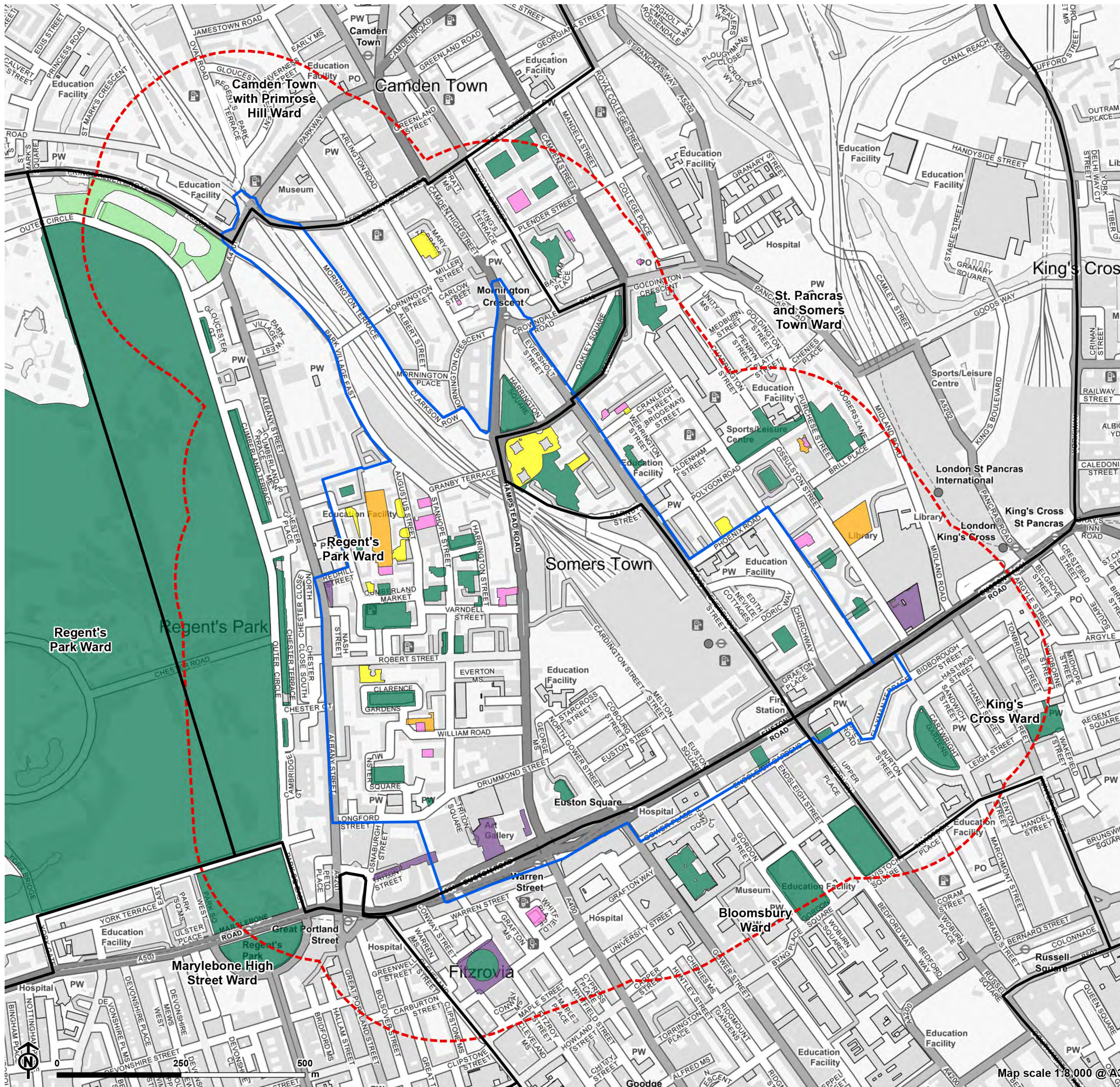
4.18 The table below indicates that 39.19ha of open space has been identified within the study area (83 individual sites). The majority of the area and individual sites identified are classified as parks. The area of Regent's Park that falls within the study area accounts for a significant proportion of the total area of parks sites and open space generally, at 18.52ha.

Table 4.1: Quantity of all open space by primary typology and hierarchy (area and count of site)

Primary Typology and Hierarchy	Area (ha)	Count (no. of sites)
Metropolitan Parks	18.52	1
Local Parks	2.24	1
Small Local Parks	8.26	13
Pocket Parks	3.86	30
Total Parks	32.88	45
Small Local Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space	1.77	1
Amenity Green Space	1.39	9
Civic Space	1.38	6
Provision for Children and Teenagers	0.79	19
Allotment and Community Garden	1.11	4
Study Area Total (ha)	39.3	84

4.19 Open spaces identified as part of the study and their primary typologies are shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Open Spaces by Primary Typology



- Euston study area
- 280m study area buffer
- Ward boundary
- Primary typology**
 - Park and garden
 - Natural and semi natural green space
 - Amenity green space
 - Provision for children and teenagers
 - Allotment or community garden
 - Civic space

Map scale 1:8,000 @ A3

Quantity of Open Space by Access Category

4.20 Sites have also been grouped into several access categories, these are:

- Freely accessible to the public (i.e. no access restrictions, locked gates etc.)
- Freely accessible to the public: Opening hours (i.e. locked at night or advertised opening hours)
- Semi-public access (i.e. sites that can be accessed by the public but public access is not clear, explicit or advertised – through signage or welcoming entrances etc.)
- Restricted access: Members/tenants only (i.e. sites that are closed off to members of the public but accessible to residents or tenants. This category also applies to tenanted allotment sites).

4.21 Most sites categorised as ‘semi-public’ access occur within housing sites. Due to the nature of these open spaces and play spaces being integrated within the curtilage of housing estates and housing land, there are instances where access and use is limited to those living directly within the housing sites they are associated with. Whilst no strict criteria have been used to categorise these sites, several characteristics of such sites have been noted as contributing to a site being considered as having ‘semi-public’ access. Such characteristics include close integration within housing land (i.e. surrounded by low or high rise accommodation), no clear entrances/unwelcoming entrances, a lack of clear views into and across the site and a general lack of ‘cues’ to indicate the site is publicly accessible to all (i.e. explicit welcoming signage etc.). The categorisation of such sites has been undertaken through site visits and local officer knowledge. Due to the limited offer of these sites to the wider public as open space and play space, it has been deemed appropriate to discount these sites from the quantity analysis of public open space undertaken in Chapter 6. This ensures that an accurate calculation of functional public open space that benefits the whole community is achieved.

4.22 Table 4.2 shows the total quantity of open space within each access category, by typology. Figure 4.3 shows open spaces identified as part of the study and their access category.

4.23 The table below indicates the majority of open space has been identified as ‘freely accessible to the public’ or ‘freely accessible to the public: opening hours’.

4.24 A notable amount of open space has some form of restricted access and is not freely accessible to all residents and visitors within the study area. These sites include allotments and social housing sites with secure resident (key fob) access. Most sites classified as ‘restricted access: members/tenants only’ are parks. This reflects that there are several formal communal gardens and squares that are only accessible to some residents. Access to these sites is generally associated with house ownership, tenancy, or membership. This includes Park Square, Chester Terrace and Fitzroy Square Garden.

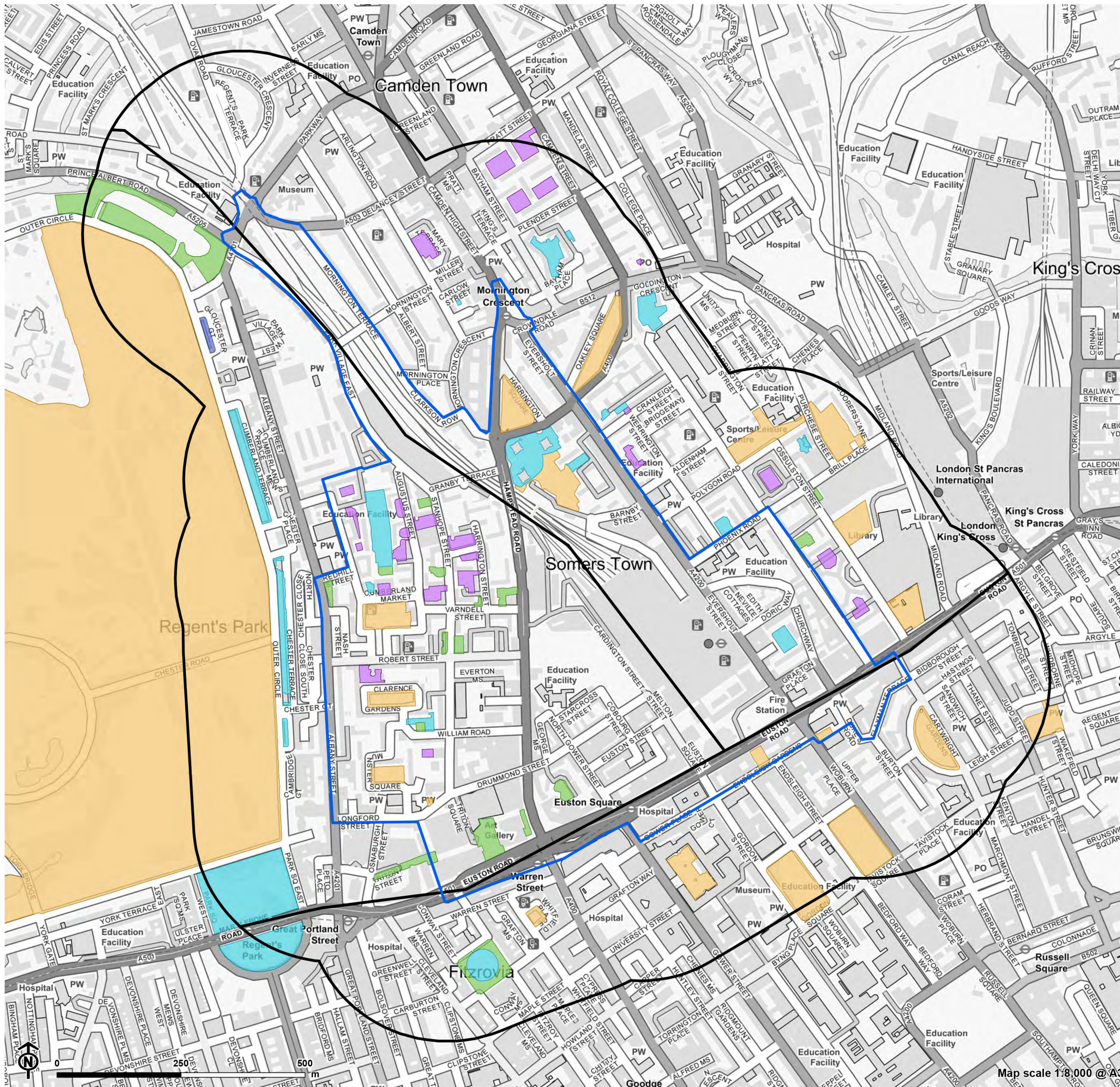
4.25 1.82ha of open space has been classified as ‘semi-public’. These sites are considered to only provide open space provision to a limited number of residents. ‘Semi-public’ sites generally occur within housing estates and in many instances are likely only used by those that are residents of the housing estates they occur within.

Table 4.2: Quantity of open space (primary typology) categorised by the level of public access (in hectares)

Primary Typology	Freely Accessible to the Public	Freely Accessible to the Public: Opening Hours	Semi-Public Access	Restricted Access: Members/Tenants Only	Restricted Access: Other	Total
Parks	0.32	25.89	1.42	5.16	0.09	32.88
Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space	1.77	-	-	-	-	1.77
Amenity Green Space	-	-	0.54	0.85	-	1.39
Civic Space	0.97	0.41	-	-	-	1.38
Allotment and Community Garden	-	0.39	-	0.72	-	1.11
Provision for Children and Teenagers [See reference 17]	0.31	0.10	0.28	0.10	-	0.79
Study Area Total	3.38	26.79	1.96	6.73	0.09	39.3

Figure 4.3: Open Space Access Category

- Euston study area
- Open space analysis area boundary
- Freely accessible to public
- Freely accessible to public: opening hours
- Restricted access: other
- Restricted access: members/tenants only
- Semi-accessible to public



Map scale 1:8,000 @ A3

4.26 Table 4.3 below shows the total quantity (area hectares) of sites per analysis area. The table below includes all open space that is categorised as:

- Freely accessible to the public (i.e. no access restrictions, locked gates etc.)
- Freely accessible to the public: Opening hours (i.e. locked at night or advertised opening hours)
- Semi-public access (i.e. sites that can be accessed by the public but public access is not clear, explicit or advertised – through signage or welcoming entrances etc.)

4.27 The table below shows primary typology. Secondary typologies (e.g. play spaces) are included within the total area of the sites they occur within. Individual ‘standalone’ play spaces are listed separately.

4.28 The table below indicates that the south analysis area has the least publicly accessible open space (3.87ha), this is followed by the east analysis area (5.06ha). The west analysis area has significantly more than both the south and east (23.35ha). Focussing on the typologies in more detail, the table below indicates that:

- The majority of the open space area categorised as a park is located in the west, the vast majority of this area is Regent’s Park.
- The south and east analysis areas have a similar quantity of parks. Several of those in the south are formal, historic squares and often do not contain features such as children’s play areas.
- The only area categorised as ‘natural and semi-natural’ green space is located in the west analysis area.
- The only allotment and community garden that is freely accessible (opening hours) is located in the east analysis area (The Story Garden). The remainder of sites within this typology are accessible only to tenants. It should be noted that the use of the site for this purpose is a temporary arrangement.

Table 4.3: Public accessible (and semi-public) open space by typology and analysis area (in hectares)

Primary Typology	East	West	South	Total
Park	3.84	20.38	3.40	27.62
Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space	-	1.77	-	1.77
Amenity Green Space	0.19	0.35	-	0.54
Civic Space	0.41	0.60	0.37	1.38
Allotment and Community Garden [See reference 18]	0.39	-	-	0.39
Provision for Children and Teenagers [See reference 19]	0.23	0.36	0.10	0.69
Total	5.06	23.47	3.87	32.40

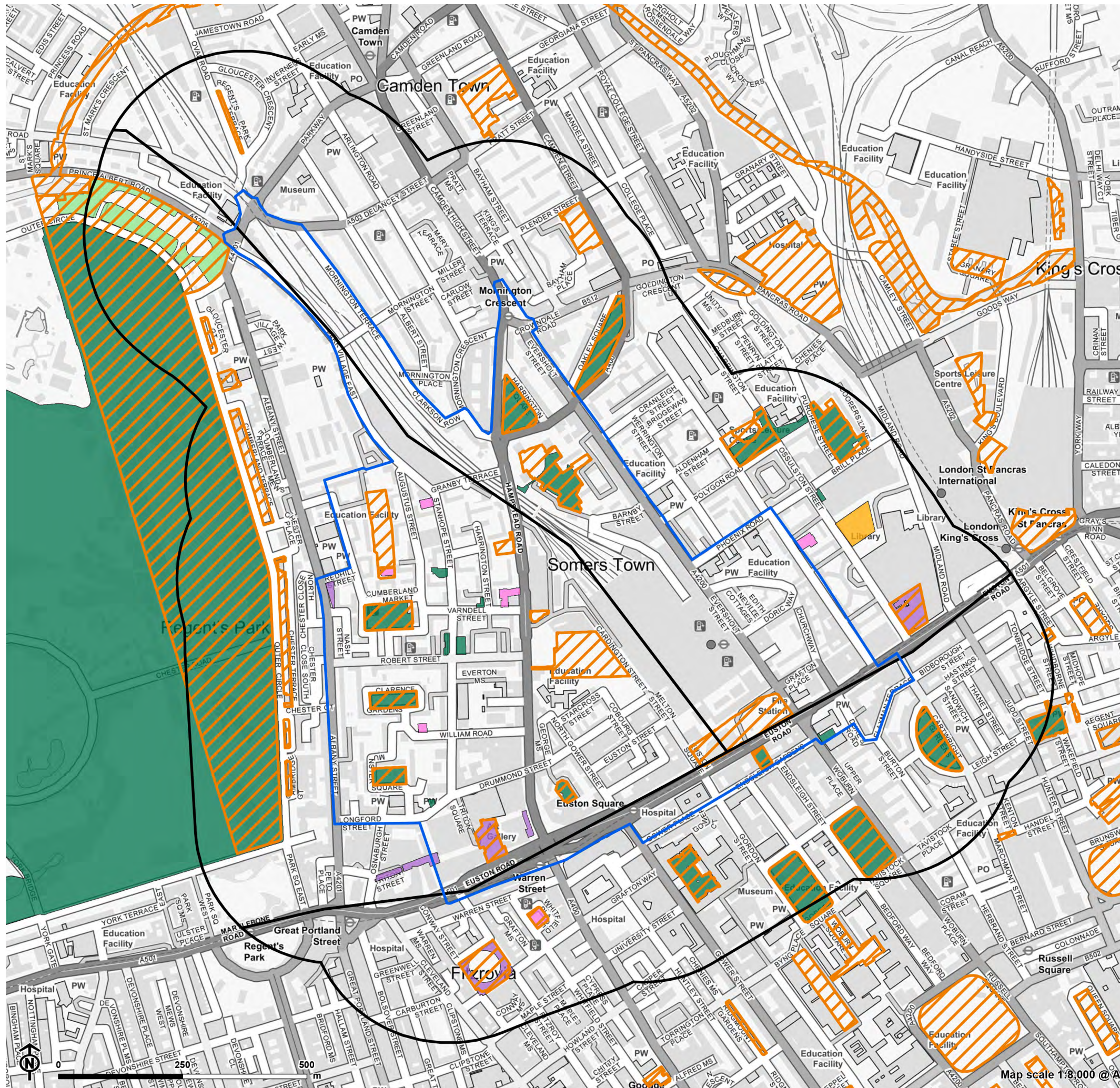
Comparison with Areas Designated as Public Open Space within Camden's Local Plan

4.29 The study has updated open space data held by the Camden to reflect recent changes on the ground such as the loss of sites and changes to site boundaries. It should be noted that the areas of open space included within this table therefore do not fully align with areas designated as Camden's Local Plan Open Space (as shown on Camden's interactive Policy Map [\[See reference 20\]](#)).

4.30 Figure 4.4 shows sites designated as Public Open Space on Camden's Policy Map compared against fully publicly accessible open space that will be used as part of the quantity analysis (metres squared per resident) in the remainder of the report (this excludes sites categorised as semi-public). In summary, the variation between the two has arisen because of:

- The loss of several sites as a result of HS2 works (although Euston Square Gardens is a temporary loss and is due to be re-provided in the same location).
- Changes to some site boundaries as a result of development.
- A review site access (sites which are not publicly accessible are not included in Table 4.3). Categorising some sites as semi-public which are not considered to provide a fully publicly accessible open space offer.
- The addition of several play areas and additional pocket park sites which have been subject to recent enhancement works.

Figure 4.4: Publicly Accessible Open Space by Typology



- Euston study area
- Open space analysis area boundary
- Local Plan Designated Public Open Space
- Primary typology**
 - Park and garden
 - Natural and semi natural green space
 - Allotment and community garden
 - Provision for children and teenagers
 - Civic space

Play Provision

4.31 The following analysis includes all play that is categorised as:

- Freely accessible to the public (i.e. no access restrictions, locked gates etc.)
- Freely accessible to the public: Opening hours (i.e. locked at night or advertised opening hours)
- Semi-public access (i.e. sites that can be accessed by the public but public access is not clear, explicit or advertised – through signage or welcoming entrances etc.)

4.32 Table 4.4 provides a detailed breakdown of Provision for Children and Teenagers by play type (hierarchy) where they occur as either primary or secondary typology.

4.33 Sites categorised as 12+ play accounts for the largest quantity of play space (0.83ha) when compared to the other play types. Whilst this play type accounts for the largest quantity, this is only spread over three individual sites. Two of the 12+ play spaces are located within Regent's Park. Sites categorised as 'other play and recreation' account for the largest number of individual sites (15) when compared to the other play types. Sites categorised as 0-5 play account the small quantity of play space in area. However, it should be noted that sites aimed at older age groups, often also have some provision and age appropriate equipment for younger age groups.

Table 4.4: Quantity of each play type (area and count of sites)

Play Type	Area (ha)	Count (no. of sites)
0-5 play	0.26	7
5-11 play	0.58	8
12+ play	0.83	3

Play Type	Area (ha)	Count (no. of sites)
Other Play and Recreation	0.42	15
Total (ha)	2.08	33

4.34 Table 4.5 shows the number of different types of ‘Other Play and Recreation’ features across the study area. Those categorised as ‘other’ include Ping Pong and Parkour facilities.

Table 4.5: Type and count of ‘Other Play and Recreation’ occurring across the study area

Type of ‘Other Play and Recreation’	Count
MUGA	8
Outdoor Gym	4
Other	3
Total	15

4.35 Table 4.6 shows the quantity of each play type by analysis area. The west analysis area has the largest quantity of equipped play facilities (1.36ha) and the south analysis area has the least (0.16ha).

Table 4.6: Quantity of play type by analysis area

Play Type	East	West	South	Total
0-5 Play	0.08	0.12	0.05	0.26
5-11 Play	0.31	0.26	-	0.58
12+ Play	-	0.78	0.06	0.83
Other Play and Recreation	0.16	0.20	0.05	0.42

Play Type	East	West	South	Total
Total	0.56	1.36	0.16	2.08

4.36 It should be noted that the analysis areas vary in terms of their size/area (hectare). The south analysis area is significantly smaller than the east and west analysis areas. The quantity analysis within Table 4.6. focuses on the quantity of open space per population (i.e. hectare per 1,000 residents or metres squared per person) which provides the opportunity to compare relative provision of open space between analysis areas. It should be noted that all spaces within each area are not easily accessible to all residents within that area. Any quantity analysis therefore needs to be cross referenced with accessibility analysis.

Chapter 5

Quality and Value Assessment

5.1 Open spaces within the study area have been subject to a site audit based on the Green Flag Award Criteria (see Appendix A). In order to assess sites consistently, audit forms were completed referring to an agreed scoring system (Appendix B). The intention is that the audit that has been undertaken can be easily repeated to understand any changes in the quality/value of provision over time.

5.2 The Green Flag Award is a recognised benchmark standard for open space management in the UK and internationally. Detailed criteria have been developed that are suitable for the Euston context. Criteria have either been defined as relating to:

- ‘Value’ (the presence of various features and facilities, and value to the local community); or
- ‘Quality’ (aspects relating to management and the condition of features and facilities).

5.3 The utility of considering quality and value separately is usefully set out within the (now superseded) Planning Practice Guidance 17 (PPG 17) Companion Guide: “quality and value are fundamentally different and can be completely unrelated”. For example, an open space may be of high quality (by virtue of being well maintained and in good condition), but if it is not accessible or does not have the level of facilities that would be expected of the type of site, it may be of low value. Conversely an open space could have an appropriate range and level of facilities (high value), but the condition of the site or standards of maintenance could still fall short (low quality).

5.4 The audit form comprises both a desk assessment which considers any designations that apply to a site, listed features within a site and other

characteristics which contribute to the value of the site, and an assessment on site.

Desk Assessment

5.5 The desk assessment was carried out remotely within a Geographical Information System database. The content of the desk assessment can be seen in the audit pro-forma included within Appendix A. Desk based criteria comprises:

- National designations (Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monument, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Register of Historic Parks and Gardens)
- Regional designations (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, Regionally Important Geological Site, London Squares Act)
- Local designations (Conservation Area, Local Nature Reserve, Locally Important Geological Site, Designated Public Open Space, Designated Private Open Space)
- Access (National/Regional Trails, Sustrans Routes)
- Other (Ancient Woodland, 'B-Lines')

Site Assessment

5.6 The box below provides an overview of the Green Flag themes considered as part of the site audits.

Assessment Themes (based on green flag award criteria)

- 1. A Welcoming Place: Welcoming, good and safe access, signage, equal access for all.

- 2. Healthy, Safe and Secure: Safe equipment and facilities, personal security, dog fouling, appropriate provision of facilities, quality of facilities.
- 3. Well Maintained and Clean: Litter and waste management, grounds maintenance and horticulture, building and infrastructure maintenance.
- 4. Environmental Management: Environmental sustainability, waste minimisation, arboriculture and woodland management.
- 5. Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage: Conservation of nature features, wild flora and fauna, conservation of landscape features, conservation of buildings and structures.
- 6. Community Involvement: Community involvement in management and development including outreach work, appropriate provision for the community.
- 7. Marketing and Communication: Marketing and promotion, provision of appropriate information, provision of appropriate educational interpretation/information.

5.7 Using the Green Flag Themes as a framework for the audits, sites have been scored against a set of sub criteria. Sub criteria relating to quality were scored on a scale of one to five, as set out below:

- 1 = Very Poor
- 2 = Poor
- 3 = Fair
- 4 = Good
- 5 = Very Good

5.8 This assessment has then been transposed through a scoring system into a total quality score for individual sites.

5.9 Value scores are assigned to several aspects including the level of public access (e.g. freely accessible or with opening hours), the presence of facilities (e.g. value scores are added for play features, seating), use by the local

community (evidence of recreation, community engagement, events), value for conservation and environmental benefits. This assessment has then been transposed through a scoring system into a total value score for individual sites.

5.10 Appendix E provides a summary of results for all sites that were included within the audit, by primary typology. Individual audit forms can also be scrutinised to understand how scoring against each sub-criteria feeds into the total quality and value score for each site.

Developing Quality and Value 'Benchmark' Standards

5.11 The purpose of undertaking the site audits is to provide a strategic assessment of the quality and value of sites and a picture of deficiencies in access to high quality/value sites. To this end, the scores have been used as part of a quality and value benchmarking process. Quality and value benchmark standards have been proposed that can be used to assess existing open space and play provision strategically, across the study area. The 'performance' of open spaces and play spaces can be 'tested' against the benchmark scores; highlighting where they 'sit' in relation to an agreed standard. This process can help to identify current needs for improvement and prioritise investment and enhancement in a strategic way.

5.12 Quality and value standards have been proposed for each typology and level of the size hierarchy (where appropriate), which ensures that sites are compared 'like for like' with sites that would be expected to provide a similar 'offer' and level of facilities. The standards that have been developed provide a numeric score that represents what should be considered an acceptable good quality/high value site.

5.13 Whilst all sites were scored on all criteria during the audit, it should be noted that all criteria are not relevant for all sites. However, the benchmarks that sites are compared against reflect this, ensuring that sites are only tested

against a standard that is realistically achievable and appropriate for the type and size of site being considered.

5.14 The benchmark standards have been developed to reflect the range, type and quality of features, facilities and characteristics that would be expected of each type and size of site. For example, a civic space or amenity site would not be expected to have the same range of features or facilities as a park. Even within one typology, a good quality and value Pocket Park would not be expected to have the same range of features and facilities as a Metropolitan Park, hence, it would be expected that Pocket Parks would have a lower numeric standard for a high quality/high value site.

5.15 Development of the proposed quality and value standards has taken account of:

- What can reasonably be expected from open space and play space within the Euston area, and the levels of maintenance that should be expected for the type of facilities and landscape features present.
- Recognised national standards for parks, open space and play (such as Green Flag Award guidance).
- A review of the quality and value scores by typology and associated levels of the hierarchy. This has included considering the average scores for each typology and the range for each typology.
- A high-level comparison of the site audit results against data that has been collated through consultation, including aspects of open space which are particularly valued, current perceptions of the quality of open space and aspirations for improved provision have also been considered.

5.16 The standards that are proposed are intended to be aspirational whilst being realistically achievable, and to promote improvements where required. It should also be noted that the public consultation highlighted a general dissatisfaction with the quality of open spaces within the study area. Only 5% of respondents indicated that they feel the quality of open spaces and play spaces in around Euston are 'good', and only 1% as 'very good'. It is therefore reasonable to expect that several of the sites within the study area would likely

fall short of quality and value benchmarks. There is significant variation in the quality and value of open spaces within the study area and in a number of instances, sites that scored highest as part of the site audit were noted as some of the most frequently visited site during consultation (e.g. Regent's Park).

Proposed Quality and Value Standards: Open Space

5.17 Table 5.1 below sets out the proposed numeric benchmark standards for quality and value. The benchmark standards have been 'applied' to the sites that have been subject to an audit as part of the study. It should be noted that sites achieving, exceeding, or falling short of the benchmark standards may only do so by one or two audit scores and there is variation to what extent sites meet or fall short of the proposed standards.

Table 5.1: Proposed quality and value standards: Open space

Typology/Hierarchy	Proposed Quality Standard	Proposed Value Standard
Metropolitan Park	110	40
Small Local Park	48	18
Pocket Park	39	13
Small Local Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space	48	12
Amenity Green Space	21	10
Small Civic Space	48	16
Pocket Civic Space	37	12
Allotment or Community Garden	34	11

Proposed Quality and Value Standards: Provision for Children and Teenagers

5.18 The proposed quality and value standards for play are set out in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: Proposed quality and value standards: Provision for Children and Teenagers

Play Type/Hierarchy	Proposed Quality Standard	Proposed Value Standard
0-5 years	6	12
5-11 years	6	19
11+ years	6	22
Other Play and Recreation	5	1

Application of Quality and Value Standards

5.19 As noted above, the sites can be tested against the benchmarks to indicate where they 'sit' against an agreed standard for quality and value.

Figure 5.1: Example of testing sites against benchmark standards



5.20 Sites are then identified as falling into one of the four categories, shown below:

- Higher quality/higher value (+ +)
- Higher quality, lower value (+ -)
- Lower quality, higher value (- +)
- Lower quality, lower value (- -)

5.21 The categories can provide a broad indication of the type of management approach that may be needed across any given area or site (summarised below).

Higher Quality/Higher Value (+ +)

5.22 These sites represent the best open spaces within the study area; offering the greatest value to local communities. Future management should seek to maintain the standards to ensure sites continue to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

5.23 These sites would likely not be considered a priority in terms of future enhancement, however, improvements and enhancement to these sites may still be appropriate.

High Quality/Lower Value (+ -)

5.24 The audit found these sites to be achieving a sufficient standard for quality; most likely with sufficient levels of maintenance. Features, facilities and habitats are likely to be in good condition, or a good state of repair. Value for these sites falls short of what should be expected of the typology and level of the hierarchy. For instance, through a lack of suitable features, facilities, opportunities for informal recreation and environmental functions.

5.25 These sites should be prioritised for future works to enhance the sites value, for instance through the provision of appropriate features and facilities and implementing appropriate design interventions.