Bexley Growth Strategy

Public Consultation Draft

LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY

May 2017

LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY

BEXLEY GROWTH STRATEGY

PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT

MAY 2017

Leader's Foreword

For centuries, Bexley riverside has been a place of enterprise and endeavour, from iron working and ship fitting to silk printing, quarrying and heavy engineering. People have come to live and work in the borough for generations, taking advantage of its riverside locations, bustling town and village centres and pleasant neighbourhoods as well as good links to London and Kent, major airports, the Channel rail tunnel, and ports.

Today Bexley remains a popular place to put down roots and for businesses to start and grow. We have a wealth of quality housing and employment land where large and small businesses alike are investing for the future. We also have a variety of historic buildings, neighbourhoods and open spaces that provide an important link to our proud heritage and are a rich resource.

History tells us that change is inevitable and we are ready to respond and adapt to meet new opportunities. London is facing unprecedented growth and Bexley needs to play its part in helping the capital continue to thrive.

Bexley has huge potential to grow in exciting ways, attracting new residents and businesses into the borough. There is growing momentum here that promises to open up amazing possibilities. The arrival of Crossrail to Abbey Wood will provide fast and reliable links into central London. New housing developments across the borough are sweeping away old, tired housing estates and replacing them with good quality, modern homes. Commercial investment in our towns and employment areas are creating new jobs and improved local facilities.

The aim is not just to build new homes and workplaces, but to create sustainable, healthy high quality neighbourhoods where people want to live, play, learn and earn. Further transport improvements could see us able to develop large underused sites around our stations in the north of the borough. These well-connected places could see new higher density neighbourhoods offering a range of homes supported by healthy streets with 'walk to' facilities and high tech infrastructure, and access to a variety of good quality jobs both locally and in economic centres outside the borough. Innovative thinking will allow us to create new approaches to housing and employment that will attract new residents and businesses and safeguard our success well into the future.

At the same time it is key that we can identify bad growth when it happens and react quickly and effectively to stop it. Our starting point is, therefore, to make our vision clear.

Many different things will need to happen to be well connected, entrepreneurial and vibrant. We are not talking about one plan but a number of plans that will all work together to make the right things happen at the right time.

The Growth Strategy is the first of these plans. It looks at Bexley's built and natural environment to identify what makes it such a special place. It sets out the areas that will grow and what kinds of development they will see. It also talks about the new infrastructure necessary to make sure these areas will work properly.

The plan is ambitious and will see some areas change dramatically, whilst retaining and improving those features that give Bexley its overall character. At the heart of our vision is the creation of high quality places in well-planned locations where people can live safe, healthy, fulfilling lives close to high quality facilities and services and with access to a range

of good job opportunities. After all, that is what has always drawn people to Bexley throughout its long history.

Teresa O'Neill OBE

Leader of the Council

Preface

This draft Bexley Growth Strategy has been published for consultation. We are seeking comments from residents, businesses and other key stakeholders and investors on the proposals set out in this strategy. If you have any comments then you can send them to Bexley by:

Email to   growthstrategy@bexley.gov.uk

Post to   London Borough of Bexley
                  Draft Growth Strategy Comments
                  Strategic Planning & Growth
                  Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street
                  Bexleyheath, DA6 7AT

Please include 'Growth strategy comments' in your email subject line. Your responses will inform a final draft of the strategy, which will be considered by Bexley Members at a full Council meeting for adoption as a growth manifesto for the borough later in the year.

A significant amount of work has gone into the preparation of this strategy. A public consultation on the emerging directions of the proposals in was carried out in 2014. In 2015, Bexley and the Greater London Authority (GLA) published the Direction of Travel statement.

This public consultation draft is informed by early engagement with Bexley's delivery partners, including those that provide specialist housing, health services and schools in the borough. The Mayor of London, through the GLA and Transport for London (TfL), has been key to the progression of the strategy. Indeed, the Mayor has published his own manifesto for good growth in his *A City for All Londoners*. A new London Plan and Mayor's Transport Strategy are also currently in preparation, into which will feed Bexley's proposals for managing growth in the borough.

When the Bexley Growth Strategy is adopted, it will inform new planning policies for the borough. Detailed planning guidance, including opportunity area planning frameworks and town centre master plans, will also be produced.

It is intended that an early draft of the Bexley Local Plan covering strategic and detailed policies be published for consultation following the adoption of the Bexley Growth Strategy. There will also be an open 'call for sites,' and development proposals put forward will be considered alongside sites previously submitted to Bexley in earlier engagement exercises. Sites included in the Local Plan will be those essential to the delivery of the amount of growth proposed.

The closing date for comments to be submitted is 5pm, **14 July 2017**. If you have any questions or queries on the document or the consultation then please contact Clare Loops, Planning & Housing Strategy Manager at growthstrategy@bexley.gov.uk.

Contents

Executive Summary

This document is Bexley's manifesto for growth, setting out the long-term plans for the development of the borough, with a presumption of high growth premised on securing a major uplift in supporting infrastructure, particularly with regard to improved connectivity through better public transport. Bexley and its partners propose to positively manage housing and economic growth and its associated supporting infrastructure in Bexley across short, medium and longer-term timeframes.

Similar to the Mayor's *A City for All Londoners*, the preparation of a growth strategy is an essential first step that will form the basis for a coordinated effort across organisations to maximise the benefits of growth for the borough's residents and businesses. It will also form part of a suite of documents that look at different aspects of growth, including the Bexley Investors Prospectus, and are supported by key pieces of evidence such as the Development Infrastructure Funding Study.

Chapter 1 of the Bexley Growth Strategy sets out the purpose and status of the document and its method of preparation. The document is a broad strategy that deals with a wide range of relevant issues across the whole of London Borough of Bexley. Proposals within this document have emerged through joint working with a range of partners including the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL) and influenced by other major stakeholders. Key to this is the identification of shared priorities which can feed into a vision for growth, describing the sort of place the borough should become as it accommodates change and how that links with activity in the wider sub region, particularly with regard to major infrastructure investment.

However, there is a focus on spatial planning as one of the key tools available to Bexleyand its partners to influence physical growth. In this context, it is intended that those elements of the final strategy related to planning will become two Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks, which will be supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan. The Growth Strategy is an important material consideration when determining proposals for development in the borough, informed by both the Mayor's London Plan and Bexley's Local Plan, and compliant with all relevant legal requirements. Appendix A sets out a comprehensive policy context for the Growth Strategy, with links to other strategies.

Chapter 2 considers the geographical scope and sets out the vision for growth, with an emphasis on the London Plan opportunity areas in the north of the borough as the focus for new development. These are seen as part of a broader corridor of growth as London expands eastwards along the Thames Gateway. In particular, growth areas at Thamesmead, Belvedere, Erith, Slade Green and Crayford hold significant development potential given the right conditions, but town centres and major employment areas outside of the opportunity areas do as well.

The need for change in the borough is explained, noting the main opportunities and the challenges facing positive growth. It is clear that growth is already occurring in the borough and that some of it is having an adverse effect. By taking control of change, growth can be positively shaped to the advantage of the people who live and work in the borough, ensuring that it unlocks a range of benefits whilst 'planning out' any potential negative impacts. This chapter sets out the vision for the Bexley Growth Strategy, which is also set out here:

Bexley Growth Strategy vision:

Bexley will play a key part in helping London grow sustainably, whilst respecting the borough's overall character and identity. New and existing communities will be strong, sustainable, cohesive and prosperous. A well-connected borough, both within and beyond Bexley, provides the key to securing growth opportunities for residents and businesses. People across the borough will have a better quality of life and improved wellbeing, supported by high quality housing, rewarding employment opportunities and effective local services and facilities.

Good growth will be secured by focussing new residential development on a series of well-connected public transport nodes, making the most of Bexley's riverside location and industrial heritage. Core industrial areas retained for employment uses will be improved and intensified, fostering the growing Maker Movement. The borough's valued suburban heartland and quality open spaces will be preserved and enhanced. Shopping, culture and leisure facilities will be vibrant, supported by innovative industries and businesses.

A new neighbourhood will be created in Belvedere growing out from a potential new Crossrail station, accommodating more than 8,000 homes focussed on a public transport interchange and a new town centre that will include a luxury outlet shopping destination, with the area generating up to 3,500 new jobs.

Erith will provide the opportunity to deliver an exciting and well-connected urban riverfront destination of at least 6,000 new homes, with the area supporting over 2,000 new jobs through a shift to new engineering and manufacturing activities associated with the Maker Movement.

Situated next to one of London's remaining marshlands along the River Thames, Slade Green will be transformed into a high quality neighbourhood with a new local town centre set around a potential new Crossrail station and access to outstanding recreational spaces, delivering 8,000 new homes and 1,000 new jobs.

Thamesmead will provide more than 4,000 new homes and 5,000 new jobs, triggered by the Housing Zone and a new Crossrail station and supported by local transport improvements, a new local centre at Abbey Wood station and with better access to green and digital infrastructure.

Bexleyheath will remain the borough's strategic shopping and civic centre, and the hub of its bus network, enabling a thriving and diverse daytime and night time economy. An enhanced leisure offer and over 1,500 new dwellings and 1,500 new jobs will be created. Welling lies along the same Roman road as Bexleyheath and will be revitalised through a consolidation of the shopping area and more housing, providing 400 new homes and 800 new jobs.

Sidcup will capitalise on its performing arts assets and new student population by making the area the focus for high quality leisure and cultural activities, supported by a vibrant high street and boutique hotels. Modest housing and commercial growth, amounting to over 400 homes and 1,000 jobs, will ensure that the area continues to thrive. Neighbouring Foots Cray will provide the opportunity for expansion of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, creating a further 1,000 jobs.

Crayford will provide the opportunity to consolidate and redefine the town centre, opening up the north of the area to more than 1,000 new high quality homes with increased access to a more naturalised River Cray. Employment will remain important to Crayford, with uses consolidated to the east, delivering 1,000 additional jobs.

Associated with this vision is a range of growth objectives that seek to secure economic, social and environmental sustainability, strong communication and engagement and positive financial impacts.

Linked to the vision and objectives, Bexley will seek the following outcomes:

- achieve a step change in strategic transport infrastructure improvements and regeneration opportunities, particularly in the north of the borough – the former radically enhancing Bexley's connectivity to London;
- secure and enhance educational, skills and employment prospects locally and on the London employment-stage;
- create a network of flexible working spaces;
- increase the flow and diversity of housing availability;
- increase vitality and investment opportunities; and,
- make best use of private and public sector landholdings in a tough financial setting.

These outcomes will act as a catalyst for further growth, providing the opportunity for significant development, job creation and new homes. Subject to the provision of the right levels of infrastructure, in the right locations, this document sets out how up to 31,500 new homes and 17,500 net new jobs can be delivered across the borough.

Chapter 3 sets out a series of key themes relevant to growth in Bexley. These are economic development (including town centres); housing; transport and utilities infrastructure; social and community services and facilities (including education, culture and heritage); health and wellbeing; and green and blue infrastructure (including biodiversity). The current context for each of these themes is considered, together with relevant issues arising. A series of aims and objectives, including identified outcomes, are then proposed that set out how these themes will be taken forward in the context of good growth.

From this point forward in the document, it is intended that the Bexley Growth Strategy form the basis for two London Plan opportunity area planning frameworks or for town centre master plans in parts of the borough outside of the opportunity areas that are identified for growth.

Chapter 4 seeks to integrate the aims and objectives into an overarching land use strategy for Bexley. Specific growth areas are identified, particularly around existing or proposed transport hubs mainly within the opportunity areas in the north of the borough, where there is the potential to provide the significant additional housing and employment capacity enabled by a step change in connectivity and supported by local infrastructure improvements.

Large areas of land currently protected for employment uses will be de-designated to allow alternate uses, particularly for other commercial activities, housing, and land for necessary services and facilities such as schools, medical centres and open space. A strategic approach will be taken, based on identifying future need and managing the release of surplus industrial sites. In addition, there are existing residential areas with the potential to deliver higher density housing through comprehensive redevelopment. Town centres in the borough are highlighted as the desired locations for new employment opportunities and additional housing.

Chapter 5 builds on the land use strategy set out in Chapter 4, and proposes a broad approach to urban design, providing a series of high-level design principles for new development and infrastructure. It also presents a series of transitional principles for development that set out how place making will progress over time. These will help ensure the creation of high quality, sustainable, accessible, safe and durable places, improving the character and function of the growth areas and the borough as a whole.

Chapter 6 considers each of the growth areas in turn at Abbey Wood and Thamesmead, Belvedere, Erith, Slade Green, Crayford and other locations in the borough. 'Development frameworks' for each area focus on the location, density and typology of the main future land uses: residential; commercial (town centre); industrial/employment; and green spaces and transport infrastructure. They are broadly drawn, avoiding detailed proposals to ensure flexibility, although they provide a good indication of the area the Council and its partners will seek to directly manage for significant change. They are, crucially, end state plans, showing how each growth area may appear in a longer-term timeframe.

Chapter 7 brings the strands of the strategy into a conclusion. Five appendices complete the growth strategy, providing further detail on the policy context, the DIFS and delivery mechanisms, segregated public transport routes, examples of housing typologies, and a glossary.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1   The purpose and status of this document

1.1.1   This document is Bexley's manifesto for growth. The purpose of the Bexley Growth Strategy (the 'Growth Strategy') is to set out how London Borough of Bexley ('the Council') and its partners propose to positively manage housing and economic growth and its associated supporting infrastructure in Bexley ('the borough') now and into the future.

1.1.2   The preparation of the Growth Strategy is seen as an essential first step that will form the basis for a coordinated effort across organisations to maximise the benefits of growth for the borough's residents and businesses. Key to this are the shared priorities for Bexley's vision of growth, setting out the sort of place the borough should become as it accommodates change, and how that links with activity in the wider sub region, particularly with regard to major infrastructure investment. The Growth Strategy then sets out how that vision is achieved by identifying a series of aims, objectives and outcomes that proposed developments can be tested against.

1.1.3   This strategy sets out a proposition for high growth premised on the securing of a major uplift in supporting infrastructure in the borough, particularly with regard to transport connectivity improvements associated with a potential Crossrail extension towards Gravesend (C2G) and a potential new Thames crossing at Belvedere. If this infrastructure is not secured, the nature and quantum of development the borough is able to sustain will be significantly more modest. As major growth is the clear aspiration for the Council, this lower growth scenario is not set out in any detail in this strategy although the broad approach to lower growth is summarised in Appendix A, together with details of the core infrastructure ask for high growth.

1.1.4   It is also a broad strategy that addresses a wide range of relevant issues, with a particular focus on spatial planning as one of the key tools available to the Council and its partners to influence physical growth. Moreover, as a manifesto for Bexley, it will inform the next Bexley Local Plan, in the same way that the Mayor's *A City for all Londoners*, informs the development of the next London Plan.

1.1.5   Key documents that have influenced the preparation of the Growth Strategy, and that will in turn be influenced by the Growth Strategy when they are reviewed include Bexley's Corporate Plan, Local Plan and Local Implementation Plan, and the Mayor's London Plan and strategies, including the Mayor's Transport Strategy. Appendix A sets out a comprehensive policy context, including relationships with key strategies.

1.1.6   Whilst this document does not propose new planning policy, it does provide further detail on how policies within the Mayor's London Plan should be interpreted and used. It is intended that the latter half of the strategy related to spatial planning will become opportunity area planning frameworks (OAPFs) that form supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan. The adopted Growth Strategy therefore will be a material consideration for decisions on planning applications that fall into those opportunity areas within the borough. Figure 1 illustrates these relationships.

1.1.7   As well as influencing future planning policy this document should inform the investment plans and decisions of individual land owners and developers and the

development and investment priorities of other public sector bodies and agencies, particularly those charged with providing essential infrastructure. In this context, it can be seen as a companion document to the Council's Investors Prospectus: Untapped Bexley, described in more detail in Appendix A.

1.1.8   A fundamental piece of evidence supporting this strategy is a Development Infrastructure Funding Study (DIFS), which considers the need for infrastructure in the area and how this might be delivered (see Appendix B for more detail).
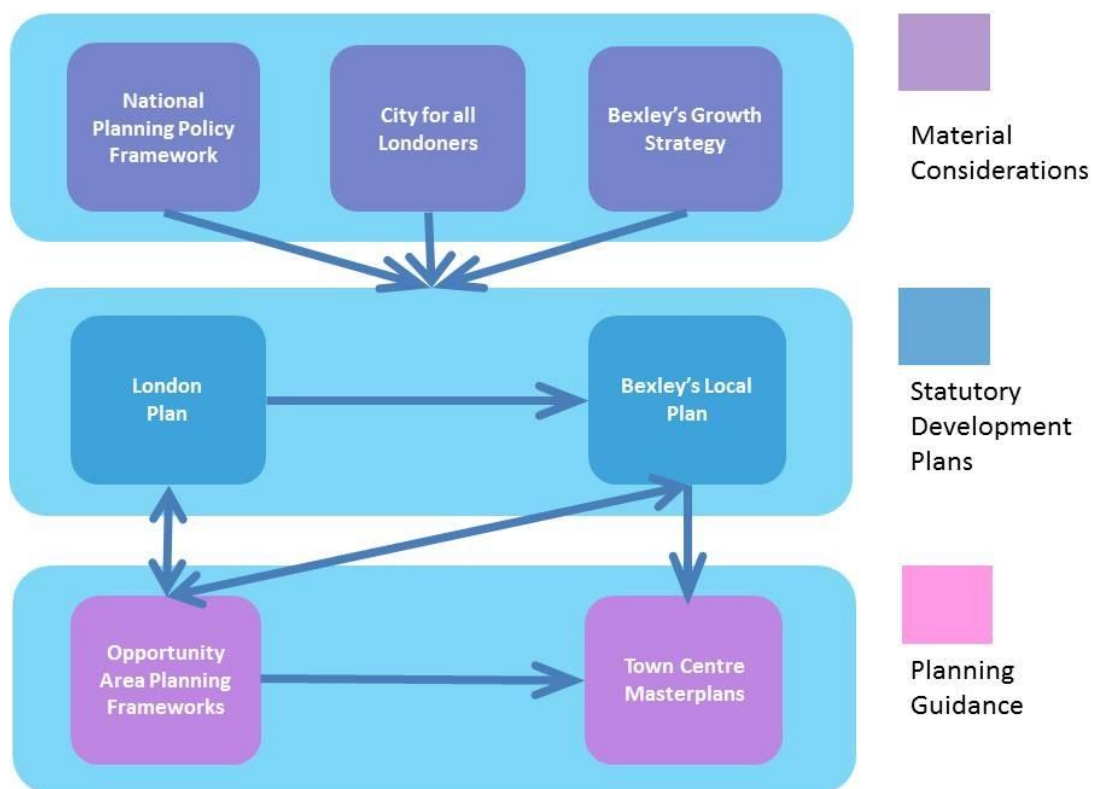
Figure 1: Status and relationships of key spatial planning documents

1.2   Document development

1.2.1   Proposals within this document have emerged through joint working with a range of partners including the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL) and were influenced by other major stakeholders (see Figure 2 for governance structure).

1.2.2   The Council has also engaged with local residents and businesses. This took the form of a six-week consultation on an emerging vision document in the summer of 2014 which introduced the need to plan for growth, considered some of the key issues arising, proposed a number of key principles for growth and considered the quantum and location of potential change.

1.2.3   Responses from this consultation then informed a direction of travel document, jointly produced with the GLA, which was published in June 2015 and included a vision for growth, set out a series of delivery objectives and explained how the Mayor of London and the Council would approach development proposals prior to the final Growth Strategy being in place.
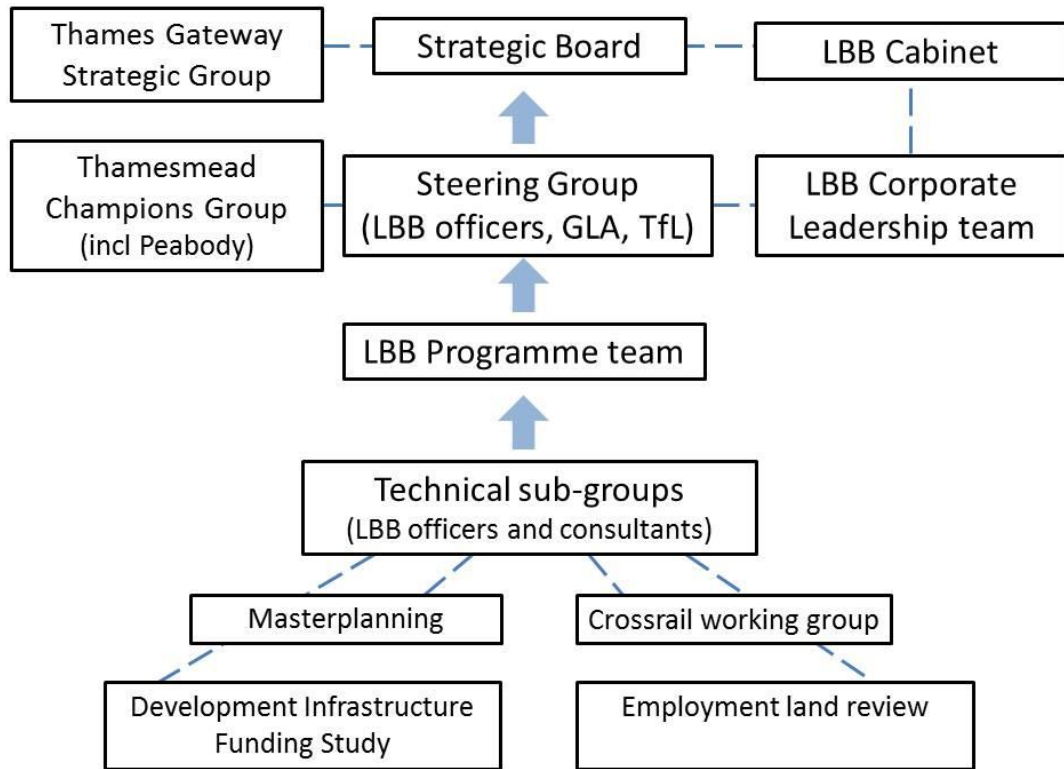
Figure 2: Growth Strategy governance structure

1.3 Next steps

1.3.1 Once approved, the aims and objectives of the Growth Strategy will become the remit for detailed spatial planning work to progress.

1.3.2 When the Growth Strategy is adopted, it will inform new local planning policies for the borough. This will include a full review of the current Bexley Local Plan, comprising the Core Strategy and saved policies and proposals map from the Unitary Development Plan.

1.3.3 The amounts and locations for growth, including the infrastructure necessary to support growth, will be set out in more detail in the new local plan, along with policies that will guide development. Detailed planning guidance, including opportunity area planning frameworks and town centre master plans, will also be produced.

Chapter 2 – The need for change

2.1.   Bexley's place in London and the Thames Gateway

Opportunities

2.1.1.   The Bexley Growth Strategy is a borough-wide manifesto because growth will take place across Bexley.   The *Bexley Core Strategy* indicates that Bexley's town centres, including Bexleyheath, Welling and Sidcup, are sustainable areas for accommodating future housing and jobs.

2.1.2.   Whilst the strategy is for the whole borough, it necessarily focuses on the areas that are likely to accommodate the most growth. These are, predominantly, in the north of the borough. This area is also part of a much larger regeneration opportunity known as Thames Gateway that extends north and south along the river between London and the estuary.

2.1.3.   Within London, the Thames Gateway is the focus of the eastward extension of the capital and Bexley's opportunity areas of Thamesmead and Abbey Wood and Bexley Riverside are part of a key growth corridor running through southeast and east London and into north Kent and Essex (Figure 3).

2.1.4.   There are significant land resources in the borough that could be made available for residential-led development, provided the appropriate infrastructure investment is secured. This lies predominantly in the release of surplus industrial land in areas with the potential to be well connected and with the most to gain from renewed
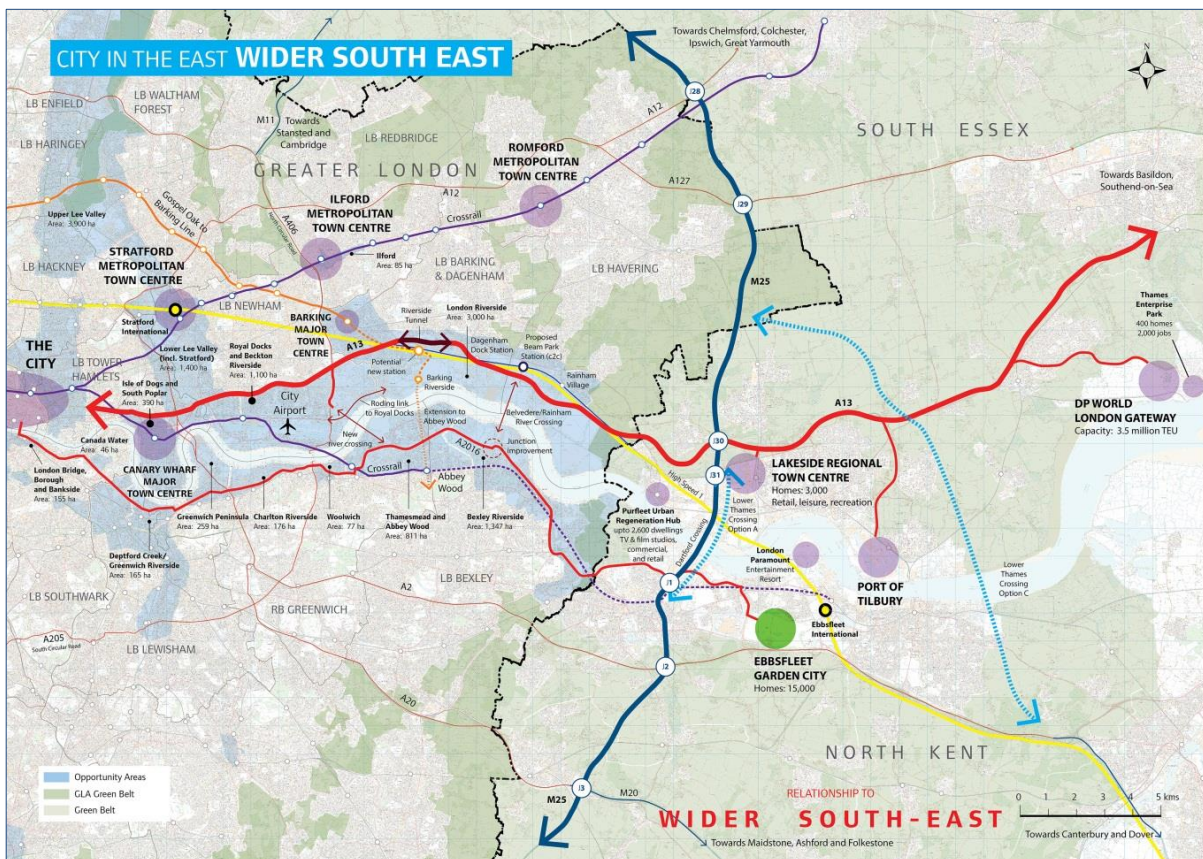

Figure 3: Bexley's place within the Thames Gateway growth corridor
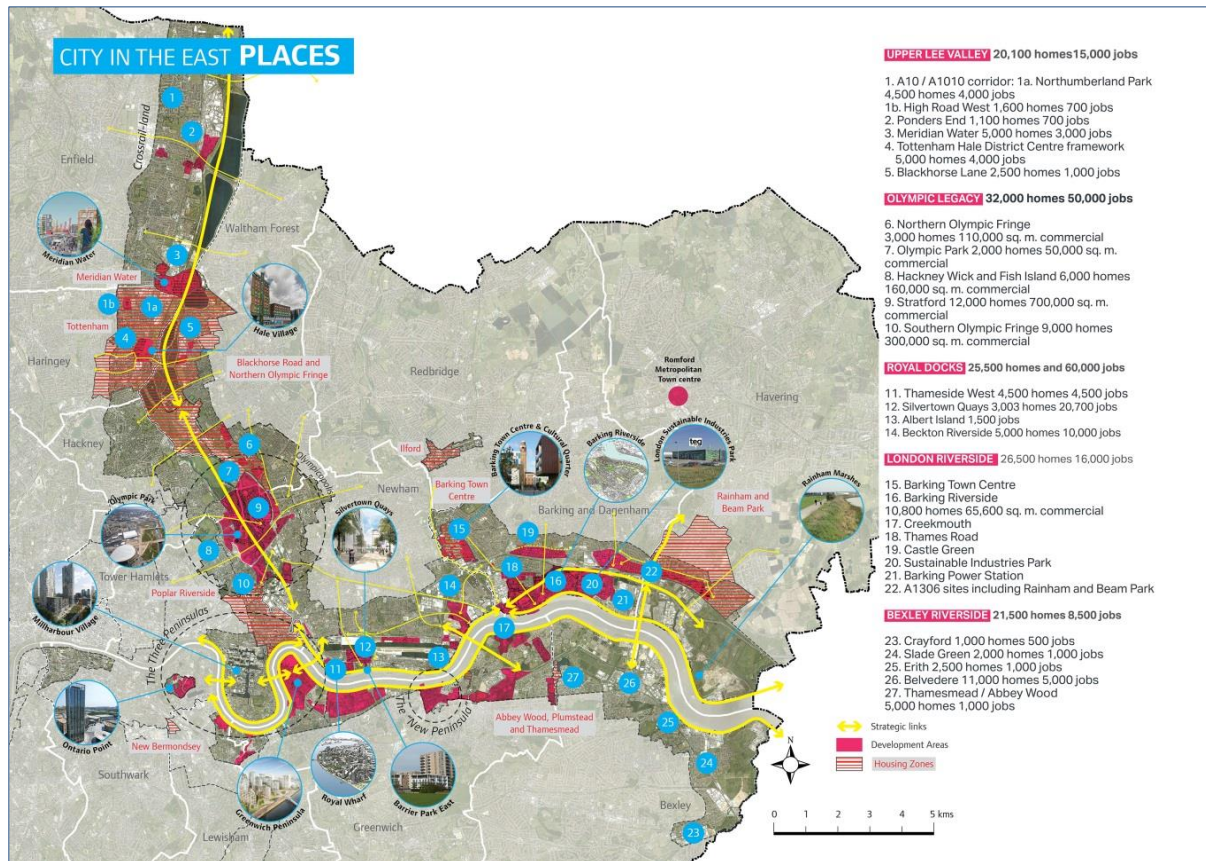
Figure 4: London Borough of Bexley's contribution to growth in the Mayor's *City in the East*

investment as well as in the intensification of the remaining employment land.

2.1.5. In this context, the focus for growth is in the London Plan opportunity areas that lie within the borough, collectively identified by the Mayor's *City in the East* strategy as 'Bexley Riverside,' and which that document noted had the potential to generate a minimum of 21,500 new homes and 8,500 new jobs.

2.1.6. In addition, important growth opportunities exist within and around Bexley's town centres in the centre and south of the borough where relatively high connectivity and concentrated service provision offers the opportunity for intensification of development.

Challenges

2.1.7. London Borough of Bexley is often perceived to be a leafy suburb; in reality, the borough displays a diverse character including major industrial and employment areas adjacent to the River Thames, post war housing areas in need of renewal and town centres that predominantly serve local communities with limited spending power.

2.1.8. Poor connectivity has been the main contributor to Bexley's historic position as a low growth borough, despite its location within Thames Gateway and adjacent to significant growth nodes in North Kent, Royal Greenwich and the Royal Docks.

2.1.9. Established radial transport connections by road and heavy rail into London mask connectivity issues, particularly by public transport, which result in long journey

times, a limited choice of modes and a lack of quality and reliability of services. The resulting reliance on the car affects environmental quality, economic competitiveness and social cohesion.

2.1.10. Nonetheless, this has not prevented population growth in recent years and associated pressures on local services, particularly housing, education, health and transport. The ability to plan positively for growth is seen as an opportunity to help remedy this situation as well as promote meaningful regeneration through economic development. Figure 5 illustrates the locations for growth.

Figure 5: Setting the geographical scope - opportunities and challenges in Bexley

2.2.   The need for growth

2.2.1.   Regionally, London's growing population is driving a renewed interest in the east. Locally, Bexley's population is also increasing significantly. The borough's population grew by 6.3% between 2001 and 2011 and the most recent Greater London Authority projections estimate that the number of people living in the borough has continued to increase, with local evidence suggesting that even these projections may be underestimating the situation. This pattern is set to continue with at least a 14.4% increase to 275,000 people living in the borough by 2036. This will be accompanied by employment growth of 10.6% to 84,000 jobs.

2.2.2.   In Bexley this growth in the size and nature of the population has been accommodated to a large extent with an intensification in the use of the existing housing stock and has exacerbated existing pressures on local services, including education. Bexley has not received the level of infrastructure investment needed to support the level of growth secured elsewhere in London. The transport network is a significant concern with a particular need to improve connectivity both locally and to major employment areas in central London and north Kent.

2.2.3.   By taking control of change, growth can be positively shaped to the advantage of the people who live and work in the borough, ensuring that it unlocks a range of benefits whilst planning out any potential negative impacts. In particular, the Council will seek to secure the following outcomes:

Key outcomes from the Bexley Growth Strategy

- achieve a step change in strategic transport infrastructure improvements and regeneration opportunities, particularly in the north of the borough – the former radically enhancing Bexley's connectivity to London;

- secure and enhance educational, skills and employment prospects locally and on the London employment-stage;

- create a network of flexible working spaces;

- increase the flow and diversity of housing availability;

- increase vitality and investment opportunities;

- make best use of private and public sector landholdings in a tough financial setting; and,

- protect the things that already make Bexley a good place to live and work and be ambitious in seeking to develop new assets for future generations.

2.2.4.   The Council will look to achieve these primarily through setting the right conditions for developers to invest in the borough and for businesses to stay and prosper.

2.3.   Analysis of the main growth opportunities and challenges in Bexley

2.3.1.   Large parts of the north of the borough have been identified for growth by successive governments over the last 20 years, but despite some notable successes, the area has not met its full potential. Challenges include:

- large areas of vacant or underused industrial land;

- pockets of deprivation within its residential community;
- limited public transport in many locations;
- a poor environment associated with the area's industrial past and present; and,
- areas of housing that are dated and in need of renewal.

2.3.2. More positively, parts of the area are seeing improvement including:

- on-going housing estate renewal and retail investment;
- enhancements in its educational offer and historic and leisure attractions;
- the arrival of Crossrail at Abbey Wood in 2018;
- the prospect for additional major transport improvements; and,
- huge investment in Thamesmead by Peabody and other partners including the Housing Zone centred on Harrow Manorway.

2.3.3. Changes in the economy also create potential to release large areas of industrial land for other uses. Elsewhere, proposed developments such as Ebbsfleet Garden City and Barking Riverside could be of huge benefit to the borough if we link up in the right way, although Bexley also wants to become a major growth node in its own right. These changes will act as a catalyst for further growth, providing the opportunity for significant development, job creation and new homes.

2.3.4. In light of the above, the current projection is that up to 31,500 new homes and 17,500 net new jobs can be delivered across the borough over the next 30 years, subject to provision of appropriate levels of infrastructure. This figure is indicative and will be subject to further refinement as more detailed plans are drawn up.

2.3.5. Whilst the majority of this growth will be in the opportunity areas in the north of the borough, there will still be a contribution from other areas, particularly in Bexley's town centres and other well-connected places. Details on how these capacity figures have been calculated are provided in Appendix B.

2.3.6. To get growth right, however, the challenges need to be set out clearly right from the start. These include:

- making space for growth – this will include assembling land in different ownerships;
- gaining commitment for the land and infrastructure needed from the government, the Mayor of London, developers and other partners;
- making sure the Council plays its part whilst driving forward a programme of savings and efficiencies;
- balancing the need for quality with the need to ensure development is financially viable;
- effectively addressing constraints such as flood risk and land contamination;
- changing peoples' perceptions of north Bexley so it becomes a place they would like to live, work and invest in;
- attracting new investors in to the borough who will change the dynamic of the area; and,
- properly coordinating actions across a large number of organisations and a wide area.

2.4.   The vision for growth and the objectives to achieve this vision

Bexley Growth Strategy vision:

Bexley will play a key part in helping London grow sustainably, whilst respecting the borough's overall character and identity. New and existing communities will be strong, sustainable, cohesive and prosperous. A well-connected borough, both within and beyond Bexley, provides the key to securing growth opportunities for residents and businesses. People across the borough will have a better quality of life and improved wellbeing, supported by high quality housing, rewarding employment opportunities and effective local services and facilities.

Good growth will be secured by focussing new residential development on a series of well-connected public transport nodes, making the most of Bexley's riverside location and industrial heritage. Core industrial areas retained for employment uses will be improved and intensified, fostering the growing Maker Movement. The borough's valued suburban heartland and quality open spaces will be preserved and enhanced. Shopping, culture and leisure facilities will be vibrant, supported by innovative industries and businesses.

A new neighbourhood will be created in Belvedere growing out from a potential new Crossrail station, accommodating more than 8,000 homes focussed on a public transport interchange and a new town centre that will include a luxury outlet shopping destination, with the area generating up to 3,500 new jobs.

Erith will provide the opportunity to deliver an exciting and well-connected urban riverfront destination of at least 6,000 new homes, with the area supporting over 2,000 new jobs through a shift to new engineering and manufacturing activities associated with the Maker Movement.

Situated next to one of London's remaining marshlands along the River Thames, Slade Green will be transformed into a high quality, neighbourhood with a new local town centre set around a potential new Crossrail station and access to outstanding recreational spaces, delivering 8,000 new homes and 1,000 new jobs.

Thamesmead will provide more than 4,000 new homes and 5,000 new jobs, triggered by the Housing Zone and a new Crossrail station and supported by local transport improvements, a new local centre at Abbey Wood station and with better access to green and digital infrastructure.

Bexleyheath will remain the borough's strategic shopping and civic centre and the hub of its bus network, enabling a thriving and diverse daytime and night time economy. An enhanced leisure offer and over 1,500 new dwellings and 1,500 new jobs will be created. Welling lies along the same Roman road as Bexleyheath and will be revitalised through a consolidation of the shopping area and more housing, providing 400 new homes and 800 new jobs.

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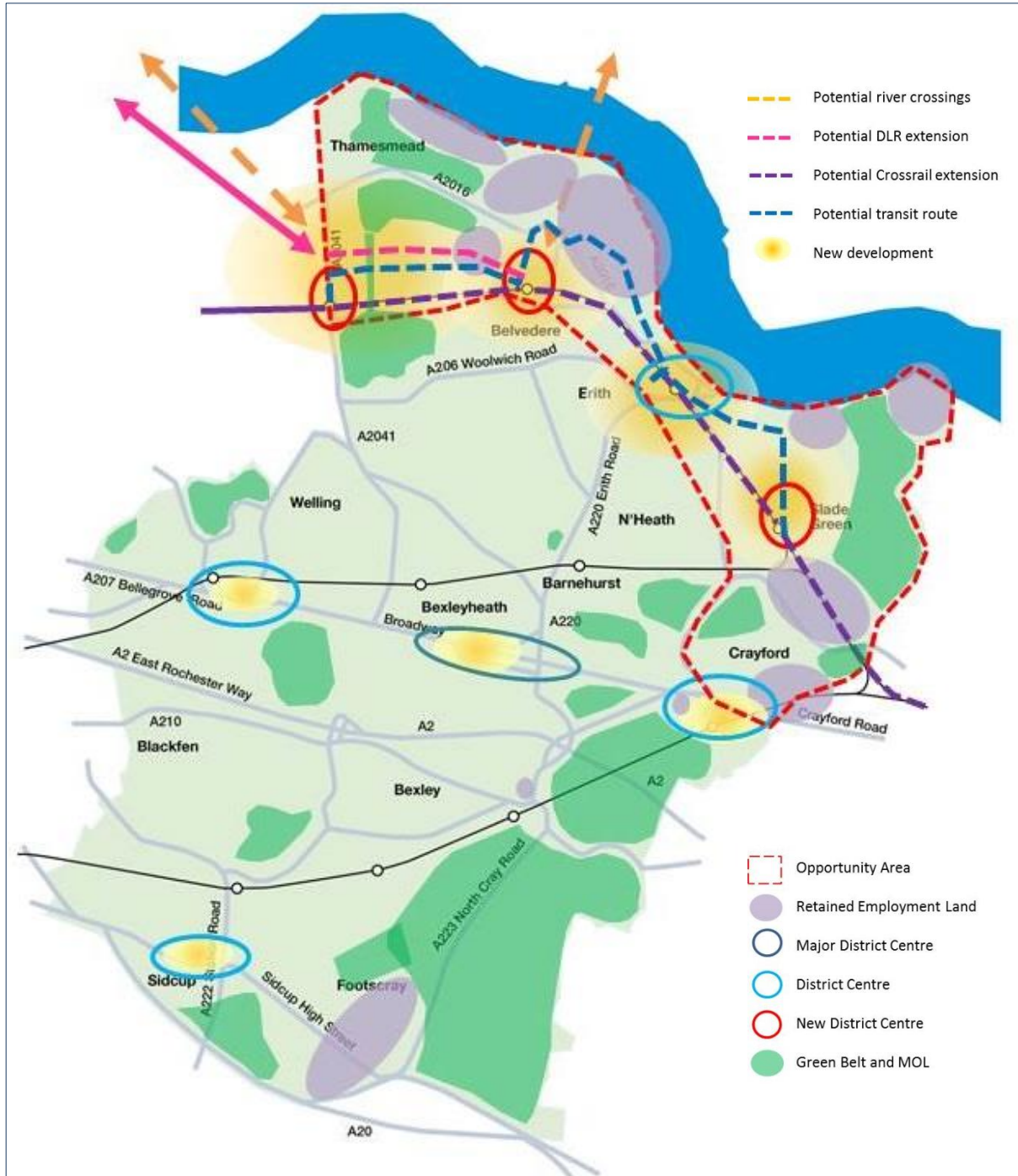

Figure 6: Key Diagram - the spatial representation of the Growth Strategy vision

2.4.1   The vision addresses the main issues and aspirations around growth in Bexley. The following objectives will support the vision:

<u>Economic sustainability</u>

2.4.2   To support the strengthening of a diverse local economy including: a network of vibrant and successful town centres; increased inward investment in new high technology and creative sectors supported by state of the art digital connectivity; the development of skills; and improved accessibility to jobs in London and the wider south east.

<u>Environmental sustainability</u>

2.4.3   To value aspects of the natural and built environment, take account of, adapt to, and mitigate the impacts of climate change and flood risk and maximise the efficient management of existing and future resources and waste.

<u>Social sustainability</u>

2.4.4   To encourage the creation of high quality, well connected lifetime communities that are mixed and balanced, safe, and well supported by infrastructure, local services, and cultural and education facilities, which offer a choice of living styles that appeal across generations.

<u>Financial impact</u>

2.4.5   To ensure that the Growth Strategy and its implementation are sustainable and represent value for money to residents, businesses, partners and other key stakeholders through the right levels of investment backed by strong service delivery.

<u>Communications</u>

2.4.6   To use all methods of engagement available to ensure effective input from residents, businesses, partners and other key stakeholders to maximise influence and subsequent ownership of the strategy.

Chapter 3 – Key growth themes

This chapter focusses on the key principles that are most relevant to growth in Bexley. These will inform the approach to growth set out in the remainder of the strategy and particularly issues relevant to land use. The main principles are economic development (including town centres, skills, culture and tourism); housing; transport and utilities; social and community services and facilities (including education, heritage and culture); health and wellbeing; and, green and blue infrastructure.

3.1   Theme 1 – the Bexley economy

Context – opportunities and challenges

3.1.1. Bexley, like many other outer London boroughs, has a high proportion of working residents who live in the borough to take advantage of the high quality of life offered but commute into the City, Canary Wharf and the wider central London area to access a variety of jobs. However, the borough also has a broad business base, which includes major multinational companies and award winning, innovative small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Start-up rates are higher than other boroughs.

3.1.2. Key sectors include logistics, construction and manufacturing. In recent years growth has also been in education, health, scientific and technical activities. At the end of 2015, there were 8,785 businesses in Bexley providing over 72,000 jobs. This represents high rates of economic activity.

3.1.3. Local employment is concentrated in the identified employment areas and in the borough's town centres. The employment areas are well connected to the strategic road network making them attractive to a range of industries. Bexley's five main town centres function well and their offer tends to meet local needs. Bexleyheath in particular offers a good range of uses including retail, offices, residential, leisure, entertainment (including sports and recreation), and tourism facilities.

3.1.4. Other towns in the borough provide less comparison goods and focus more on convenience goods and services for the local communities, with fewer cultural and leisure offers than that of Bexleyheath. Overall, employment in Bexley's town centres felt the impact of the recession, although retail employment remained strong despite competition from out-of-town shopping centres such as Bluewater.

3.1.5. However, available evidence suggests that the borough faces some significant economic challenges, which need to be addressed if sustainable economic development is to be achieved. These are summarised below:

- A relatively poor job growth in the borough, with the rate of increase of jobs in Bexley lower than the rest of London;
- A slower growth in employment rates, with the number of Bexley residents in employment increasing at a slower rate than the rest of London;
- A higher proportion of 18 to 24 year olds in Bexley claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) than the London average, reflecting the working age demographic in Bexley;
- A higher proportion of Bexley's working age population above the age of 50, compared to the London average;

- A low skilled population, with the percentage of Bexley's employed residents educated to NVQ2 or below (including no qualifications), significantly higher than the London average;

- A low proportion of highly skilled population (NVQ level 4 or above) by London standards;

- As a result, unemployment levels are higher, and income levels are lower when compared with the London average;

- Many of Bexley's employment areas have very low public transport accessibility and suffer from environmental issues such as poor air quality and ground contamination; and,

- A consolidation of retail activity, with growth tending to concentrate into larger centres and out of town locations, leading to changes in function in some small and medium sized town centres such as Sidcup and Welling.

3.1.6. In September 2014, the Council consulted on a draft Economic Plan for the borough. With the emergence of the growth agenda, the main aims and objectives of that draft plan are incorporated into this strategy to ensure consistency and coordination in the delivery of economic development in the context of growth.

Aims, objectives and outcomes

> ***The economic development aims of the Bexley Growth Strategy:***
>
> To secure the highest rates of economic growth in London including the encouragement of an emerging high technology Makers Movement and creative sectors that not only supports the development of the local economy but also the on-going evolution and competitiveness of London and the wider south east;
>
> To ensure residents have the necessary skills and qualifications to enable them to participate in these new opportunities, underpinned by a new spirit of entrepreneurialism, innovation and the knowledge that residents can stay living in the borough and have successful, rewarding careers; and,
>
> To create more prosperity in Bexley, capitalise on the opportunities presented by growth to increase and improve employment, skills, infrastructure and participation, while at the same time, delivering a higher quality education and support offer for local people.

Economic objective 1: use growth to secure economic development

3.1.7. It is essential that growth be planned to facilitate high quality economic development. Growth is not just about building new homes but creating places where people want to live and work and where businesses would like to locate and grow. Bexley's unique location within London and the wider southeast provides huge potential to tap into the economic opportunities a global city has to offer. In this regard the following sub-objectives are pursued:

a) ensure investment in infrastructure and growth supports the aims and objectives of the economic strategy;

b) seek a step change in connectivity to regional economic centres through investment in digital technology and strategic transport infrastructure such as an

extension of Crossrail towards Gravesend (C2G) as well as improved local connections;

c) ensure Bexley's businesses benefit from the economic opportunities arising from the construction of new homes, business premises and associated infrastructure; and,

d) ensure Bexley's industrial areas and town centres are ready to meet the needs of new residents, workers and businesses by creating a network of flexible workspaces.
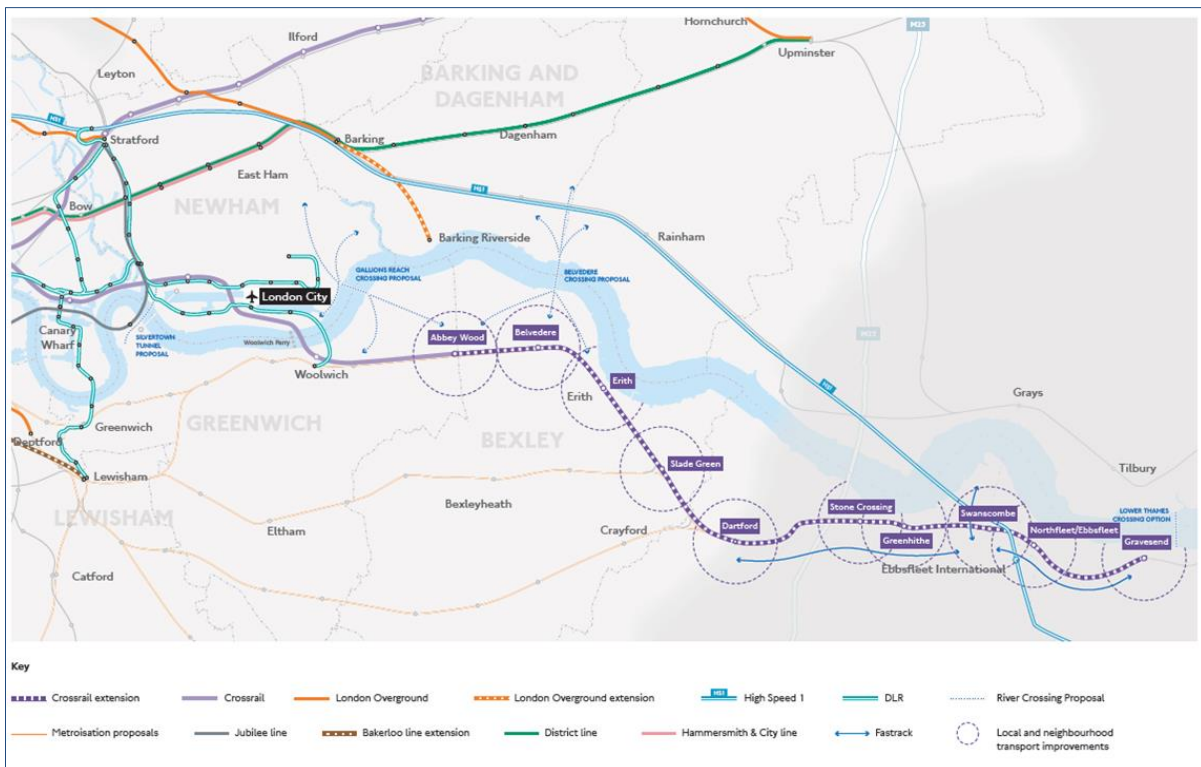
Figure 7: Connectivity in the wider southeast

Economic objective 2: create a broader, more resilient and higher quality economic base

3.1.8. Although Bexley's traditional employment sectors will continue to play an important role, for the economy to grow and become more resilient a broader range of activities is needed. In this context, there are other sectors (such as low carbon goods and services, and food production) that are evident in the borough but which could evolve to capitalise upon new markets and higher value added sub-sectors.

3.1.9. The reintroduction of manufacturing activity into the borough as part of a resurgent, more diverse Makers Movement is also a priority. The development of a high-class cultural offer, capitalising on the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, is also a priority. The improved connectivity, which is the pre-requisite of high growth, together with the new diverse populations that this will attract to proposed new high quality housing areas, will create some of the necessary conditions to enable this sectoral shift.

3.1.10. As a result, the Council will look to create the right environment for those sectors that are already important to Bexley's economy, so they continue to prosper whilst

also putting the necessary measures in place to make the borough attractive for new and diverse businesses. In this context the following sub-objectives will be pursued:

a) maintain and increase the number of businesses in the borough;

b) improve connectivity to and the environmental quality of employment areas;

c) target businesses in growth sectors to relocate and cluster in the borough by providing state of the art accommodation including shared working facilities;

d) exploit the location of high class performing art colleges in the borough and the Thames Estuary Production Corridor to develop and grow a cultural and creative arts offer in Bexley;

e) promote Bexley's heritage assets and develop heritage tourism to support them;

f) support more enterprise amongst the local population by encouraging co-living and co-working environments and 'fab labs,', as well as supporting entrepreneurial Londoners to come to Bexley;

g) fostering the right support mechanisms to enable new businesses to thrive;

h) encourage Bexley businesses to provide permanent, long term opportunities along with good training and career prospects;

i) better understand new communities in Bexley and how their ambitions to develop new businesses can be supported; and,

j) where there are opportunities, signpost businesses effectively to ensure they have the best chance to succeed in Bexley.

Economic objective 3: make Bexley a thriving and ambitious place of opportunity through education and employment

3.1.11. Bexley is ideally placed to capitalise on the growing economy in London and the wider southeast region. If Bexley is to realise the benefits of this economic growth, the Council must ensure it has a local workforce with the right skills to meet the demands of the labour market today and in the future.

3.1.12. As the labour market changes there will be increased demand for higher skills, whilst intermediate level jobs are projected to decline. Without raising the skills of the workforce, local people could become trapped in a diminishing pool of lower-skilled lower-paid work as supply overtakes demand.

3.1.13. To improve the skills of local people, the Council will work with partners to ensure the right education and training pathways are available to meet the needs of all learners, with clear progression routes to employment. This will need to be reinforced by high quality, impartial careers information and guidance that will shape demand and supply courses in response to the labour market.

3.1.14. There must also be opportunities to develop enterprise and employability skills, to promote entrepreneurship and ensure people are 'work-ready' so they can access work, remain competitive and thrive economically.

3.1.15. With its partners, the Council will empower people to gain the right qualifications and skills for the jobs of today and tomorrow. A higher skilled population will drive growth and create greater economic prosperity for individuals and businesses, which will benefit the borough as a whole. Outcomes of this objective are:

    a) a learning offer fit for the future: high quality provision that is responsive and flexible to the changing needs of learners and employers, based on financially viable and sustainable delivery models, with clear progression routes to and within employment;

    b) a skilled workforce for strong and sustainable growth: creating greater economic prosperity for those who live, learn and earn in the borough;

    c) thriving businesses and enterprise: to increase innovation, productivity and job creation; and,

    d) a culture of continuous learning and development: signposting and supporting people to build, maintain and improve their skills to sustain relevance and competitiveness in a dynamic labour market.

Economic objective 4: enhance Bexley's image

3.1.16. Growth, and the investment it brings, provides a huge opportunity to realise economic development aspirations. However, it is critical to ensure that a positive image of the place is created in the minds of individuals and businesses to ensure the right kind of change occurs. This will involve selling Bexley's unique attributes and why it is a great place to live and work. Principles include:

    a) developing a brand identity, across different media, focusing on the value of Bexley to new residents and investors and its place within a dynamic sub region;

    b) working with partners to provide clear messages and on-going information about Bexley;

    c) promoting an Investors' Prospectus of key opportunities and a clear vision of how they can be delivered; and,

Figure 8: Bexley's built and natural environment offers opportunities for heritage tourism

d) using brand ambassadors to promote Bexley on the bigger stage, engaging with businesses and representative bodies through international events such as MIPIM and more locally focussed engagement to attract investment.

The economic development outcomes of the Bexley Growth Strategy:

Short term

- increased awareness of Bexley and its offer
- increased investment by existing firms
- increase in commercial property transactions
- increased local jobs
- enhanced retail offer and growing night-time economy

Medium term

- reduced levels of unemployment
- reduced vacancy rates for commercial floor space
- more relevant courses meeting employers' needs offered by educational establishments
- improved qualifications within local workforce
- growth in new high value added sectors

Long term

- a strong and dynamic local economy incorporating a range of industries including high tech and creative sectors
- attractive, well connected employment locations with the ability to support innovation and accommodate expansion in the long term
- a strong local culture of entrepreneurship creating a thriving small and medium sized business sector
- a skilled local workforce able to take advantage of good quality employment opportunities with every chance to acquire new skills and gain advancement

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3.2   Theme 2 – Housing

Context – opportunities and challenges

3.2.1. Bexley is typified as a suburban outer London borough dominated by predominantly privately owned, inter-war, low density residential neighbourhoods. The evidence base, including data from the 2011 Census, shows that:

- Bexley has over twice the southeast London average of semi-detached properties;
- flats represent less than a quarter of the housing stock; and,
- nearly half of the housing stock was built between 1919 and 1944.

3.2.2. As a result of on-going demographic change, Bexley is experiencing increased pressures across many of its services and facilities, and nowhere is this felt more acutely than in housing. This has resulted in an increased demand for homes, decreasing affordability, rising homelessness and an associated need for more

temporary accommodation as well as issues around providing suitable dwellings for an ageing population.

3.2.3.   Evidence from the South East London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SEL SHMA) (2014) suggests that this is having a significant effect on the nature of housing in the borough. In particular, owner occupation is reducing whilst the private rented sector has grown substantially, and the existing housing stock is being used more intensely. This pressure on housing in the borough is set to continue into the foreseeable future in the context of current population growth projections. In terms of age profile, the biggest single increase is expected in the 0-15 year old cohort, although the aging of the population generally will continue.

3.2.4.   The resulting impact on household growth suggests a net additional dwelling requirement of just below 1,000 per year, identified in the SEL SHMA. This is a higher level of requirement than the housing supply target set for Bexley in the London Plan, leaving an annual shortfall of over 500 dwellings. In addition, over four-fifths of this overall requirement should be coming forward as affordable housing. However, the London Plan and Core Strategy policy on affordable housing is set at 50% of overall development. Therefore, the evidence suggests that Bexley needs a higher level of housing growth in order to realistically meet its housing requirements across all sectors.

3.2.5.   The SEL SHMA suggests that Bexley remains relatively affordable compared to other locations in London in terms of property prices and that low to medium income households elsewhere in the capital who are looking to buy or rent their first home or have been affected by benefit changes, may seek to relocate here. This is likely to increase as planned and proposed transport infrastructure is secured, thereby improving connectivity to employment opportunities in central London and elsewhere.
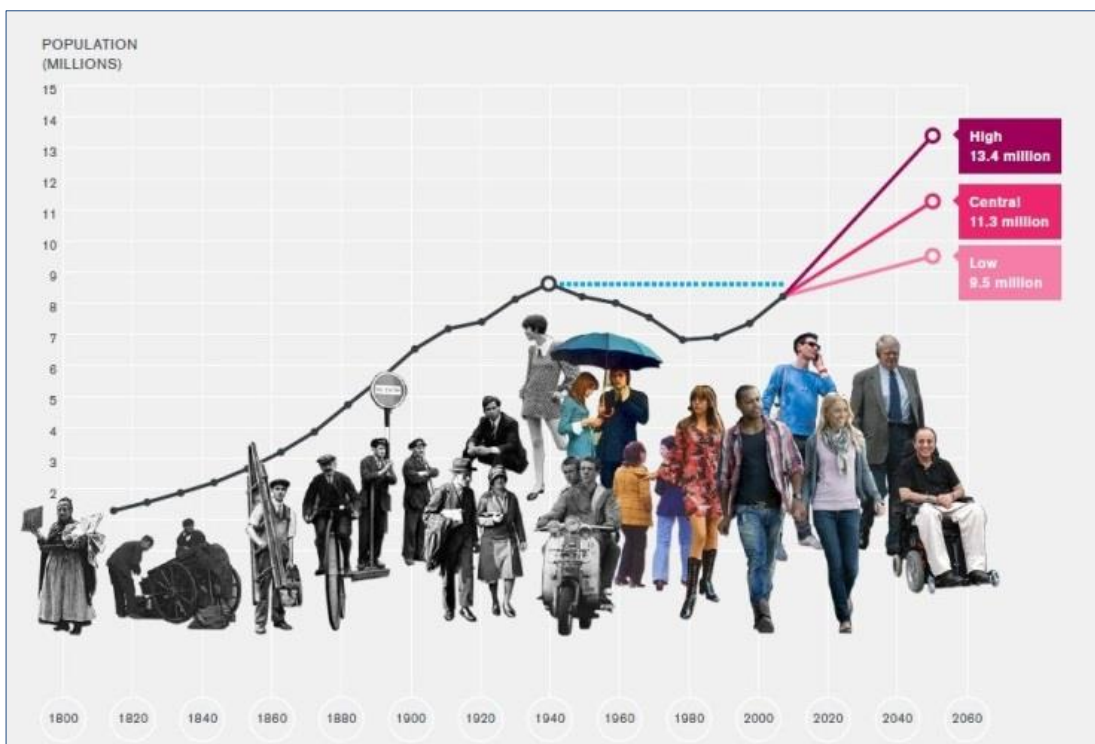

Figure 9: London's growing population

3.2.6.   It will be essential that these wider pressures, linked with increased development in Bexley, do not result in reinforcing existing patterns of deprivation within our growth areas, which would undermine the overarching objectives of this strategy.

Aims, objectives and outcomes

> ***The housing aims of the Bexley Growth Strategy:***
>
> To create a borough of contrast and choice of living styles for all life stages and tenures, through preserving and enhancing the best areas of family housing to high quality, compact, mixed use including live/work, and higher density development in locations with good transport links, service provision and regeneration potential.

Objective 1: create lifetime neighbourhoods where people have the opportunity to stay throughout their lives irrespective of their accommodation needs

3.2.7.   It is essential the neighbourhoods we create support strong, stable and healthy communities which provide a sense of security, encourage mutual support, promote aspiration and engender a feeling of belonging and shared purpose. In this way places become more attractive and self-sustaining. This will be facilitated through the development of well-connected neighbourhoods with a range of accommodation types to suit different needs, including for first-time buyers and key workers.

3.2.8.   As well as enabling residents to stay close to friends and family and maintain informal support networks as their circumstances change, a range of accommodation types will encourage the more efficient reuse of the available housing stock. This means that residents will have the opportunity to stay in Bexley if they wish, including young people getting onto the housing ladder, and new residents will be able to join the community, ensuring renewal and maintaining vibrancy.

Objective 2: build more new homes at higher densities across all tenures and affordable to households across a range of incomes and sizes

3.2.9.   The London Plan sets a housing supply target for Bexley of 4,457 new homes over a ten-year monitoring period (2015 – 2025), which is a housing target of 446 new homes a year. This aligns with recent annual housing completions in the borough. The published five-year housing supply (2017 – 2022) identifies a capacity of 3,401 new housing units, which is planned development under construction, with planning permission or in the pipeline to be delivered in the next five years. This indicates that growth is already happening, and that this needs to be positively managed using the principles set out in this strategy.

3.2.10. This will be achieved primarily by increasing development density in appropriate locations ((Figure 10), which in turn can enhance economic viability, support public transport and social amenities, improve the vitality and integration of an area and aid regeneration. In this context, the relationship between housing growth, jobs and income generation has been widely reported, with every £1 spent on construction said to generate a further £2.09 in economic activity, higher than the return to most other sectors including manufacturing and finance.

3.2.11. The Council is investigating options that would enable the ability to actively intervene in accelerating housing development. The Council could assist in the regeneration of areas by influencing the type and quality of any development and to
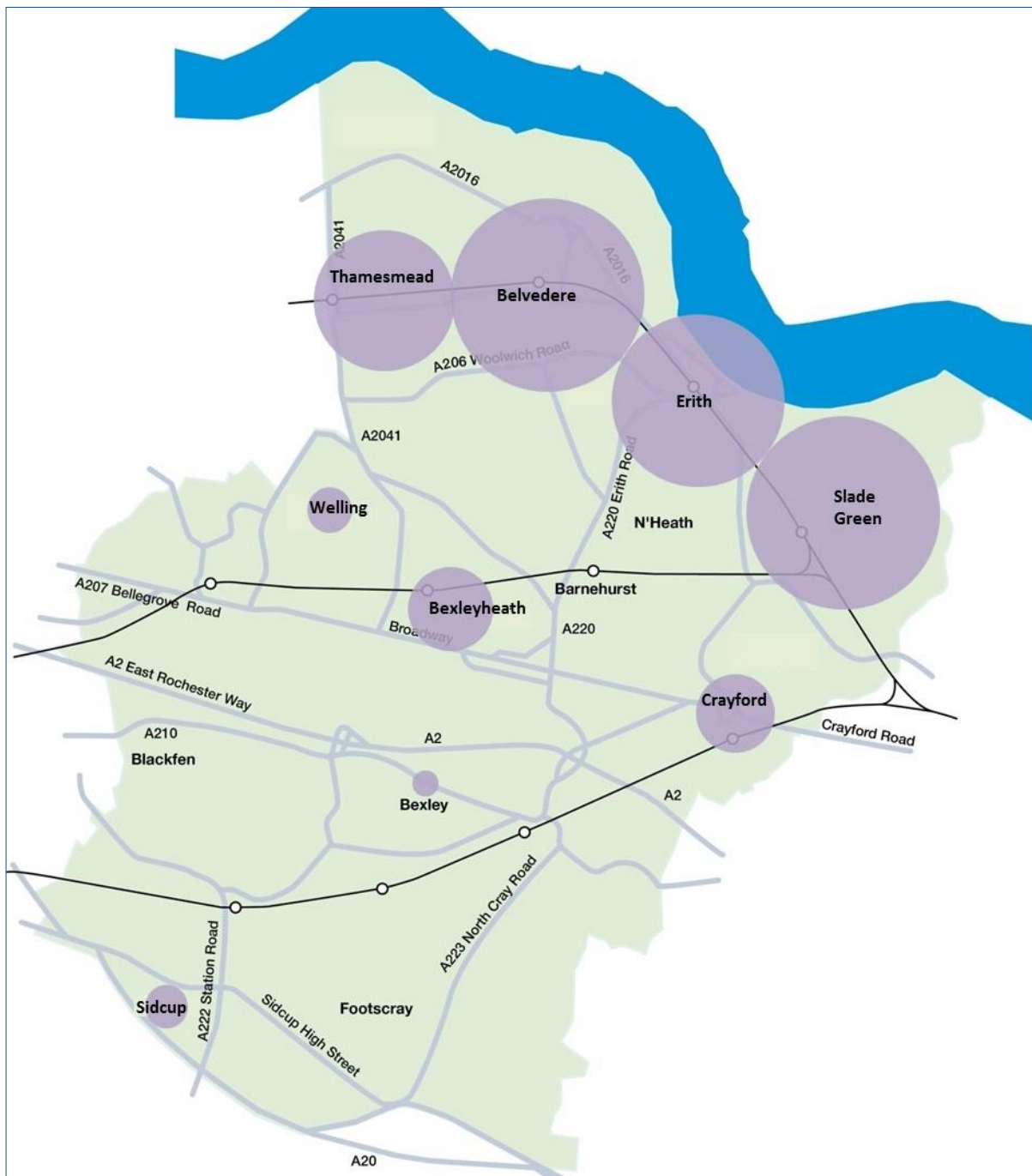

Figure 10: Scale of residential development

act as a catalyst to accelerate the regeneration of existing private owned sites. This may include assembling land in different ownerships by either private treaty or using the Council's compulsory purchase powers and/or the use of a Bexley growth fund.

3.2.12. Currently, Bexley's overall aim is that 50% of all provision should be affordable housing over the current plan period as a whole. In private residential schemes of more than 10 new homes, the Council will seek a minimum 35% affordable housing with an affordable tenure split appropriate to the locality.

3.2.13. Providing affordable housing appropriately located across the borough will help to meet the borough's objectively assessed housing need and will create mixed and economically balanced communities.

Objective 3: prevent homelessness

3.2.14. Bexley's housing allocations service nominates households for most of the empty housing association homes in Bexley. An allocations policy has been adopted to enable properties to be allocated to best meet the identified housing pressures facing the borough.

3.2.15. The current housing pressures being experienced in Bexley are an increased demand for housing, rising homelessness and an associated need for more temporary accommodation. Families are now spending longer in temporary accommodation because there is a shortage of appropriate social and affordable rented housing into which they can move. Local lettings plans are used on new developments to ensure a balanced community in terms of economic activity, age and family structure.

3.2.16. A Homelessness Strategy is in place as part of Bexley's joined-up early intervention and preventative approach. The strategy aims to:

a) provide families, children and young people with safe and secure accommodation while preventing homelessness occurring in the first place;

b) meet the housing needs of vulnerable people by providing flexible, multi-agency support to those in need while assisting in establishing settled and sustainable tenancies; and,

c) ensure opportunity and choice for housing and provide quality short term temporary accommodation when prevention is not possible.

3.2.17. The private rented sector has grown in recent years and is becoming increasingly significant as more people find it difficult to access the home ownership market or require access to a more flexible tenure. A well-managed, good quality private rented sector can meet a range of housing requirements and the Council works with landlords to promote improvement in the sector. Poorly managed properties are unacceptable and will be prioritised for enforcement action.

3.2.18. The Council will continue to develop links with landlords and estate agents in the private rented sector as a means of ensuing quality, sharing best practice and supporting vulnerable residents in the sector. This is especially relevant in helping to safeguard tenancies among housing benefit claimants, which account for over half of tenants in the private rented sector. There are a number of schemes in Bexley to help and encourage landlords to bring their property back into use. These

include empty homes grants and interest free loans as well as the option for the Council to lease properties in return for nomination rights.

3.2.19. An additional and selective licencing scheme for Bexley is also under development for all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and for selective licensing covering all private rented properties within two postcode areas, which are estimated to encompass some 3,000 properties.

Objective 4: develop a range of well-designed and managed dwellings

3.2.20. New homes must be high quality, attractive, and accessible, designed to meet residents' needs now and as their needs change over time. They should enhance the existing character of the area. As a minimum, homes should meet the standards set out in the London Housing SPG.

3.2.21. In the private rented sector the Council will work with landlords to promote high quality, well managed schemes as a real choice for households seeking homes in the borough. Landlord forums are held to enable engagement with the sector and the Council works with private landlords to ensure their properties are free from health and safety hazards and support is available to ensure landlords are familiar with their responsibilities and liabilities when renting out a property. The Council will support the development of purpose-built private rented homes as a means of driving up quality in the private rented sector.

3.2.22. Certain larger houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) currently need to be licenced and a public register of licences granted is published by the Council, which is working to extend control of HMOs to ensure they provide suitable accommodation where required. This includes an extension of the licensing regime to include smaller HMOs and the introduction of additional planning controls through an Article 4 Direction.

Objective 5: meet a range of housing needs

3.2.23. The needs of older people are changing, including their mobility needs, and the current stock of traditional sheltered housing for rent, as well as leasehold retirement schemes, are unlikely to be suitable for the next generation of retired households. Changing aspirations and the fact that people are living longer means that different levels of care are needed.

3.2.24. This new housing will be located in areas where older people are more likely to have networks of friends and family, and are close to shops, services and transport interchanges. It is important that new developments expand the choice for existing and future generations of older people and in this context, the Council is actively pursuing the development of affordable extra care type accommodation.

3.2.25. With regard to other needs, a key priority is to provide options for individuals to move to more appropriate accommodation to meet their requirements and enable them to access the housing and support they need to remain independent. Work will continue in co-operation with Registered Providers and other agencies in considering and planning vulnerable residents' needs for care and support.

3.2.26. The Adult Social Care service works in partnership with housing services to help identify and plan for relevant housing needs including the maintenance of a Market

Position Statement that helps providers understand what is currently on offer and also what the Council thinks services might look like in the future. The aim is to encourage providers from all sectors to develop innovative proposals and to stimulate the market to offer a diverse range of provision.

3.2.27. The Housing Service provides advice and support to give relevant groups greater choice on the housing options available to them. This includes the 'Home Fit' scheme, which enables existing homeowners to move into sheltered or care homes and to lease their existing home as temporary accommodation for homeless households.

The housing outcomes of the Bexley Growth Strategy:

Short term

- an increase in residential planning applications and permissions granted
- improved housing affordability, mix and quality

Medium term

- an increase in the supply of well-designed homes
- reduced homelessness
- increasingly diverse range of homes to meet different needs

Long term

- housing need across all groups is effectively met
- lifetime neighbourhoods established to suit people at all stages of life, including housing for older people (with changing mobility needs)
- strong, cohesive, sustainable, mixed and balanced communities

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3.3   Theme 3 – Transport and utilities infrastructure

Context – opportunities and challenges

3.3.1   Good transport provision links people with the goods and services they need and to the places they need to go: to employment, education, shopping and social activities. Good transport is essential for growth and is an integral part of the plans for our growth areas if its benefits for existing and future residents are to be maximised.

3.3.2   The borough's strategic transport links (both road and rail) are generally east-west, based on connections with central London. North-south movement is difficult as major roads and rail connections tend to form barriers to cross/orbital movement. Transport investment in east London and north Kent has often left Bexley behind. Bexley is one of just two London boroughs with no Tube, Overground or tram services at all. Basing growth on the existing network alone is not going to deliver what Bexley needs. Bexley's transport picture comprises high reliance on the car, a lack of choice of good public transport, congestion, poor air quality and excessive travel times. These factors mean Bexley has been a less attractive place to live.

3.3.3   Considerable growth is already happening in Bexley; the adverse effects of this can be seen in increasing congestion and poor environmental quality. However, by

actively managing the growth process and making the most of the growth potential of the north of the borough, there could be a step-change in transport provision to deliver travel benefits more widely.

3.3.4   Modal shift is necessary but a choice of transport types is needed to make that happen. Well-managed significant growth should be able to bring about the sort of major transport interventions that the borough needs. If the supporting transport investment is not secured, the borough's capacity for sustainable growth will decline significantly.

3.3.5   The delivery of utilities (e.g. gas, electric, water and wastewater) and digital communications (e.g. mobile and broadband technology and data storage) is largely dependent on external service providers many of whom have a statutory obligation to provide facilities where required. However, utility networks are mainly in the highway and as a result, utilities works often have a direct impact on the operation of the highway network. The network management duty to provide close coordination of highway and utility planning, operation and maintenance therefore will be essential to the delivery of growth. Emerging utility capacity issues are evident within the borough and will have an effect on the phasing of development, land requirements and the quality and desirability of places, which will need to be reflected in planning and delivery documents following on from the Growth Strategy.

Aims, objectives and outcomes

The transport aims of the Bexley Growth Strategy:

To realise the growth potential in the borough, particularly in the designated growth areas, by securing a step change in connectivity and accessibility through investment in local and strategic transport infrastructure, public transport services, cycling and walking, whilst also reducing the need to travel and minimising reliance on the car.

Objective 1: improve the connectivity of places

3.3.6   The creation of highly accessible and connected places lies at the core of the Council's transport strategy for growth and will be based on the following key principles:

a) minimising the need to travel at all;

b) encouraging as much movement as possible to use more sustainable modes such as walking, cycling, and public transport;

c) integrating land use and transport planning to secure transport orientated development (TOD) (see Objective 2, below);

d) making sure the right transport interventions are planned for from the start, even if implementation will be phased in later;

e) phasing creation of more transport capacity so that it will be available to support growth, rather than being used up by general demand growth beforehand;

f) keeping car use at reasonable, manageable levels whilst avoiding a "free-for-all"; and,

g) managing residential parking flexibly, including by seeking to influence car ownership and recognising prevailing levels of car ownership (at least in the
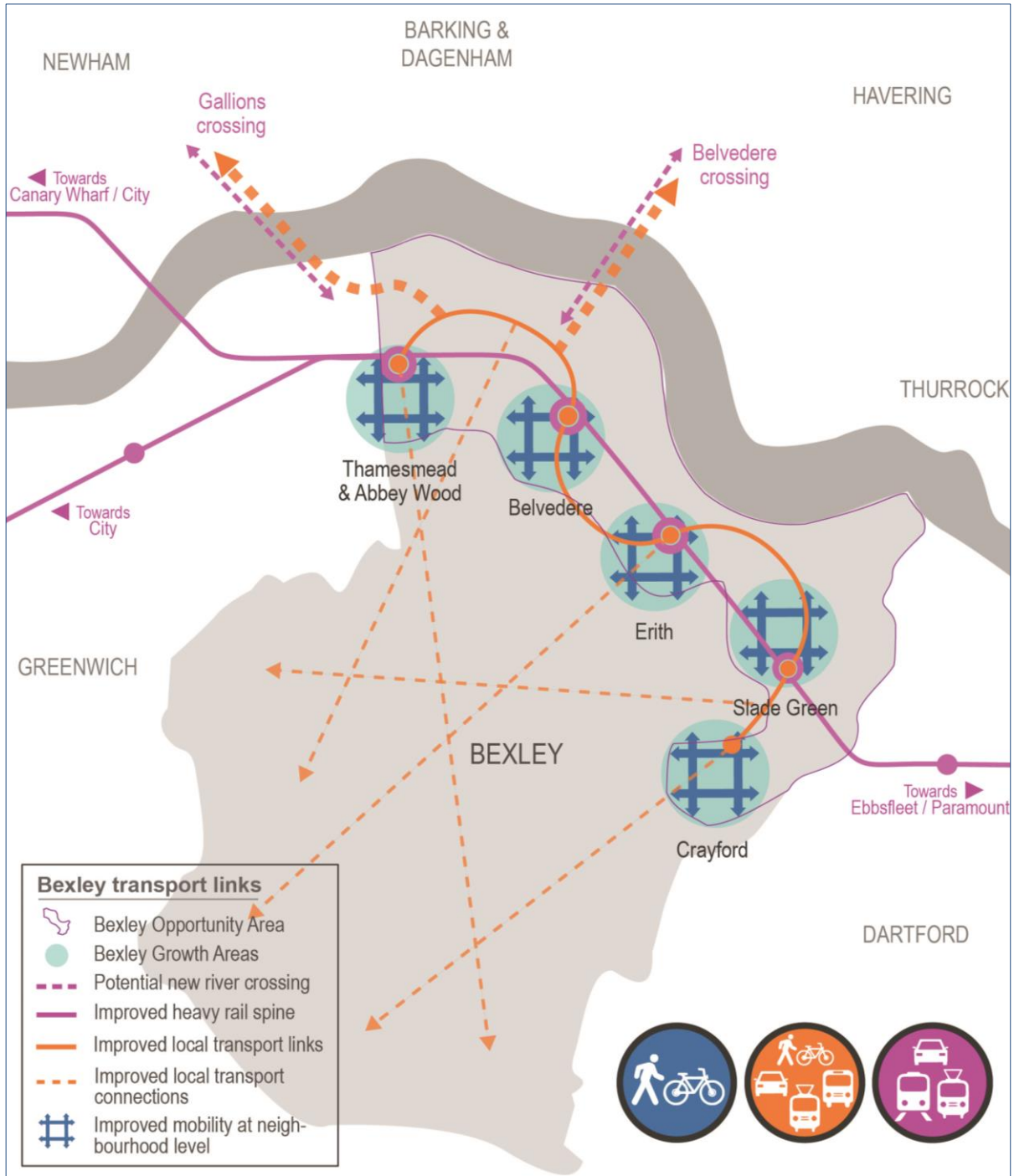
Figure 11: Using transport orientated development (TOD) to create liveable neighbourhoods

earlier phases where parking needs may be higher) as well as emerging technological advancements that may influence this in the future.

Objective 2: create healthy streets and liveable neighbourhoods to provide opportunities for local living

3.3.7   Walking provides more opportunities for social interaction, improves physical health and mental wellbeing, creates less pollution, and encourages greater economic activity through enhanced local vibrancy. Walkable communities are places where

local shops, services, and employment are accessed more easily by foot than by car and which have physical infrastructure in place to encourage walking and cycling.

3.3.8   Underpinning the creation of liveable, lifetime neighbourhoods is the concept of transport orientated development (TOD)(Figure 11), of which the main elements are:

a) the promotion of more concentrated, denser forms of high quality development facilitated by reduced reliance on the car and associated parking spaces;

b) the provision of services and facilities near to where people will live;

c) the creation of healthy streets and pleasant routes;

d) the provision of good networks for walkers and cyclists;

e) the segregation of public transport services from other traffic as much as possible; and,

f) the provision of excellent public transport links with train stations, existing communities and other growth nodes.

Objective 3: ensure effective connections within, between and to/from each growth area, including links with the rest of the borough and beyond

3.3.9   It is essential that transport be planned at different scales to ensure all travel needs are considered. Movement will, therefore, be addressed at three levels:

1. neighbourhood level – development layouts that encourage active movement for local journeys;

2. local level – longer journeys within the borough made by public transport, by cycling or by walking, and less often by car; and,

3. strategic level – longer distance journeys outside the borough (e.g. to central London), which will usually be made by public transport (often by rail) or less often by car.

Objective 4: maximise connectivity by a choice of means of travel thereby reducing reliance on the car

3.3.10   To reduce reliance on the car it will be imperative to promote walking and cycling and ensure a modal shift to public transport for motorised journeys. Public transport will be an increasingly important element of the transport mix as development progresses that reduces reliance on the car.

3.3.11   For the growth areas themselves, there will be a hierarchy of public transport provision:

a) "Heavy rail" – North Kent Line and Crossrail train services, including potential Crossrail services extending east from Abbey Wood towards Ebbsfleet/Gravesend (C2G), offering enhanced service frequencies at Belvedere, Erith and Slade Green.

b) "Intermediate mode" – a new public transport system, with a segregated right of way in the form of rapid transit corridors will offer faster and more reliable journey times. Initially, bus rapid transit may be easiest to introduce, but trams or some other "intermediate mode" may well be justified in due course.
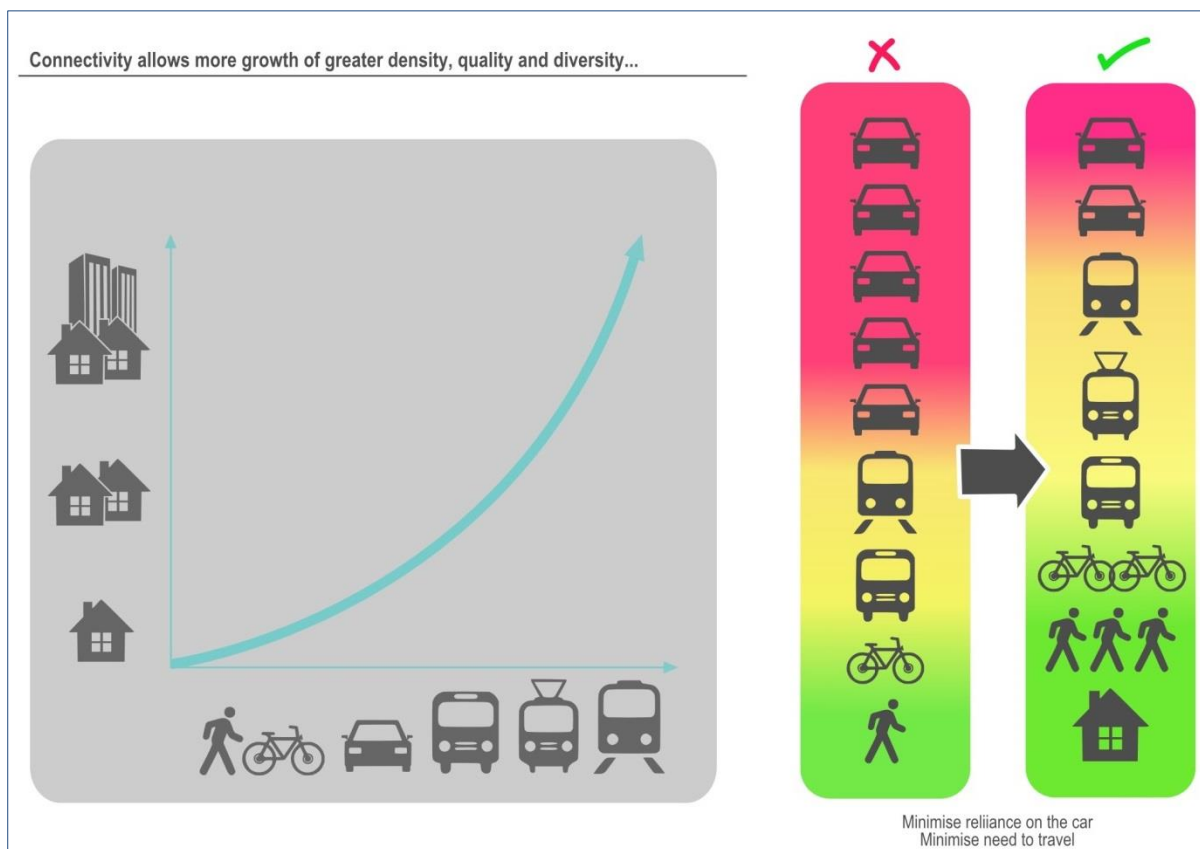
Figure 12: Moving from car based travel to other forms of transport

    c) Buses – more buses on more routes should be provided to ensure the enhanced connectivity that the growth areas will need, using segregated rapid transit corridors where appropriate.

3.3.12   Joint working with TfL on the transport strategy to support this Growth Strategy has enabled the Council to understand better the potential effects of alternative transport investment options. Specific projects are set out under Objective 5.

Objective 5: secure the required transport infrastructure investment in a timely and cost-effective fashion

3.3.13   At each stage of growth, people should have a real choice of good travel alternatives. A growing variety of timely transport investments should come forward as development progresses. Key advantages from growth will not be realised unless the right mix of transport provision (whether walking, cycling, public transport, car-based, etc.) comes forward in the right place at the right time.

3.3.14   The following list of priority interventions should be sufficient to support the level of growth envisaged. These projects must be provided in a timely fashion to enable development to progress and to encourage the necessary inward investment in the area:

Immediate/short term:

    a) better cycle and walking routes within the growth areas and linking them to the communities beyond;
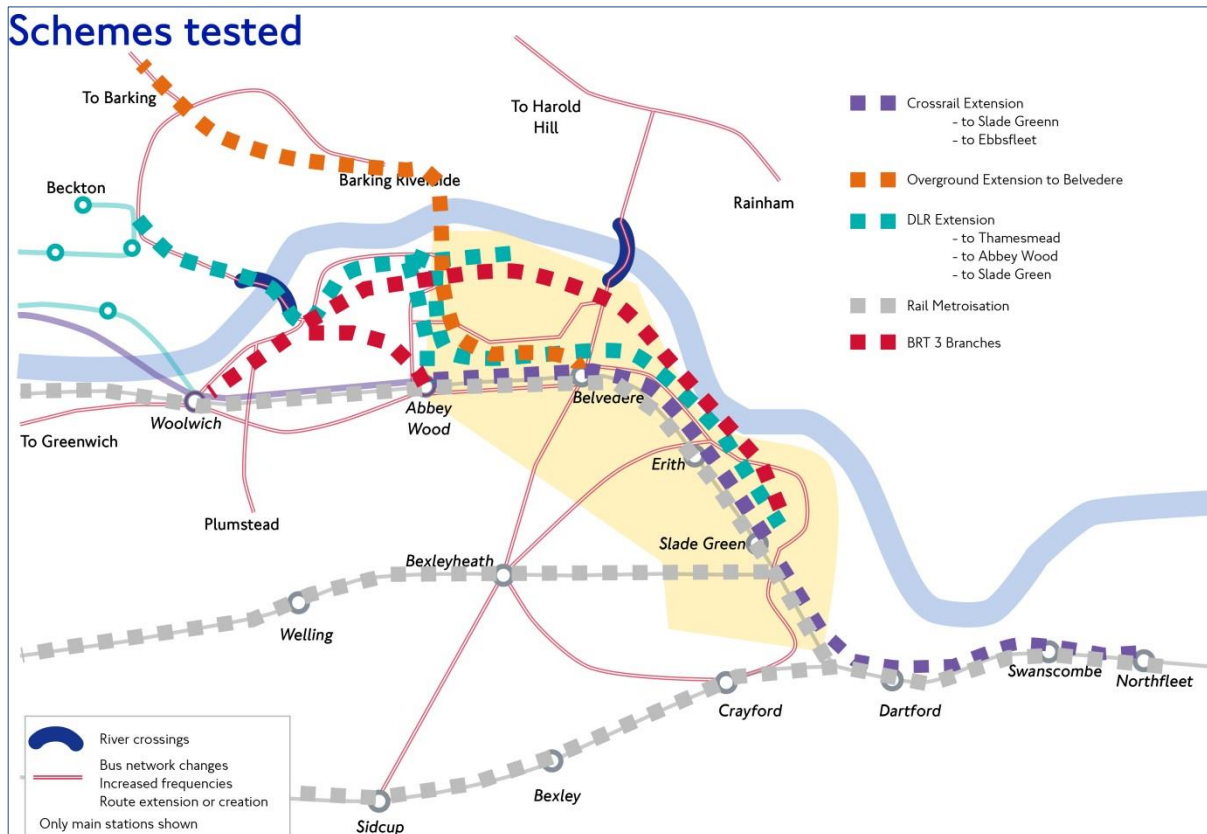
Figure 13: Transport schemes tested

b) major enhancements to the local bus network (better frequencies, new routes); and,

c) upgrades to services and stations on the Bexleyheath and Sidcup lines;

Medium/long term:

d) investment in necessary highway capacity at locally strategic road bottlenecks including key junctions on the south Thames development route and particularly a significant intervention at the Queens Road corridor;

e) a high quality intermediate mode public transport service, with segregated right of way;

f) the potential eastward extension of Crossrail from Abbey Wood towards Ebbsfleet/Gravesend; and,

g) new Thames crossings at Belvedere and Gallions Reach (with associated new, high quality public transport links).

3.3.15 Other proposed transport improvements within or close to the borough may also be beneficial to growth by, for example, creating new connections. These may include the proposed extension of the DLR to Thamesmead and the Bakerloo Line to Lewisham and beyond. Schemes will be considered on their merits but will be seen as additional to rather than a replacement for the priority interventions set out above.

Objective 6: promote innovation and coordination in the delivery of transport and utility provision.

3.3.16   The Council's approach to utility infrastructure provision will seek to facilitate the efficient and coordinated delivery of services under the highway. This will be achieved through close liaison and planning with utility companies, the use of the Council's regulatory powers and potential physical interventions such as shared utility corridors wherever practical.

3.3.17   We will also seek to use modern technology and best practice to identify innovative and cost effective solutions to transport and utility issues. These will look to make best use of existing local opportunities and attributes wherever possible. Examples could include working with Digital Greenwich and other local partners to enhance digital connectivity in the borough, including the use of dark fibre networks, introduction of automated vehicles and the potential to develop a decentralised energy network.

3.3.18   The last of these would seek to utilise existing heat sources within the area such as the RRRL energy from waste facility in Belvedere, to supply market competitive, low carbon energy to new developments and existing properties.
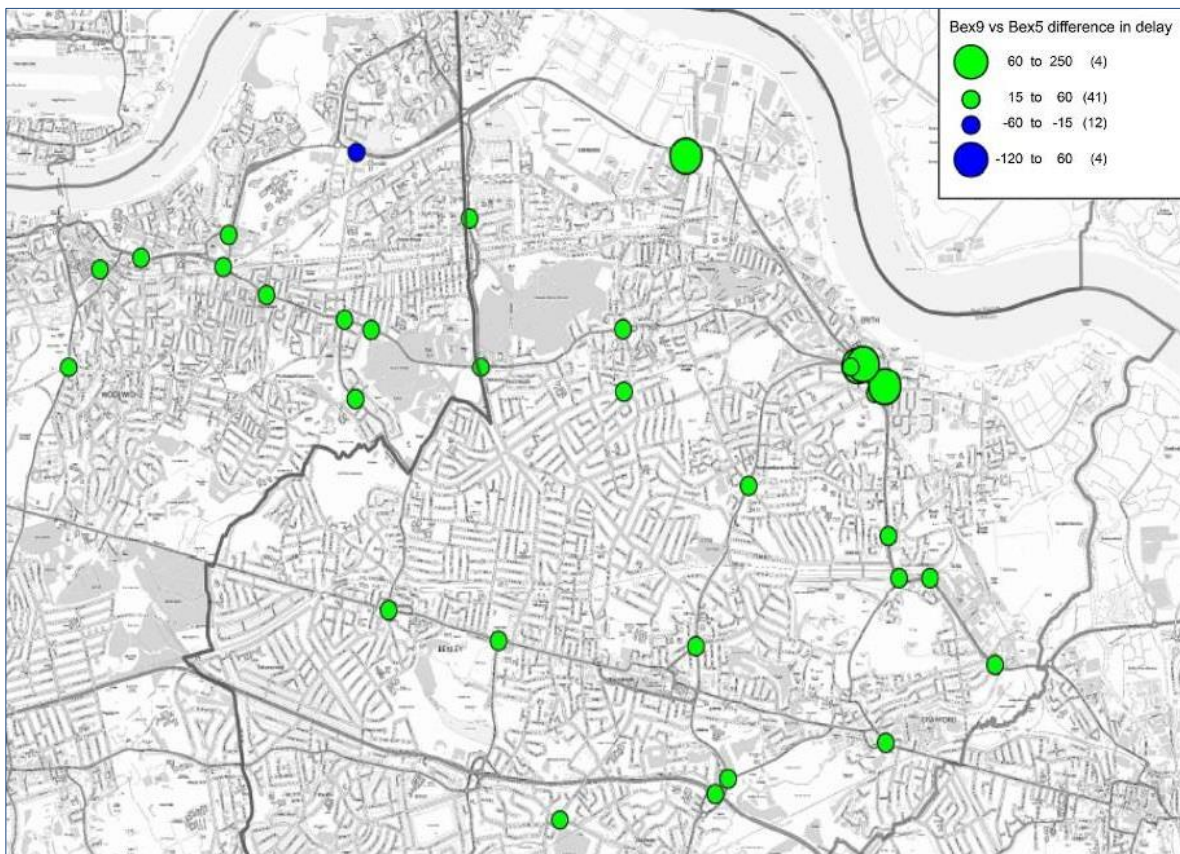

Figure 14: Increase in delays at road junctions resulting from growth

> ***The transport and utility outcomes of the Bexley Growth Strategy:***
>
> <u>Short term</u>
>
> - increased capacity on and number of passengers using public transport
> - increased numbers walking and cycling
>
> <u>Medium term</u>
>
> - higher mode share for commuting by public transport
> - lower levels of congestion
> - improved journey time reliability
>
> <u>Long term</u>
>
> - a high quality, safe, accessible and affordable transport system
> - highly connected places across a choice of transport modes
> - improved access to jobs and services
> - greater network resilience (transport and digital networks)

3.4 Theme 4 – Social and community infrastructure

<u>Context – opportunities and challenges</u>

3.4.1. Social and community infrastructure comprises many different types of services and facilities, including health, education, social services, leisure, heritage, culture, open space and the public realm. A full analysis of all infrastructure requirements that will support the positive growth set out in this strategy is set out in a Development Infrastructure Funding Study (DIFS). Further detail is set out in Appendix B of this strategy. A summary of the opportunities and challenges for each of the main types of social and community services and facilities is set out in the following paragraphs.

3.4.2. Health and wellbeing, and green and blue infrastructure are set out in sections 3.6 and 3.7. Figure 15 illustrates the existing amount and locations of all types of social and community infrastructure.

3.4.3. As this strategy plans for the potential delivery of up to 31,500 new homes, it is imperative that development is accompanied by the right levels of new and enhanced social infrastructure to meet the needs of residents. The general increase in population across London and specifically within Bexley is already placing pressure on some elements of the borough's existing social infrastructure, for example school places.

3.4.4. This is particularly important in the borough's main growth areas where large concentrations of new development are likely to occur, within high-density settlements, heavily reliant on good quality, predominantly walk to facilities.

3.4.5. Planning for social and community infrastructure to support growth must be based on careful consideration of all potential demographic changes, not just past trends and simple population increases. In turn, these implications must be considered in the context of changing service delivery arrangements driven by factors such as financial constraints and advances in technology.
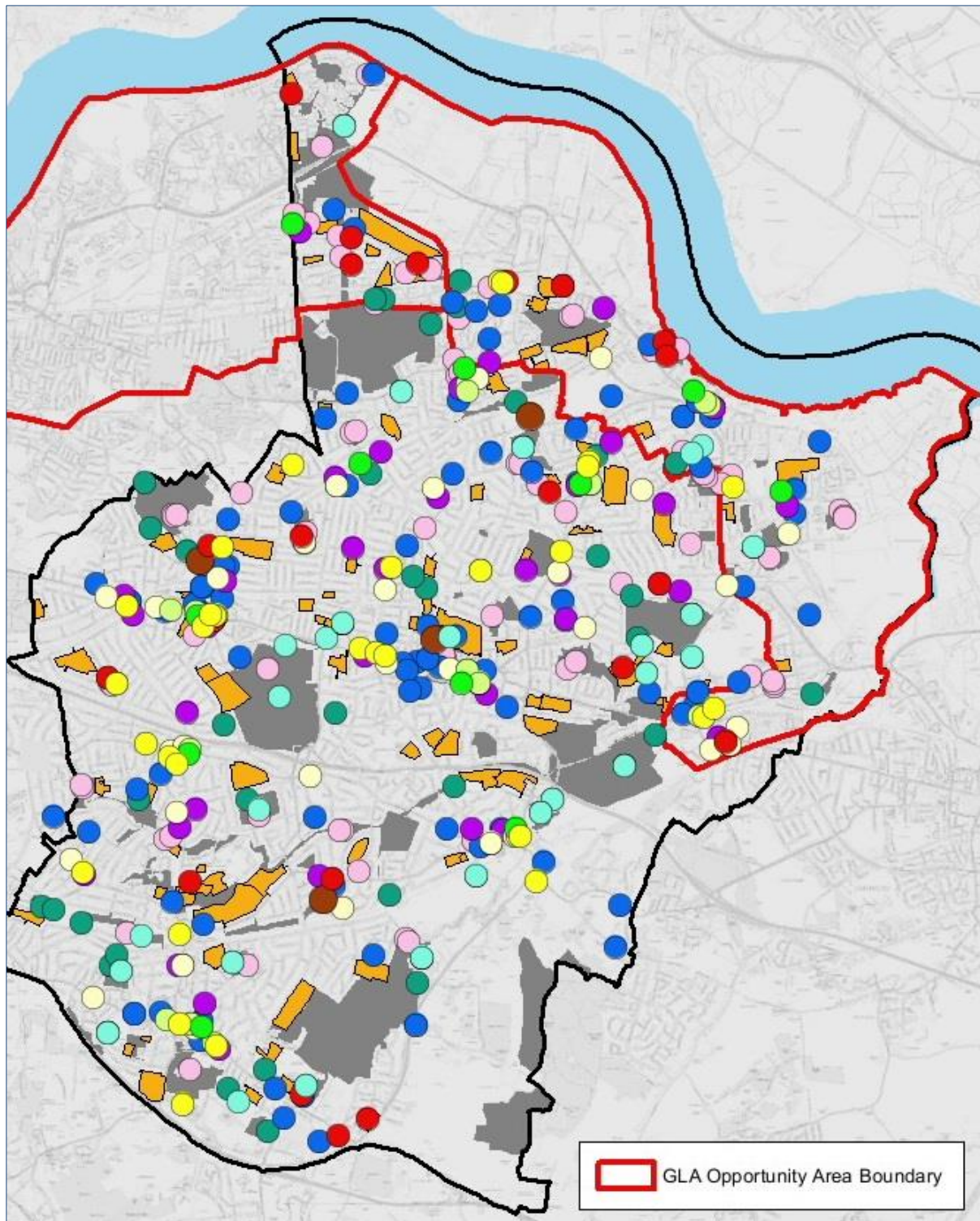
Figure 15: The geographic spread of all types of existing social and community infrastructure in Bexley, including schools, health provision and open space, overlaid by the opportunity areas

Education

3.4.6.   National and regional policy requires local authorities to take a positive, proactive approach to ensuring a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.   However, despite retaining a statutory responsibility to provide school places, reductions in grant and changes in the administration of schools has meant that local authorities are severely constrained in

their ability to respond to changes in demand, particularly in the short to medium term.

3.4.7.   This issue has been exacerbated by the fact that Bexley's schools are popular and the borough is a net importer of children living in other areas, particularly to secondary provision. Moreover, the demand for places in recent years has been particularly volatile, linked to increased migration into the borough. Added to this is a need for better opportunities in further and higher education.

3.4.8.   A number of Bexley's education facilities are located within the growth areas and it will be important to manage these and neighbouring schools as part of the on-going development of the Growth Strategy. However, capacity is limited and it will be important to plan in new provision as appropriate.

Heritage and culture

3.4.9.   Bexley's historic and cultural assets are testament to its rich history and provide a vital benefit to residents and visitors. In Bexley, there are over 150 listed buildings and structures on the National Heritage List for England and hundreds more of importance to the borough's heritage and character on the Council's Local List, as well as 23 conservation areas. Bexley's heritage sites are well loved and well used by both local residents and visitors from much further afield.

3.4.10. Heritage brings real economic value to the borough. Heritage tourism, which is worth £26.4 billion to the UK economy, brings tens of thousands of visitors to Bexley every year, including 22,000 to Red House alone.

3.4.11. The borough's industrial heritage, and particularly its association with the Makers Movement tradition as exemplified both through heavy industry production in the north of the borough and William Morris's Arts and Crafts movement at Red House, also offers investment opportunities using former associations and character buildings to promote the growth of new and emerging manufacturing activities.

3.4.12. Moreover, proximity to heritage assets boosts house prices, with properties within conservation areas selling for a premium of 9% on average, for example. Access to historic buildings and sites also has social and health benefits, with evidence suggesting it can enhance people's wellbeing and even improve their life expectancy. Local heritage sites also provide significant educational opportunities – both formally through school visits, and informally via family outings.

3.4.13. Bexley also has strong cultural associations, exemplified by the location of world-renowned performing arts colleges in the south of the borough, together with a strong amateur theatre tradition and links with famous artists such as illustrator Quentin Blake. Culture provides learning opportunities as well as a sense of local identity and community and can form the focus for growth in a broad range of creative industries.

3.4.14. As Bexley's population grows, it will be more important than ever to ensure that built heritage and cultural assets are preserved and enhanced to contribute to the quality of life for existing and new residents as well as promoting economic development and acting as a catalyst for regeneration and renewal.

3.4.15. At the same time, development provides a reason and opportunity to enhance heritage and cultural facilities. An example of this is the Lesnes Abbey Woods Enhancement Project, which has provided new facilities at the Grade I Listed site and Scheduled Ancient Monument at a time when the wider area undergoes significant population growth, spurred by the arrival of Crossrail at nearby Abbey Wood.

Other social and community infrastructure

3.4.16. The importance of providing other types of local services and facilities, such as community centres and meeting places, play space, and leisure and recreation, is also recognised. Both formal leisure assets (gyms, pools etc.) alongside more informal outdoor opportunities (running, cycling etc. as considered in the next section) are vital in the response to combat the dramatic rise in health conditions such as obesity, congenital heart defects and dementia, and as such are essential parts of the borough's wider social asset base going forward.

3.4.17. Whilst the delivery of these will in many instances be through the private or the third sector, it remains essential to plan in and safeguard provision where need is identified so as to support high quality, sustainable communities.

Aims, objectives and outcomes

The social and community infrastructure aims of the Bexley Growth Strategy:

To identify and review the current provision of social and community services and facilities and ensure that any additional provision required as a result of planned growth is delivered at the right time and in the right locations, complementing new development.

Objective 1: create and maintain a robust evidence base

3.4.18. In order to provide social infrastructure as part of Bexley's planned future growth, there needs to be a clear understanding of the existing provision of services and facilities; how well utilised they are and by whom; the quality, quantity and suitability of facilities; where pressures may currently exist; and where they may occur in the future.

3.4.19. Once a baseline is established, it will be possible to plan for the provision of future social infrastructure to meet the needs of local communities. This will primarily be done through further refinement of the DIFS (see paragraph 3.5.5).

Objective 2: effectively manage and protect assets

3.4.20. The preparation of land use frameworks for each Growth Area allows social and community infrastructure providers to plan ahead with greater certainty. Based on these proposals they may, for example, decide on alternative models of service delivery or seek to consolidate, expand or co-locate their facilities to best suit the projected geographic and demographic demands. This process will also enable the identification and protection of essential facilities and those with a high heritage, wellbeing or cultural value.

3.4.21. On-going contact with infrastructure providers will help to identify requirements and opportunities, including highlighting surplus or inadequate facilities that may be better consolidated and/or developed for alternative uses, specifying sensitive structures and uses that require protection and identifying land where larger new facilities may be required.

Objective 3: planned phasing of the provision of services and facilities

3.4.22. This is critical to ensure that all new and existing communities have access to the infrastructure they need, when they need it. This means, wherever possible, putting in place certain elements of social infrastructure prior to or alongside the construction of new homes and employment facilities, thus ensuring adequate provision of essential facilities from the moment residents move in.

3.4.23. Where infrastructure cannot be provided prior to development, alternative arrangements should be planned for including the phasing of schemes to better align with the provision of facilities.

Objective 4: development of a funding strategy for infrastructure

3.4.24. Appendix B provides a summary of a development infrastructure funding study, which is helping to identify the broad costs for various types of infrastructure that are required as part of growth, possible phasing, the potential funding gap and how that gap can be filled. This work will be updated as more detailed plans are drawn up.

3.4.25. The Council will work closely with infrastructure providers to identify potential delivery costs and sources of funding, as well as engaging other groups, such as the voluntary/community sector, regarding future infrastructure provision and on-going maintenance. Innovative approaches will be pursued to identify potential funding, including lobbying for fiscal devolution to enable the capture of local land value uplift.

Objective 5: ensure a flexible approach

3.4.26. The Growth Strategy sets out the long term plans for the growth and development of the borough. Longer-term planning projections are inevitably based on assumptions that may alter over time. In addition, different providers will have different strategies and programmes of delivery.

3.4.27. It therefore remains crucial that flexibility is built in to accommodate future changes, not only into the strategy itself but also into the adaptability of early phases of development. The ability to transition effectively between present and future planning scenarios is essential to successful growth, and a series of principles in this regard are set out in Appendix B.

Objective 6: continuous communication and collaboration

3.4.28. Joint working with key partners, stakeholders and service providers from all sectors will be essential to ensure that information on growth and its impacts is shared effectively.

> ***The social and community infrastructure outcomes of the Bexley Growth Strategy:***
>
> <u>Short term</u>
> - infrastructure need identified and funding strategy agreed
> - existing social and community infrastructure rationalised and safeguarded
>
> <u>Medium term</u>
> - phase development/improvement of facilities in association with housing growth
> - a high quality educational offer that meets local needs within the community it serves
>
> <u>Long term</u>
> - a range of flexible community facilities, capable of meeting a variety of local needs effectively and highly accessible to local people
> - treasured local heritage assets put to sustainable uses that contribute positively to the community

3.5   Theme 5 – Health and wellbeing

3.5.1.   A healthy community supports healthy behaviours and supports reductions in health inequalities. It enhances the physical and mental health of residents. Access to traditional health facilities, such as GP surgeries and hospitals, must be in line with the needs of a growing population. New development should support the creation of new facilities.

3.5.2.   Encouraging active healthy lifestyles can reduce the pressure on traditional health facilities in the first place. Good urban design and the creation of walkable neighbourhoods with healthy streets in which local services and goods are accessible by walking and cycling creates opportunities for people to be active whilst going about their daily lives, such as deciding to walk to the shop instead of driving there. Greater levels of activity are supported through the provision of parks and open spaces, including playing fields, and the green links that connect them.

3.5.3.   Improving health is not just down to individuals' lifestyle choices, but also to the environments in which they live. Pollution and other forms of environmental degradation can have a negative impact on health. Across London, for example, nearly 9,500 people die each year because of air pollution. Environmental improvements can play a big part in improving physical and mental health.

3.5.4.   Mental wellbeing plays a key role in overall health. There must be sufficient resources to help those dealing with mental health issues, with timely access to both care in the community and in-patient services. In addition, facilities and clubs that support social interaction, such as libraries and community centres, are key to improving mental wellbeing of residents.

3.5.5.   Liveable, lifetime neighbourhoods are healthy neighbourhoods because they meet the needs of people at all stages of their lives, from play parks for children to a built environment that responds to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments. Lifetime neighbourhoods also enable friends and family to stay close together providing enhanced support and interaction, all of which contribute to a feeling of wellbeing.

Aims, objectives and outcomes

> **The health and wellbeing aims of the Bexley Growth Strategy:**
>
> To create neighbourhoods where people are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles such as walking, playing and spending time with their neighbours. Should they need them, residents are able to access good quality health and social care facilities.

Objective 1: provide health facilities needed to meet the community's needs

3.5.6.   The Mayor's London Plan makes clear the need for local authorities to identify and address significant local health and social care issues; working closely with partners to ensure that future provision is planned for according to need. This in turn helps to ensure that Bexley's residents are able to live long, fulfilling and independent lives, thereby reducing the demand on local authority resources and the need for intervention.

3.5.7.   With the planned significant increase in population and anticipated change in demographics, the need for on-going communication with relevant health partners is essential. Continual assessment of the need for health and social care facilities at the local and sub-regional level is required; particularly in terms of the types of facilities that may be necessary in the long term.

3.5.8.   Close working with the clinical commissioning group (CCG), local NHS Trusts and NHS England on their estate requirements has been established and an opportunity to rationalise and optimise assets, as well as identify the need for new provision is on-going.   Key challenges remain however, in terms of the complex and interconnected interests associated with health care provision and the need to balance their various demands.

Objective 2: encourage people to be active through the creation of walkable neighbourhoods and the availability of recreation facilities

3.5.9.   Communities focused on the needs of pedestrians are healthier communities because more people walk or cycle to local shops and services instead of driving. This integration of physical activity into daily life improves physical and mental wellbeing.   The principles underpinning the creation of liveable, lifetime neighbourhoods are outlined in paragraph 3.4.10.

3.5.10. In addition to integrating physical activity into daily life, people must have access to recreation and leisure facilities to support a range of activities, from parks and green links where people can walk their dogs to playing fields where local clubs can play sport.

3.5.11. The growth areas are deficient in high quality leisure facilities and existing facilities are reaching capacity. The Council will look at different models and stimulate more market opportunities to enable this sector to thrive and meet the needs and demands of a growing and changing population.

> ***The health and wellbeing outcomes of the Bexley Growth Strategy:***
>
> Short term
>
> - health infrastructure need identified and funding strategy agreed
> - existing health infrastructure rationalised and safeguarded
> - activity levels within the local population increased
>
> Medium term
>
> - phase development/improvement of health facilities in association with housing growth
> - key local health indicators improve
> - enhanced environmental quality
>
> Long term
>
> - a happier and healthier population with access to a range of facilities that support health and wellbeing
> - an active population which integrates exercise into its daily life and uses recreation facilities such as parks, green links and leisure centres
> - a cleaner and greener environment that improves residents' health and mental wellbeing

Objective 3: improve the mental wellbeing of residents

3.5.12. The provision of health facilities addressed in Objective 1 must include facilities to address mental health issues. The Council will work with relevant health partners to ensure that there is access to mental health services, including talking therapies, care in the community, and in-patient care.

3.5.13. Mental health is an important part of wellbeing for all residents. Isolation is a contributing factor to poor mental health, and can be addressed through the provision of community infrastructure that supports social interaction. This includes libraries and community centres, as well as clubs run by local organisations using appropriate meeting spaces.

Objective 4: improve the environment to address its impact on health

3.5.14. New development offers the opportunity to improve environmental quality, through the provision of new parks or the integration of green spaces and planting within the development itself, including green roofs and walls.

3.5.15. Many of the growth areas contain formerly industrial land that is suitable for release to residential development. New development must take account of and take steps to address situations where potential pollution and other environmental hazards might lead to an adverse impact on human health. Land must be thoroughly decontaminated prior to any residential development.

3.6   Theme 6 – Green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity

Context

3.6.1. The multi-functionality of all types of green infrastructure provides benefits, such as flood defence, food production, air quality improvement, urban heat reduction, improved connectivity, enhanced biodiversity and space for leisure and recreation.

3.6.2.   Bexley is one of London's greenest boroughs. The Growth Strategy seeks to ensure that Bexley remains a 'green' borough, well served by a network of high quality, safe and accessible open spaces, offering a range of opportunities and providing attractive relief to the built form. Much like transport infrastructure, green infrastructure can be classified at different scales from strategic to local importance.

3.6.3.   Bexley's green infrastructure is made up of a series of spaces and corridors, forming a network that stretches throughout and beyond the borough. The green corridors are as important as the spaces themselves, as they provide crucial links and connectivity for people and nature to move between places.

3.6.4.   However, green infrastructure is not limited to open spaces. It also includes blue infrastructure, such as tidal and inland waterways and water features. Blue infrastructure is multi-functional, providing a transport corridor, drainage and flood management, a source of water, discharge of treated effluent, a series of diverse and important habitats, heritage value, recreational opportunities and important landscapes and views.

3.6.5.   Within Bexley, there are a number of watercourses including the Rivers Cray and Shuttle. The River Thames flows along the north of the borough and the River Darent in the northeast. Additionally, there is a network of smaller streams, dykes and ditches within the borough and 'lost rivers' such as the Wansunt and Stanham that now run in tunnels beneath Crayford.

3.6.6.   In planning for the growth of Bexley's population, it is necessary to plan for the provision of appropriate levels of green infrastructure, in all its variants, as an integral part of development. This is expressed in both the Mayor's London Plan, specifically through policy 2.18, and the All London Green Grid (ALGG) SPG.

Aims and objectives

> ***The green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity aims for the Bexley Growth Strategy:***
>
> To value the natural environment to ensure that it remains an essential characteristic of the borough and an important recreational, leisure, cultural and economic resource that enhances the quality of life of residents as well as providing habitat for a range of protected species.

Objective 1: improve access to and reduce deficiencies in open space and nature

3.6.7.   Access to open space, nature and wildlife provides important benefits to residents. It improves health and overall well-being, by providing opportunities for recreation, improving the environment through better air quality, and making the borough more attractive and prosperous.

3.6.8.   Areas of deficiency can be addressed through new development. Historic patterns of growth have in some areas resulted in the provision of small, isolated open spaces often in difficult to access locations, and the clustering of similar types of open space with resulting overprovision of facilities. Such spaces are often underutilised by the local community, are low in quality and provide little in the way

of biodiversity and natural habitats. Where these open spaces are in areas of deficiency, opportunities will be taken to enhance the quality of these spaces.

3.6.9. The Mayor's All London Green Grid SPG (ALGG) identifies a number of project clusters offering significant opportunities to conserve, develop, and enhance the borough's green infrastructure and biodiversity, including: the Southern Marshes; the River Cray Corridor; Thamesmead Link; the South East London Green Chain Park; the South East London Green Chain Walk and Green Chain extensions.

3.6.10. In addition to increasing access to open space and to nature, these projects would help to adapt to climate change, make sustainable travel connections, promote green skills and incorporate sustainable design, management and maintenance. Residential amenity within Belvedere, Erith and Slade Green growth areas will also enhanced through these initiatives.

Objective 2: maintain and enhance existing and new green infrastructure to a high standard

3.6.11. Whilst the initial provision of new green infrastructure is possible largely through new development, the on-going associated maintenance costs can be more difficult to secure. Well-intentioned schemes can age badly over time; therefore, design approaches should consider multi-functional uses and lifetime costs, including management.

3.6.12. Increasingly, local authorities lack the resources to take on non-statutory functions, placing a greater reliance on alternative sources of funding and governance models for green infrastructure in the long term. Examples of innovative approaches to the funding and governance of green infrastructure include: public/private partnerships; use of charitable organisations; private management and business improvement districts (BIDs); local sponsorship; grants and funds; and, use of volunteers, community groups and associations. Whilst not all will be appropriate in every circumstance, the use of non-traditional methods is becoming increasingly necessary and will be explored in light of Bexley's ambitious plans for growth.

3.6.13. New and existing residents within the growth areas of Belvedere, Erith and Slade Green will benefit from enhancements to Erith Marshes and Crayford Marshes and the River Thames. Improvements to these areas will improve the quality and desirability, enhance amenity value and views from residential areas.

Objective 3: protect and enhance biodiversity and strategic green corridors

3.6.14. Bexley has a rich network of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation across the borough and within the vicinity of the Growth Areas, many of which are home to legally protected species such as water voles, bats and reptiles. These sites include sites of importance to London such as the River Thames, Erith Marshes and Crayford Marshes.

3.6.15. Due regard will be given to the legal duties associated with protecting these important habitats and species, whilst taking opportunities to enhance them wherever possible. The hierarchy of avoid, minimise, compensate will be followed in relation to biodiversity.

3.6.16. Strategic green corridors, such as roadway verges and along railway lines and the southeast London green chain, are important for wildlife and are also located within or adjacent to the growth areas. The integrity and connectivity of these corridors will be enhanced where possible and the aims of relevant Biodiversity Action Plan targets will also be carefully considered.

3.6.17. The Growth Strategy aims to achieve a net gain for biodiversity and net biodiversity loss will be avoided. Development proposals will be informed by the environmental context of the site and adjacent area and should provide solutions for greenspace links from the outset.

3.6.18. Improving the recreational resource of green corridors such as the green chain, along with the integration of green spaces within and through development, for example, the incorporation of green roofs within building design, will add to the
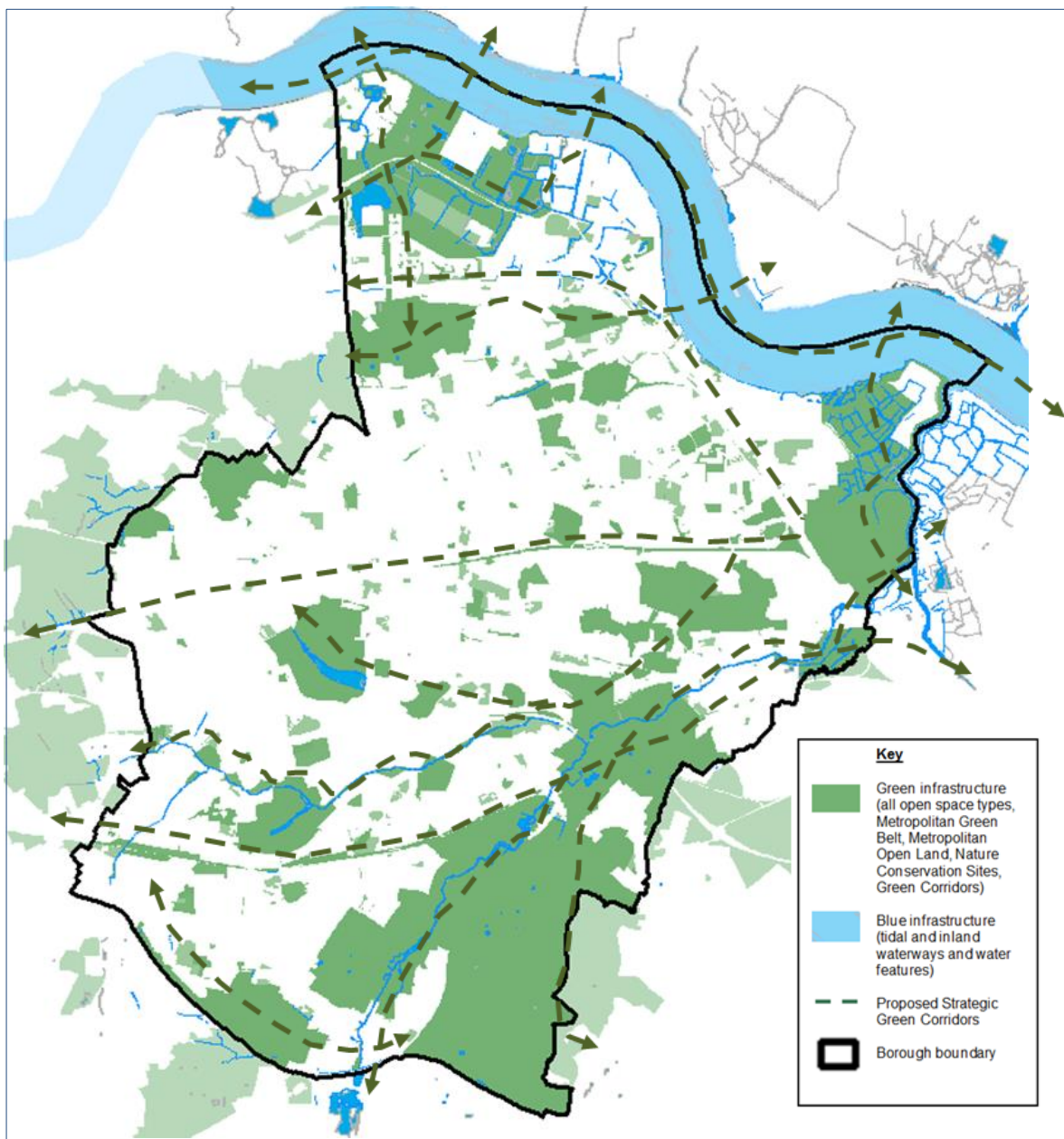

Figure 16: Bexley's green and blue infrastructure

quality of the build environment, providing opportunities for health and wellbeing benefits to residents.

Objective 4: support the maintenance and enhancement of blue infrastructure

3.6.19. The watercourses in Bexley are a unique aspect of the borough. Consideration must be given as to how they can be positively incorporated, maintained and enhanced as part of any future development plans.

3.6.20. The Belvedere and Slade Green growth areas, for example, offer opportunities to enhance the quality of the built and natural environment, through incorporation of the marsh dyke systems in development proposals. With careful design, the outlook onto these biodiversity rich areas will be enhanced.

3.6.21. Planning for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as an integral part of new development and associated opportunities for biodiversity, landscape and sense of place will be considered within design.

3.6.22. Improvements within the growth strategy for Thamesmead, provides an opportunity to enhance the Thamesmead canal network, Southmere Lake and the Thames foreshore for biodiversity through enhanced management.

The green and blue Infrastructure and biodiversity outcomes of the Bexley Growth Strategy:

Short term

- green/blue infrastructure need identified and funding strategy agreed
- improved access to/through and facilities at existing spaces
- reduced deficiencies in quality and accessibility of green infrastructure

Medium term

- provide additional green/blue infrastructure
- reduce quantitative deficiency of green infrastructure
- secure net gain in biodiversity

Long term

- an extensive network of well-managed, high quality green and blue infrastructure provides a range of benefits including important amenity for residents and valued habitats for wildlife
- open space deficiency is effectively addressed through new provision or enhanced facilities

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Chapter 4 – Land use strategy

4.1. Introduction

4.1.1. The previous chapter set out the Council's broad strategies for dealing with key growth themes. These strategies will need to be closely integrated with our approach to land use planning to ensure that our growth aims and objectives are supported by the development, improvement and protection of land across the borough and that different land uses are properly coordinated so as to be mutually supportive.

4.1.2. Bexley is a borough of contrast with large areas of traditional suburban housing, served by bustling town and neighbourhood centres; significant areas of industrial activity, particularly by the River Thames; and a range of open spaces providing breaks in the built form as well as an important local amenity.

4.1.3. Many of these areas will continue in their current roles, providing essential housing, local job opportunities, facilities and services. However, some localities, particularly around existing transport hubs within the opportunity areas in the north of the borough, have the potential to provide significant additional housing and employment capacity enabled by a step change in connectivity and supported by local infrastructure improvements.

4.1.4. The existing land uses and key objectives going forward are outlined below.

4.2. Employment

4.2.1. London Plan Policy 2.17 outlines the strategic approach to protecting Strategic Industrial Land (SIL) that has been identified based on future need, whilst managing the release of surplus industrial land. Changes in the structure of the local economy have seen a decline in manufacturing industry, one of Bexley's historic employment uses, and the rise of new employment opportunities including within new locations such as town centres.

4.2.2. The London Plan identifies Bexley's potential to be a strategic outer London development centre with strategic functions of greater than sub-regional importance including logistics, and industry/green enterprise (LP table 2.1). The London Plan and the Mayor's *Land for Industry and Transport* SPG (2012) provide more information on suitable uses within London's SIL and should be read alongside this framework.

4.2.3. The strategy for the land use aspects of employment use is as follows:

a) Reconfigure the Eastern Industrial Estate extension in Thamesmead to create a better-integrated, higher density and higher use value employment location, in the context of proposed connectivity improvements. This change will also provide an opportunity to rationalise the Metropolitan Open Land boundary within the area.

b) Parts of the Belvedere, Fraser Road, Manor Road and Crayford industrial areas will be released for other uses; however, the retained areas will be intensified and promoted as strategically important employment locations. Transport improvements, such as bus service enhancements as well as a possible

Belvedere-Rainham river crossing, digital connectivity enhancements, including the use of dark fibre networks, and modernised business premises, such as the introduction of shared working spaces and environmental enhancements, will aid these areas. In this way, the areas will become increasingly attractive for new industries including those displaced from elsewhere within the opportunity areas.

c) Review the boundaries of, but primarily retain and enhance, the existing industrial areas at Crayford Ness, Thames Road and Foots Cray.

d) Seek to secure new, higher density industrial accommodation within all
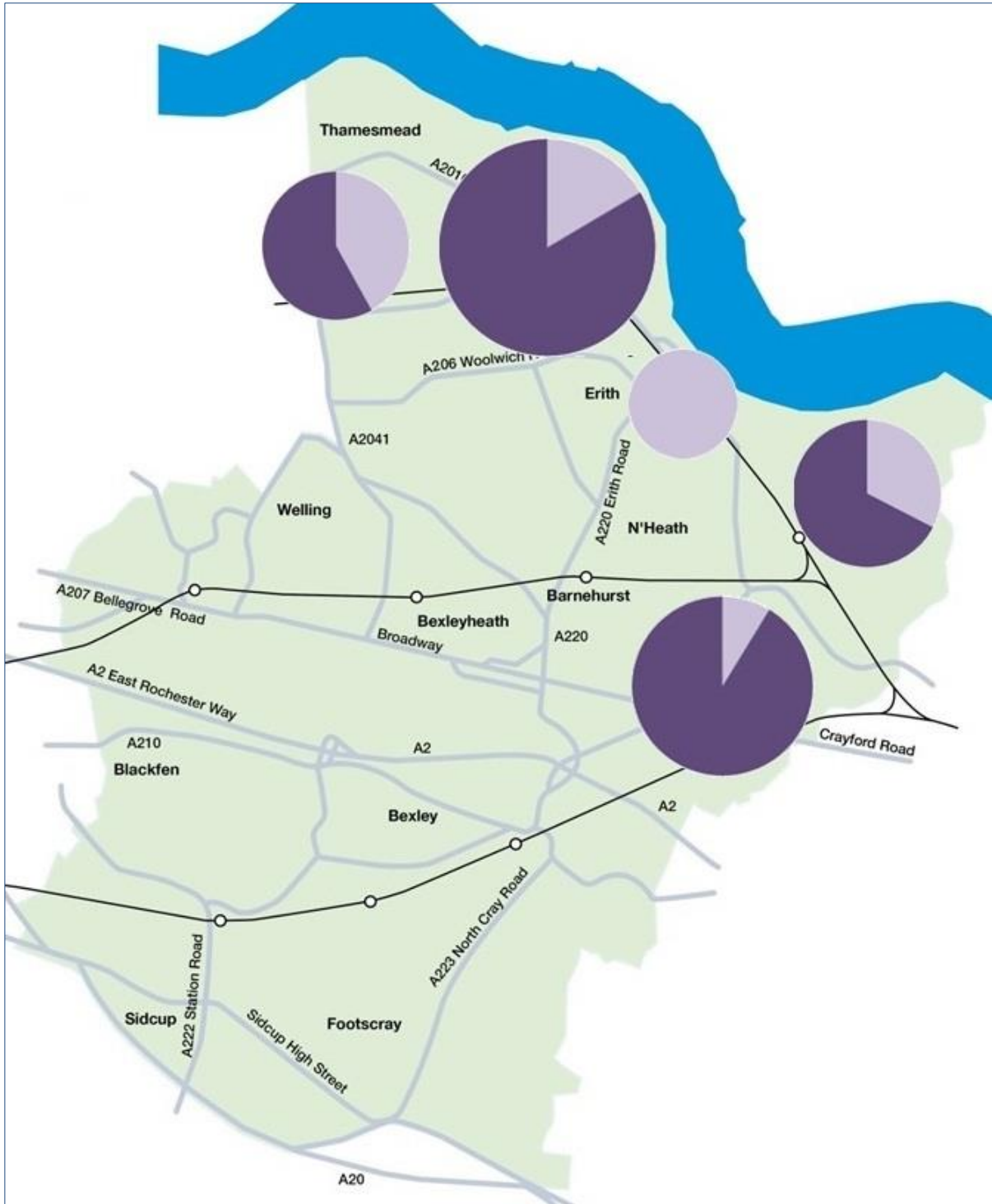
Figure 17: Proportion of SIL proposed for managed release

employment locations to meet the needs of a range of businesses and encourage the clustering of growth sectors, thereby aiding the creation of a higher quality, more diverse local employment base. This will include the provision of co-working facilities offering flexible, well-equipped space for collaborative, high value added activities.

4.3. Housing

4.3.1. Land currently designated for residential development is unlikely to be significantly
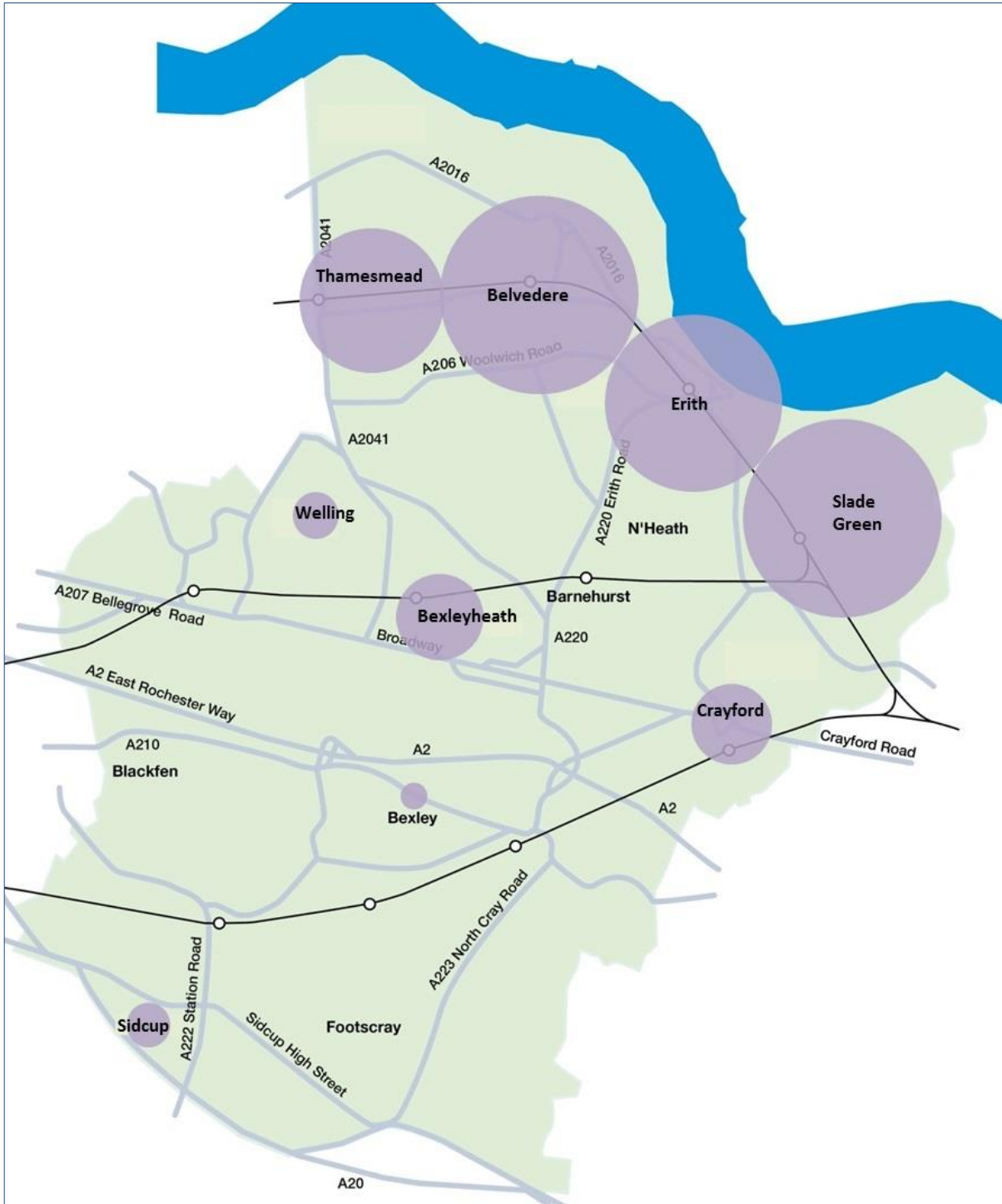
Figure 18: Scale of residential development in growth areas and town centres

altered. However, there will be opportunities for considering land swaps to create or protect existing social facilities, including pubic open space, in the right locations.

4.3.2. An assessment of the types and numbers of businesses currently in employment areas that are likely to be released for housing has been undertaken, along with the availability of alternative employment opportunities and the potential for the relocation of existing occupiers to other sites around the borough.

4.3.3. The strategy for the land use aspects of housing is set out below:

a) Support new residential development at key sites surrounding the Crossrail station at Abbey Wood as part of the Abbey Wood and South Thamesmead Housing Zone and the wider estate regeneration and renewal of South Thamesmead, including partnership working with Peabody and other major local stakeholders.

b) Increase housing capacity around the rail stations at Belvedere, Erith and Slade Green, with further housing capacity if Crossrail is extended east of Abbey Wood towards Gravesend (C2G). This will include release of employment land and the densification of existing housing areas through comprehensive redevelopment in the long term.

c) Intensify suburban residential areas through sensitive infill development, with design solutions that allow medium-density development to fit well with the existing context.

d) Increase residential use within the borough's existing town centres, such as Bexleyheath, Erith, Welling, Sidcup and Crayford, through the promotion of higher density, mixed-use developments, where this is supported by transport infrastructure capacity.

e) Seek to secure a mix of housing types and tenures (including affordable housing, shared living arrangements and suitable housing for the elderly) to reflect local need and meet the requirements of new residents.

4.4. Town centres and retail

4.4.1. Development in town centres will be coordinated by a partnership of key stakeholders, including businesses, developers, residents and relevant service providers, as well as the Council, to ensure the right outcomes.

4.4.2. Bexleyheath Town Centre is identified in the London Plan as a major centre. Despite being outside the opportunity area it remains the borough's strategic centre, a significant public transport hub and a growth area in its own right.

4.4.3. The borough has four district town centres: Sidcup, Welling, Crayford and Erith, the latter two being within the opportunity areas. Long-term retail trends have placed some pressure on these centres and most have seen a decline in the quality of their retail offer.

4.4.4. The strategy for the land use aspects of town centres is set out below:

a) Bexleyheath's role at the top of the borough's town centre hierarchy will be maintained and strengthened through the promotion of commercial and housing

development opportunities, improvements in connectivity and environmental enhancements.

b) Some consolidation of the four district centres is required, together with additional flexibility with regard to the mix of uses and how they are assessed, to allow an extension of their service based offer. Improved connectivity and environmental enhancements will also be important. It is key to maintain a balance of uses and safeguard against the overconcentration of certain uses so as not to undermine viability and vitality.

c) There is the scope for a new district centre to be created at the proposed public transport interchange in Belvedere, comprising a traditional high street running from a potential Crossrail new station up alongside Picardy Manorway, anchored at the northern end by a new luxury shopping quarter. This would comprise a major new outlet retail facility and high-concept retail innovation hub in a highly connected location at the intersection of the potential extension of Crossrail towards Gravesend (C2G) and any Belvedere–Rainham river crossing.

d) A new local centre will be created at the Crossrail station at Abbey Wood to serve the new community planned in this location created by high-density residential development in the immediate area.

e) Create a local centre at Slade Green train station that would also be served by a potential new Crossrail station, which will serve the new communities planned in this north-eastern part of the borough, and will complement the existing hierarchy of centres.

f) The borough's existing local centres at Blackfen, Bexley Village, Upper Belvedere and Northumberland Heath and the designated neighbourhood centres will continue to be supported as important local facilities.

Chapter 5 – Urban design strategy

5.1. Introduction

5.1.1 This chapter provides a series of high-level design principles for new development and infrastructure that will help ensure the creation of healthy, high quality, sustainable, accessible, safe and durable places. These will improve the character and function of the growth areas and the borough as a whole.

Existing character – opportunities and challenges

5.1.2 Key character features of Bexley's growth areas include:

a) an industrial heritage which has left a legacy of vacant or underused sites and dated structures as well as environmental issues such as land contamination and poor air quality but which also provide development opportunities and character buildings offering flexible space;

b) a significant quantity of housing stock, some in need of renewal while other areas offer popular and affordable accommodation set in pleasant surroundings

Figure 19: ADM Erith

Figure 20: Lesnes Abbey, Abbey Wood and Thamesmead

with good local amenities;

c) Highly desirable riverside locations along the Thames, Darent and Cray, where much of the existing development fails to realise the potential of its location and provides limited access to these water features;

d) a public realm of inconsistent quality, with some areas lacking in permeability and legibility and failing to create a sense of place;

e) severe severance in places caused by a number of busy major radial transport routes with limited and constrained crossing facilities, which cut communities off from essential local services and key employment, recreational and leisure facilities;

f) a car dominated environment which can lead to unpleasant public spaces and large areas of characterless car parking, and can feel unwelcoming to pedestrians, particularly at key locations such as town centres and transport interchanges; and,

g) unique heritage and natural features such as riverside marshes, Lessness Abbey ruins and woods, Crossness Pumping Station and a rich collection of listed buildings and conservation areas, which form significant leisure and recreational facilities as well as offer exciting economic development potential.

5.1.3   In addition to these features, each of the growth areas has unique characteristics that help to define them as individual and distinctive places in their own right.

5.1.4   Thamesmead's position on the flood plain creates a flat topography. The area is predominantly residential, much of the stock high rise and associated with the 1960s

new town development. The townscape is dominated with large-scale transport infrastructure including wide carriageways, flyovers and walkways that have a significant visual impact and cause severance. Expansive industrial sites are present on the margins whilst the surrounding open space and water features are somewhat anonymous and underutilised. The area also lacks a well-functioning town centre; service provision is instead found in a number of small parades of shops.

5.1.5   Lower Belvedere, like Thamesmead, has a flatter topography associated with its position in the Thames flood plain. The area is dominated by expansive industrial and commercial sites characterised by low-level sheds, and large-scale transport infrastructure such as the North Kent railway line, Picardy Manorway flyover and the A2016 dual carriageway. Low-density residential dwellings are clustered primarily around the station which has little presence or character. Although bordered by the marshes, the area has little association with this open space. The prospect of fundamentally redefining the area through ambitious place-making presents a significant development opportunity.

5.1.6   Erith occupies a dramatic position beside the river Thames with a unique topography resulting from a combination of the Abbey Ridge feature and historic quarrying activity. The town centre has a long association with the river, including a naval dockyard founded by Henry VIII and a brief spell as a riverside resort in the 1840s. For much of its modern history, Erith was a bustling Thames-side town, but its historic fabric was largely lost in a comprehensive redevelopment in the 1960s and 70s which replaced the historic streetscape with an inward looking precinct at its core.

5.1.7   Erith is a vehicle dominated town centre environment, underlined by wide and busy roads with bus stops and stands and significant areas of car parking Previous industrial activity has left its mark in the form of wharf and pier structures and some characterful commercial buildings, particularly in the Fraser Road area. Recent development has improved the environment but there is significant opportunity for further development, which brings the town's unique riverside location to the fore.

5.1.8   Slade Green is set in a flatter landscape adjacent to Thames marshland. Historically an isolated community linked to railway and agricultural activity, issues of severance continue to this day. The character of the area is distinctly industrial in nature to the north and residential to the south. The housing is typically a combination of post war semi-detached and terraced homes with late twentieth century low to medium rise blocks of flats and modern infill terraced housing, with some historic railway cottages in the vicinity of the station.

5.1.9   The area has a suburban character with some areas having a higher density than others, but there is no sense of overdevelopment. There is no recognised town centre in Slade Green and as such the area is lacking a sense of identity. Opportunities exist for the opening up of the river, the intensification of housing stock, the improvement and reconnection of open space and the creation of a new heart to the community.

5.1.10 The Crayford growth area is set within a broad river valley. Crayford is centred on an ancient village founded at the point where the River Cray could be forded, and

has been looked over by St. Paulinus Church since at least 1100. The town grew rapidly in the nineteenth century when tanning and silk-making companies were attracted there by the river, and this industrialisation continued into the twentieth century with the arrival of armaments firm Vickers.

5.1.11 The area has been shaped by its long industrial heritage including later lower density commercial development within the town centre. The potential for pleasant riverside development and land intensification is balanced by significant physical constraints to growth such as flooding and contamination.

5.2. Transitional principles

5.2.1 It is proposed to change these locations, sometimes in fundamental ways, to accommodate growth and to allow for estate regeneration. This provides a golden opportunity to address historic issues of poor design whilst ensuring that the best elements of each are preserved and enhanced to create a sense of place born of the past, existing in the present and well placed for the future.

5.2.2 This change will take time, with a long period of transition, which will need to be carefully managed to ensure that the long-term vision of place is achieved. As a result, there will be a number of requirements that apply as developments adapt over the lifespan of the Growth Strategy, to reflect increased accessibility to services and infrastructure, for example.

5.2.3 These site-specific transitional design principles affect the quantum and spatial distribution of development and are intended to ensure that areas retain their maximum potential whilst not causing short and medium term issues. The principles are set out below.

Density and flexibility of use

5.2.4 In many cases, it is expected that on-site density will continue to increase over the growth period. Development proposals should allow for future infill. Many buildings should be constructed with future higher densities in mind, including the ability to add further storeys to buildings at a later stage where practical. Early stage development should have regard to intended later-stage outcomes contained in this strategy, particularly in respect of future land uses.

Parking and modal shift

5.2.5 Relatively higher parking requirements may be needed in the early stages of growth, reflecting lower accessibility and existing higher car ownership/dependency. However, it is expected that need will decrease over the plan period, and therefore parking provision should be designed to allow for reductions when it becomes redundant. Parking at the higher level should mainly be in designated areas, off plot but still convenient to the properties, that can be built on in later stages of development as part of densification as new public transport is delivered, accessibility increases and car ownership declines. Further work will take place to develop this approach.

Open space

5.2.6   Private amenity should facilitate a more urban form of living but include provision of open space above ground level such as balconies, terraces and roofs. There must be a clear distinction between public open space retained for public/biodiversity interest on a permanent basis and that land which is only temporarily open space but will be developed in subsequent phases. This land will not be available to the public other than for 'meanwhile uses' that bring essential interim infrastructure provision. Both public and private open space will be balanced in term of quantum and quality throughout the lifetime of the developments.

Characterisation

5.2.7   Early stage development should have regard to the longer-term aims in respect of area character change. Assessments of character and context should have regard to ambitions for the future character of the area, although sensitivity should be exercised in sites close to existing development with established communities.

Inter-relationship between sites

5.2.8   Developments should not prejudice and, wherever possible, should facilitate future development of adjoining sites including for example the creation of new linkages.

Infrastructure

5.2.9   Development phasing should ensure the continuing provision of all required infrastructure (transport, social and community, health and wellbeing, etc.) within the area, as well as facilitating new infrastructure provision wherever appropriate.

Safeguarding land

5.2.10   Developments will be expected to safeguard land in accordance with the long-term requirements and uses set out in development frameworks for specific purposes unless acceptable alternative provision can be identified and secured.

Decant

5.2.11   Appropriate decant strategies will be developed by the Council in consultation with relevant partners, and that reflect the Mayor's guidance on Estate Regeneration, following the adoption of the Growth Strategy. Such strategies will seek to set out the principles and processes for the relocation of affected land uses to ensure growth proceeds with the minimum disruption to residents and businesses affected. Developments will need to have regard to and, wherever possible, facilitate agreed decant strategies for the growth areas.

5.3.   Broad design principles

5.3.1   Quality is key. Bexley has developed a range of proposed building typologies to indicate the broad character of new residential, commercial and associated development within the growth areas. Details of these are included in Chapter 6 and Appendix D.

5.3.2   This section sets out associated design principles for key land uses within the growth areas and beyond. Developers will be expected to work with the London Borough of Bexley and the Greater London Authority to ensure relevant principles

are applied. The design principles detailed here are to ensure that design is of the highest quality.

5.3.3   Design quality will be assessed through the planning process. The Council has in place a design review panel that will be used as part of the pre-application stage of development to help shape proposals.

5.3.4   These design principles do not represent a departure from the typologies that currently characterise Bexley, but attempt to reimagine them in a higher density context. They take inspiration from Bexley's suburban character but also recognise that higher density housing can integrate well into the existing built form. It is also important to keep in mind that nearly a quarter of Bexley's housing is already flatted.

5.3.5   It is important not just to think of green infrastructure in terms of open space provision because other types of green infrastructure are just as useful in the urban context.   Innovative and creative ways to incorporate green infrastructure into development design and to link existing and new green infrastructure will become ever more crucial as the Growth Strategy is implemented.

General principles

1. Ensure that new development is fully integrated with the existing area.

2. Create variety and add identity to instil a unique sense of place, taking inspiration from the existing character and context without being shackled by it.

3. Provide a legible hierarchy in ownership and access by using a block structure and clearly defined individual entrances.

4. Position buildings and routes so as to create new vistas, frame views and reinforce the street hierarchy, following the principles of the Mayor's Healthy Streets initiative by creating a streetscape that engages the pedestrian, and helps to create a meaningful transition between the public, semi-public, and private realm.

5. Incorporate variations in heights and massing without creating abrupt differences and ensuring appropriate transitions.

6. Ensure building heights relate to street widths to create enclosure.

7. Tall towers will only be appropriate in focussed clusters where they are needed architecturally for way finding or to significantly enhance the skyline, taking into consideration the character of the area, including its topography. Existing tower blocks in most parts of the borough do not set a precedent as an appropriate location for additional tall towers.

8. Mansion blocks of typically four to eight storeys in height are the borough's tall buildings of choice. This building type will achieve the desired increase in density without overwhelming the distinct suburban character of Bexley. These types of buildings will   meet the right needs, integrate well into the existing streetscape and enhance the skyline, so that they, amongst other things, provide a strong contribution to the public realm

9. Have an urban density appropriate to transport accessibility and local service levels.

Residential development principles

1. Utilise a variety of residential forms across different density ranges to promote lifetime neighbourhoods.

2. Create active frontages where possible that support the Mayor's Healthy Streets initiative, ensuring that streets and pedestrian footways are overlooked, that entrances to apartment blocks are spread over the ground floor perimeter rather than through one central door, and that front doors can be provided to streets wherever possible.

3. Use exemplar design at high-density key gateway locations.

4. Step apartment buildings to allow streets to retain a domestic scale and character and accommodate higher density living through typologies other than tall buildings or apartment blocks, such as stacked maisonettes surrounding a courtyard or rows of terraced houses punctuated with short blocks at the end of the rows.

5. Communal or private garden spaces should be designed having regard to the context of the development and their impact on the wider area. Spaces should be attractive, practical, easy to use and maintain and designed with all residents in mind, with connections to existing off site spaces maximized.

6. Ensure all residential development meets relevant national technical housing standards in accordance with the London Plan and incorporates high quality digital connectivity.

Riverside development principles

1. Ensure Thames and Cray riverside developments contribute to the improvement and creation of a high quality river walkway.

2. Create a well-defined built frontage that allows access, light and views through the site and onto the riverside.

3. Design in effective flood defence mechanisms, which at the same time allow for the creation of active street frontages and the protection of the biodiversity of the riverside edge.

4. Maximise the potential of windows and doors onto the river frontage public realm.

5. Enliven river edges with balconies, bays, porches, canopies or arcades (which provide shelter in bad weather to prolong activities) and make provision for uses, including outdoor seating, to overlap onto the river frontage.

6. Provide appropriate lighting features for the river frontage and in key public spaces.

7. Preserve and incorporate riverside heritage features, including former industrial structures, wherever possible to add interest and variety, and take inspiration from the topography of the river including its bends and banks.

Green and blue infrastructure principles

1. Incorporate green roofs and walls, street trees and grass verges into the urban fabric to soften the landscape, reduce surface water run-off and improve the environment.

2. Create green links, including linear parks between neighbourhoods to promote access and improve biodiversity.

3. Create and improve connectivity to rivers and lakes.

4. Consider the use of water features and whether they should provide a flood attenuation function, where appropriate.

5. Use landscaping materials that are high quality and low maintenance.

Sustainable design principles

1. Make sustainable design standards integral to any development and consider them at the beginning of the design process.

2. Make the fullest contribution to minimising carbon dioxide emissions in accordance with the energy hierarchy, which seeks a 'be lean, be clean, be green' approach (this should incorporate a range of measures to minimise resource consumption, encourage green lifestyles and improve environmental quality).

3. Minimise flood risk through the integration of flood defences, the use of sustainable urban drainage systems and water saving measures.

Business uses principles

1. Make employment floor space provision of a high quality including the incorporation of the latest digital technology and the flexibility to adopt future technology.

2. Incorporate flexible workspace, offered at rates that are average for the locality, into commercial development, whenever possible.

3. Design, scale and layout to have regard to adjoining uses and the wider development framework proposals.

4. Take opportunities to bring back older character buildings into employment use.

5. Ensure redevelopment makes a significant contribution to upgrading the image of the area, which in turn should help to safeguard the longer-term future of jobs in Bexley.

6. Include sustainably designed buildings and sites, adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change, including flood risk management, and ensure design is flexible to meet the changing needs of current and future tenants.

7. Utilise Intelligent Design to ensure there are no material adverse effects on the health, safety or amenities of the surrounding occupants or residents.

8. Do not allow developments to compromise the integrity or effectiveness of designated locations to accommodate employment.

9. Achieve improvements to the quality of industrial estates and town centres, including the public realm, making them more suitable and attractive locations for modern business.

10. Enhance landscaping, including the retention of suitable trees and shrubs and nature conservation features is essential, forming an integral part of design and providing a 'buffer' to surrounding uses.

Movement principles

1. Safeguard land within development for segregated public transport corridors where required. Their provision should maximise efficient operation of public transport through the main growth areas; and ensure that the opportunity is taken to maximise integration of the main local public transport corridors with both built development and the wider public realm. Appendix C provides further guidance. Kerb-guided busways are not considered appropriate within the Bexley growth areas.

2. Introduce residential parking on a phased basis with higher levels of parking available prior to the improvement in connectivity of the development through completion of key transport infrastructure. Some parking land could then be redeveloped for other uses as places become more connected and key transport infrastructure is in place, provided that all parking is conveniently located to avoid indiscriminate parking elsewhere.

3. Create an attractive, accessible and safe pedestrian environment in line with the Mayor's Healthy Streets principles.

4. Base street patterns on the Bexley street-type hierarchy that considers the 'movement' and 'place' functions of streets.

5. Provide wide and well-designed pavements that include tree planting.

6. Incorporate high quality and low maintenance landscaping where appropriate.

7. Provide pedestrian and cycle crossings along desire lines to the Thames riverside and other key locations.

8. Incorporate features in the highway such as shared utility corridors that promote the efficient and effective coordination, provision and maintenance of utility infrastructure.

9. Consider walking and cycling permeability as a key feature of urban design, avoiding cul-de-sacs and dead end routes. Community safety principles/designing out crime should be significant in influencing development.

10. Provide links for pedestrians and cyclists to key destinations including shops and services, transport links and amenity space.

Chapter 6 – Growth area development frameworks

6.1. Introduction

6.1.1 The Bexley Growth Strategy is borough-wide, but at scale it has a focus on particular areas. This chapter sets out the proposals for each of the main growth areas: Thamesmead, Belvedere, Erith, Slade Green and Crayford. The general locations of the five growth areas along with potential key transport improvements are shown in the map below.

6.1.2 The key land use proposals are set out in development frameworks for the five growth areas. Each development framework focuses on the main future land uses: residential; commercial (town centre); industrial/employment; green spaces; and transport infrastructure.
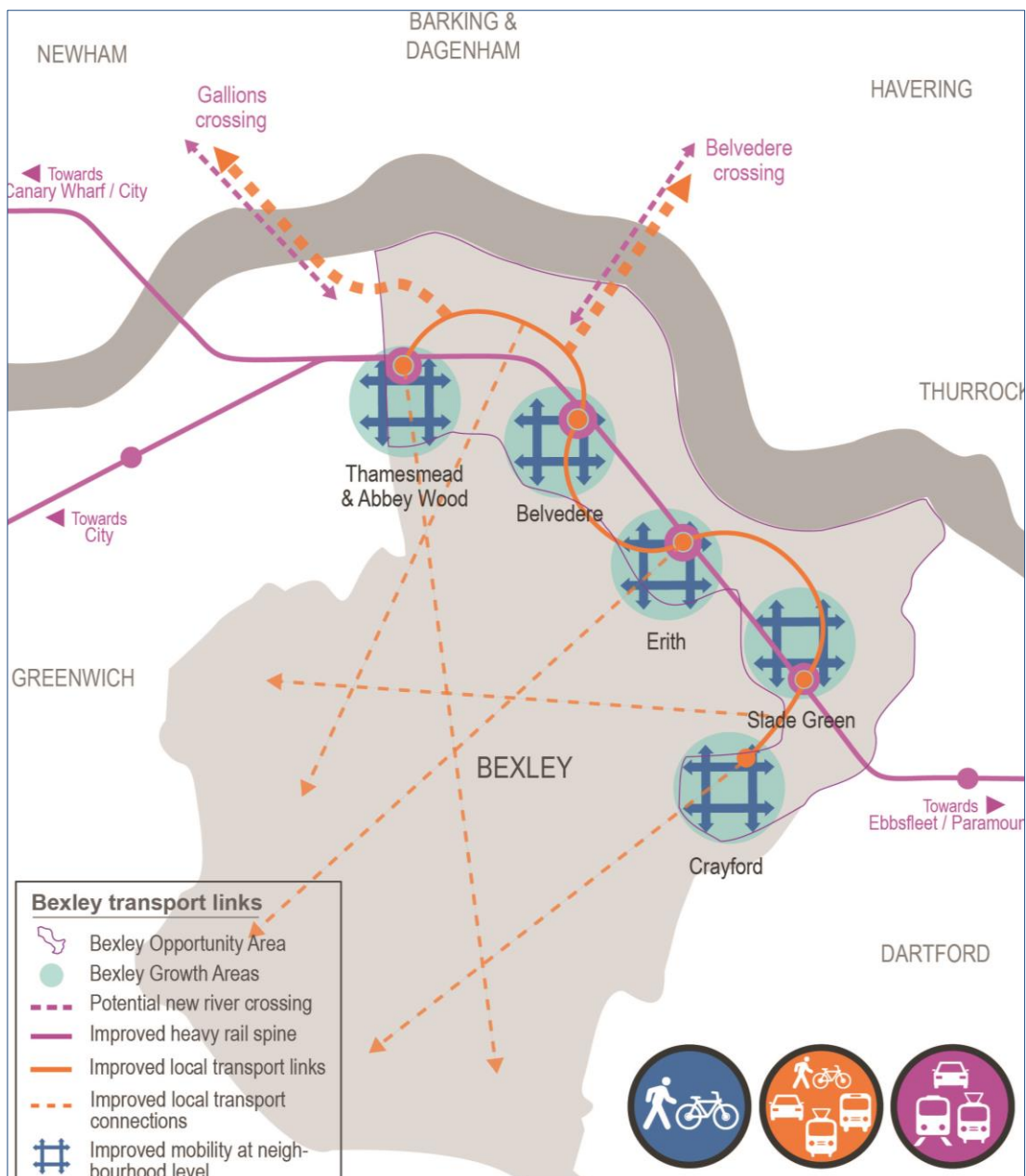

Figure 21: The main growth areas of the borough

6.1.3   The residential, commercial and industrial/employment development categories are subdivided into 'high', 'medium', and 'low' density. This is an indication of the level of intensity of each use, which will vary from area to area, and within areas.

6.1.4   It is generally the case that higher density residential development is proposed near the main commercial centres and transport nodes e.g. railway stations, as well as along key transport routes. It is sometimes the case that specific land uses overlap with each other. This is usually the case with commercial development, which can often have a residential element above it.

6.1.5   The development frameworks indicate the key locations of green and transport infrastructure. They are not intended to show smaller-scale improvements and locations, including small areas of local amenity space and access roads within specific developments, for example. Further information regarding the segregated public transport routes is provided in **Appendix C**.

6.1.6   The development frameworks illustrate an 'end state,' in that they indicate how each growth area may appear following a 20 to 30 year development timeframe. Delivery of infrastructure, particularly transport, will be of key importance and further information in this respect is provided in **Appendix B**. The phasing of developments in the growth areas is not stated, as this will depend on various factors, including:

- the timing and extent of infrastructure provision;
- land ownership;
- land assembly requirements;
- the inter-relationship between particular categories of use; and,
- physical constraints on any particular area or site.

6.1.7   Detailed constraints mapping will be undertaken as part of the development of opportunity area planning frameworks, or subsequent site or area based master planning exercises, where the impact on timing and design will be considered more fully.

6.1.8   Inclusion of the growth area development frameworks within the Growth Strategy will:

a. aid discussions with key partners, landowners and developers;

b. broadly illustrate the patterns and types of use that would be appropriate in the growth areas, whilst retaining a degree of flexibility. They are not intended to provide an exact divide between different land uses and types of infrastructure elements and do not seek to illustrate how these may or may not relate to individual properties. Such differentiation will occur during implementation of the strategy, as specific development proposals are drawn up;

c. illustrate rather than specify development typologies. The examples provide an idea of the likely scale and nature of buildings in each area;

d. set out the area where future development will be subject to additional control, over and above the normal policy framework, rather than seeking to define a particular limit to development activity. Change may not be restricted to the development framework areas themselves. This will most commonly be the case in respect of transport infrastructure (as it seeks to connect different areas) but will also apply to other land uses; and,

e. still allow for small-scale variations of uses within specific land use categories. For example, an area zoned for residential use may still include a local shop; an area zoned for employment use may include a crèche. Infrastructure and services could occur in any zone.

6.2. Typologies

6.2.1 A range of typologies has been developed to illustrate appropriate types of buildings for the main land uses, in each of their density ranges. Examples are given of variants that reflect particular locations such as at riversides and next to open spaces. The detailed examples are provided in **Appendix D.**

6.2.2 The typologies are not prescriptive and can be varied depending on the circumstances of the site, the existing context, and other relevant factors. They have also been selected to accommodate a wide variety of different housing types from shared living space to family housing and accommodation for the elderly.

Housing typologies

6.2.3 The range of housing typologies are summarised in Table 1.

Typology 1: Suburban medium – 35-95 units, or 150-250 habitable rooms, per hectare

6.2.4 This typically includes a mix of town houses and some flats with allocated off street parking and a higher proportion of family homes. This type of development is already fairly well represented in Bexley, such as at the Ratio development at Slade Green (also known as Howbury). Suburban Medium is a good way to intensify existing suburbs when it is done in a sensitive way and supported by the necessary infrastructure.

Typology 2: Urban medium – 45-170 units, or 200-450 habitable rooms, per hectare

6.2.5 This typology generally includes a greater proportion of flats to houses and fewer family dwellings. Buildings are also generally higher at 3 to 6 storeys with some taller elements. These developments tend to have less parking. A range of examples is provided to suit different locations within the growth areas. An example of a riverside typology is Chandlers Wharf in Erith with a density of 106dph and a mix of one and two bed flats with off street parking and buildings of around five storeys.

6.2.6 Locally, Erith Park (Larner Road) is an example of a transitional style of development mixing lower density housing with higher density flats to create an overall medium density. This is a good method to use when transitioning from a low to medium density location and when attempting to provide family homes within medium density developments. It includes a mix of flats and a smaller amount of family 3-bed housing with maximum heights of around six storeys.

6.2.7 Other examples include Stanmore Place in Harrow and Kidbrooke Village, which incorporate open space and a lake on the development sites. These typologies represent how medium density can be achieved in a natural setting to capitalise on a unique location.

Typology 3: Urban high – 45-260 units, or 200-700 habitable rooms, per hectare

6.2.8   This typology illustrates the top density range in Bexley's growth areas and includes predominantly flatted development in four to eight storey mansion blocks and lower parking levels. It seeks to utilise the most connected locations within easy reach of key transport nodes. A few locations in the borough would be appropriate for a focussed cluster of towers of up to approximately 15 storeys.

6.2.9   There are a range of examples used within this typology to fit with differing locations including a mixed-use town centre development, a riverside location and a transitional low to high-density scheme. An urban high-density example within Bexley, in the middle of the density scale, is the Crayford town hall development. This typology has 169 units per hectare, with a range of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units in up to six storey buildings including community uses, shops and a shared courtyard style amenity space.

Table 1: Housing typologies

Code	Housing typology description	Habitable rooms per unit	Units per hectare	Habitable rooms per hectare range
Suburban medium				
H1	family typology	4.6 – 2.7 hr/u	35 – 95 u/ha	150 – 250 hr/ha
Urban medium				
H2a	riverside typology	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	200 – 450 hr/ha
H2b	transitional typology with a mix of stories	3.8 – 4.6 hr/u	45 – 120 u/ha	
H2c	open space/lakeside typology and buffer zone	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	
H2d	urban medium open space typology	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	
H2e	town centre mixed-use typology	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 170 u/ha	
Urban high				
H3a	mixed-use town centre typology	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 260 u/ha	200 – 700 hr/ha
H3b	mixed-use riverside typology	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 225 u/ha	
H3c	high density in a previously low density area (transitional)	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 260 u/ha	
H3d	high density	3.8 – 4.6 hr/u	45 – 185 u/ha	
H3e	urban high town centre (in-borough example)	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 260 u/ha	

Employment typologies

6.2.10 Bexley has developed a range of B-use class employment typologies for the high, medium and low employment density ranges using an established employment density guide[1]. The approach taken is based on a tried and tested methodology used widely in employment land reviews, whilst taking into account local

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[1] 2nd Edition, HCA & Drivers Jonas Deloitte, 2010

circumstances, such as the character of the outer London office market. The classification by use also enables us to encompass a range of different employment accommodation types from more traditional single unit configurations to shared working models. Low-density employment will occur outside of the growth areas.

6.2.11 The typologies assist with estimating the level of employment generated by development, based on 'employment density' ratios. Ratios are expressed as the number of square metres per employee. The typologies are set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Employment typologies

Code	Employment typology description	Density*
Low density employment		
E1a	Warehouse & Distribution - B8 - Large Scale & High Bay Warehousing	80m^2 (GEA) per FTE
E1b	Warehouse and distribution - B8 - storage and distribution centres	7 m^2 (GEA) per FTE
E1c	Warehouse & Distribution - B8 - Very Large Scale: 'Dark Store' (24/7 operation shift work with ancillary offices)	32m^2 (GEA) per FTE
E1d	Broader Industrial Groups - Sui Generis	Variable
Medium density employment		
E2a	Industrial - B1(c) light industrial - Industrial processes appropriate for a residential area.	47m^2 (NIA) per FTE
E2b	Industrial - B2 General industrial - industry not within B1.	36m^2 (GIA) per FTE
High density employment		
E3	Offices – B1(a) use class: Other than financial and professional services providing for members of the public.	13.8m^2 (NIA) per FTE

Retail typologies

6.2.12 The retail typologies also focus on employment density. The low-density type refers mainly to retail warehousing which often occurs in out of town locations. It generally includes retail multiples in large warehouse style buildings with a significant amount of forecourt parking. Large areas of the store are often given over to the display of goods and a relatively small number of employees are required compared to the space used. It can include large bulky items (such as DIY) as well as comparison goods. Modern cinema complexes are included, as they also tend to take up a large floor area with a low employment density.

6.2.13 The high-density typology relates to the traditional high street shopping centre format with a large number of smaller to medium sized stores but high staffing levels. The middle category is a mixture of the high and low-density formats and tends to occur in existing town centres, which have been subject to some recent redevelopment.

Table 3: Retail typologies

Code	Retail typology description	Density
Low density		
R1	Retail warehousing and cinemas	Avg. 90sqm per FTE

Code	Retail typology description	Density
Medium density		
R2	A mixture of traditional high street and retail warehousing	Avg. 54sqm per FTE
High density		
R3	Traditional High Street	Avg. 17.5sqm per FTE

Green infrastructure typologies

6.2.14 All of the growth areas are within 400m access of natural and/or semi-natural open space. Some new local parks and amenity spaces will be created within the growth areas in order to ensure residents have sufficient access to green space. It is envisaged that in some areas there will also be enhancements to existing green and natural open space where appropriate.

6.2.15 The green infrastructure typologies used in the development frameworks are set out in the table below and are based on the categories set out in the Council's Open Space Strategy. They include all local categories of green infrastructure relevant to local area planning but exclude strategic open space provision such as district and metropolitan parks :

Table 4: Green infrastructure typologies

Title/Code	Description	Size range	Access Standard
Local park (LP)	Open space that can have lots of different functions including play space provision	2 – 20 hectares	400m/10 minutes' walking distance
Amenity areas or small parks (AA/SP)	Smaller green open spaces which can also include play provision	0.4 – 2 hectares	400m/10 minutes' walking distance
Strategic Green Corridor (SGC)	Safe and accessible routes for people to travel to local services or between green spaces with planting and landscaping that will enhance biodiversity	Variable	N/A
Natural or semi natural open space (NOS)	Naturally or semi-naturally occurring open spaces such as marshlands	Variable	720m or 15 minutes' walking distance
Allotments (A)	Sites incorporating a series of plots made available for people to grow produce	Variable	720m or 15 minutes' walking distance
Outdoor sports pitch (OSP)	Areas where sports provision would benefit the local area	Variable	768m or 16 minutes' walking distance

Transport corridor typologies

6.2.16 It is proposed that land is safeguarded within relevant development frameworks for segregated public transport corridors. Their purpose is to maximise the efficient operation of public transport through the main growth areas and to ensure that the opportunity is taken to maximise integration of the main local public transport corridors with both built development and the wider public realm.

6.2.17   Where at all possible, these corridors should be completely separate from general traffic routes. New roads within or to developments may cross the corridors but should be designed so that general traffic is physically discouraged from joining the segregated route. The corridors should be able to be used by various forms of local public transport at any phase of development.

6.2.18   Other public transport services should also be able to use these corridors in short sections or over their entire length depending on operational needs to ensure maximum flexibility and integration. Corridor typologies are arranged in order of segregation as set out in Table 5. Further detail and examples are provided in **Appendix B**.

Table 5: Transport typologies

Typology	Transport typology description	Comments/Examples
Segregated routes	Public transport only roads which would initially be busways but could be upgraded for other PT modes	Fastrack – various sections
Segregated lanes	Dedicated lanes on existing or new highways which are exclusively for public transport use at all times	Fastrack – various sections
Public transport priority measures	In locations were complete public transport segregation is not possible, incorporate design features to maximise efficient running.	Design features could include short lengths of segregation where required and traffic signal priority

6.3.   Growth Area Development Frameworks

Introduction

6.3.1   Each of the growth areas considers the existing land use and the land use that will be the 'end state.' Below are the keys for the two types of maps that illustrate this:

District Centre Boundary

Primary Employment Land

Secondary Employment Land

Primary Residential Area

Shopping or Town Centre Proposal

Shopping or Town Centre Proposal and Primary Employment land

SINC

SINC and Primary Employment Land

SINC and Metropolitan Open Land

SINC, Metropolitan Open Land and Educational Land

SINC and Urban Open Space

Metropolitan Open Land and Educational Land

Educational Land

Urban Open Space

Conservation Area

Undesignated Land

Figure 22: Key to the existing UDP designations maps

Residential density
High
Medium
Low

Industrial/Employment density
High
Medium
Low

Commercial density
High
Medium
Low

Medium density residential & medium density commercial

High density residential & high density employment

Medium density residential & high density employment

High density residential & high density commercial

Green corridor

Open space

Possible location of retail quarter

Junction/Interchange Improvement

Movement corridor improvements

Proposed Rapid Transit

Sch   Existing School

YYY   Typology

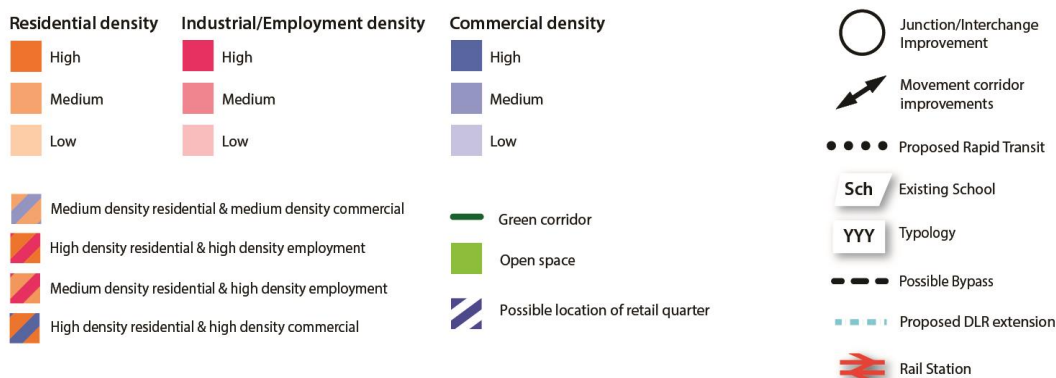Possible Bypass

Proposed DLR extension

Rail Station

Figure 23: key to the development frameworks proposed uses (end-state)

Thamesmead

Existing context – opportunities and challenges

6.3.2   The Thamesmead growth area is focused on South Thamesmead and Abbey Wood. It extends to the boundary with the Belvedere growth area to the east, the boundary with Greenwich to the west, Eastern Way to the north and the North Kent rail line to the south.

6.3.3   It includes large areas of the former Thamesmead new town, a planned settlement developed in the 1960s and 1970s that is now owned and managed by the Peabody Trust. First inhabited by Augustinian monks from Lesnes Abbey who reclaimed and drained land in the marshes, the area that would become Thamesmead was gradually given over to military uses and became part of the Royal Arsenal.

6.3.4   By the twentieth century, however, the military site was surrounded by residential uses and there was growing concern about the manufacture and testing of guns and ammunition so near to densely populated areas. In the early 1960s, the Ministry of Defence released much of the land to the London County Council and its successor, the Greater London Council, began to develop a new riverside town in conjunction
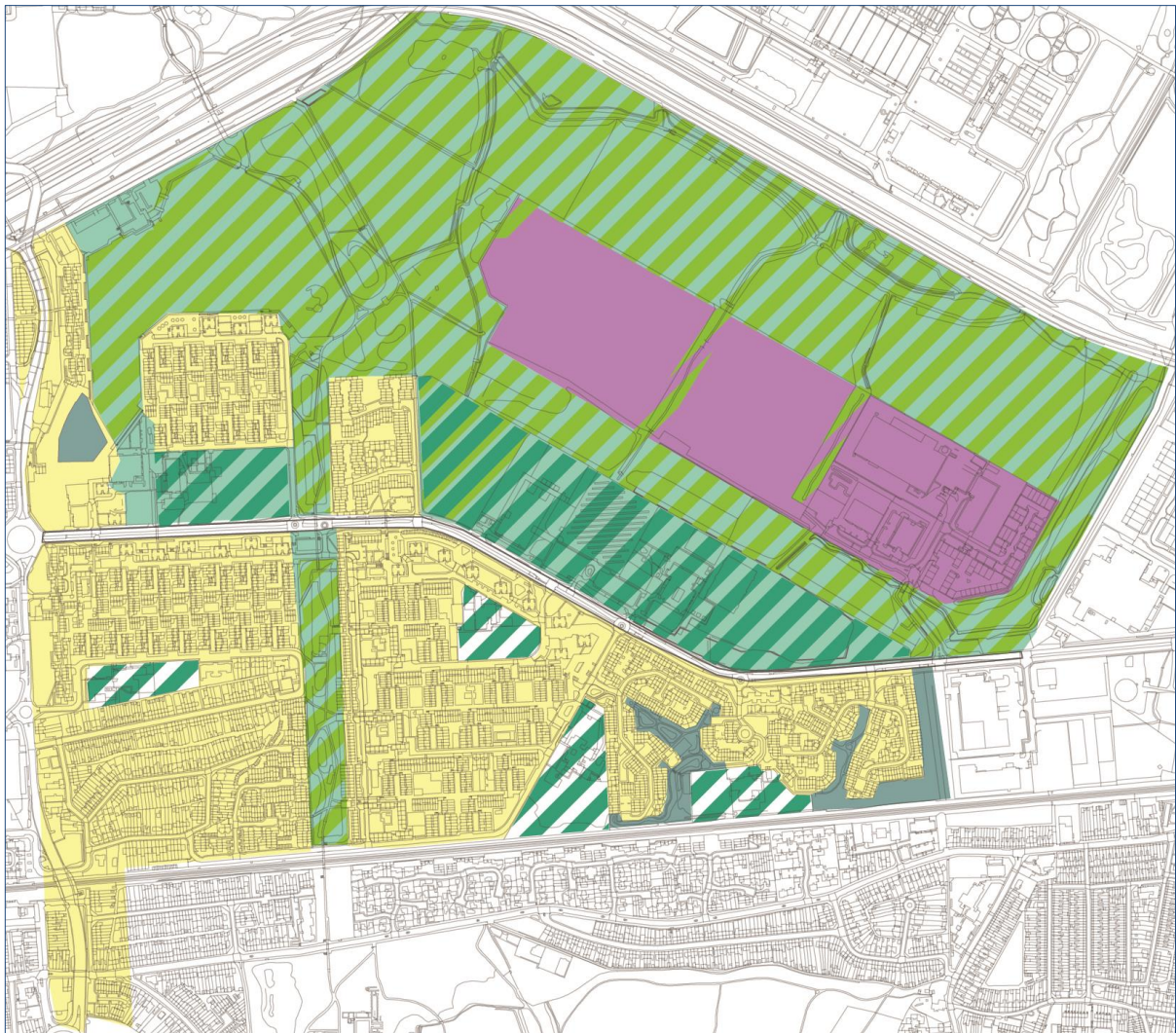

Figure 24: Thamesmead existing land uses (UDP designations) – see key on page 66

with the local boroughs of Greenwich and Bexley.

6.3.5   The area is therefore mainly residential in character, with associated community facilities, although there are also significant elements of employment land at Veridion Park and open space including Metropolitan Open Land and areas of nature conservation value. It is served by Abbey Wood mainline station and a number of local bus services

6.3.6   Thamesmead has significant strengths and opportunities, including plentiful open space, a number of heritage assets and a series of lakes and waterways, which offer a range of potential leisure and recreational opportunities. Connectivity is also set to improve significantly with the arrival of Crossrail services to Abbey Wood in late 2018.

6.3.7   Moreover, Peabody, as the new major landowner, has driven a new vision for the area. It has committed to invest heavily in its estate and has produced a Thamesmead Futures document, which sets out a broad strategy for the improvement of the area including the potential for the creation of some 20,000 homes.

6.3.8   The Mayor of London has established two Housing Zones within Thamesmead, including one within the growth area that runs broadly along the eastern edge of Harrow Manorway. This will see the development of 1,500 new dwellings across a number of sites, as well as improved social and transport infrastructure including a new library and extra primary school places.

6.3.9   It is within this challenging but potentially improving context that the growth proposals for Thamesmead are set.

Vision for Thamesmead

Thamesmead will provide more than 4,000 new homes and 5,000 new jobs, triggered by the Housing Zone and a new Crossrail station and supported by local transport improvements in the surrounding area. Existing residential areas will be renewed, providing high quality accommodation well served by local services and facilities, including a new local centre at Abbey Wood station and better access to green and digital infrastructure.

Objectives

6.3.10 The vision will be achieved by:

(i)   ensuring new homes will be of high quality design with a range of medium to high density, well connected to local walking and cycling routes as well as public transport, and resilient to flooding;

(ii) improving the quality of green and blue space for leisure, culture, recreation and biodiversity as well as providing better access and linking up green networks;

(iii) ensuring the connectivity benefits resulting from the Crossrail services at Abbey Wood station are maximised in the surrounding area through significant improvements in the local transport network;

(iv) providing local economic development opportunities through the creation and enhancement of local service centres and the improvement of existing employment land;

(v) creating a step change in the quality of digital connectivity in the area to facilitate an uplift in local skills levels, economic opportunities and competitiveness and residential service quality; and,

(vi) designating Wilton Road as a local centre, giving it town centre status and kick-starting shopping and service improvements.
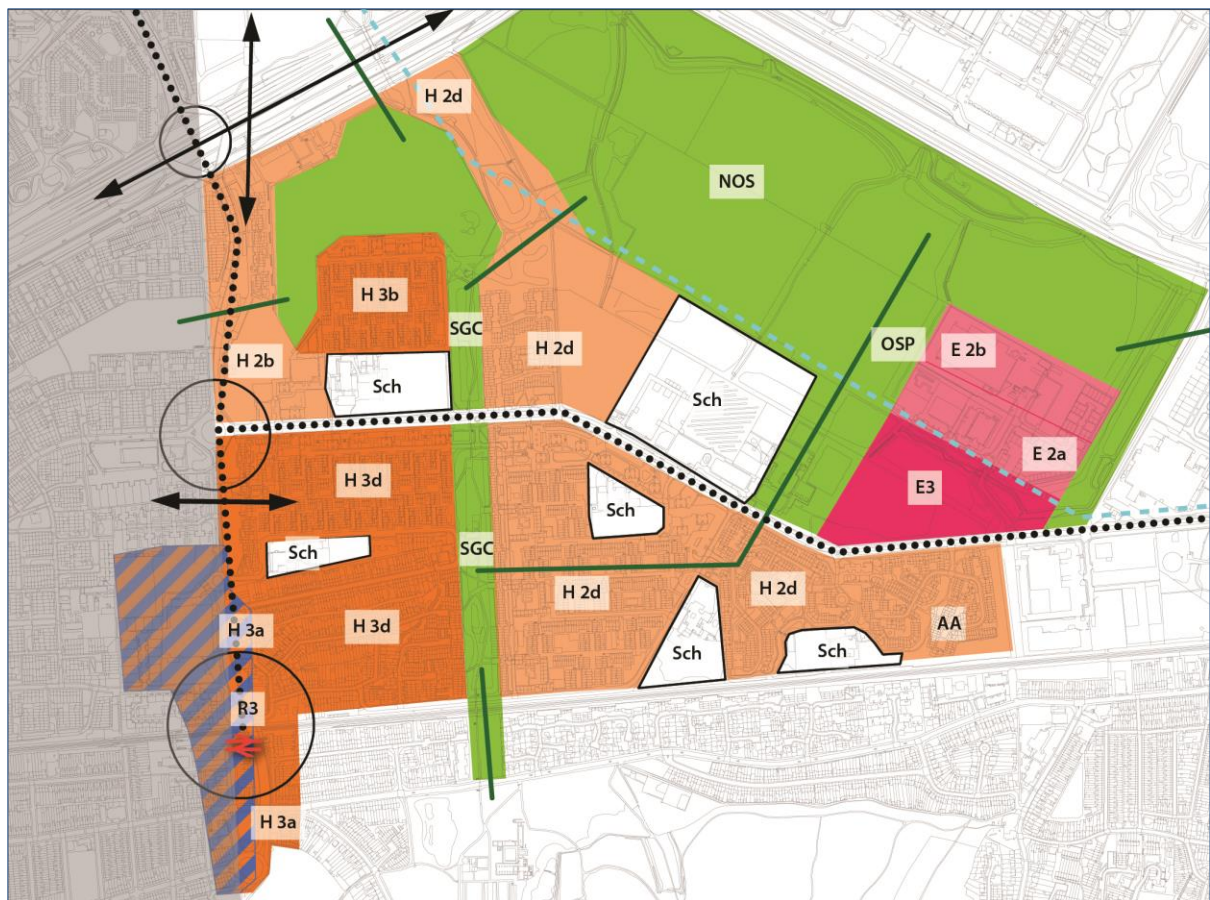
Thamesmead Development Framework

Figure 25: Thamesmead proposed uses (end-state) – see key on page 66

6.3.11   The development framework for Thamesmead seeks to locate high quality, higher density housing around and immediately to the east of Abbey Wood station and within the proposed new town centre to reflect its proximity to a key transport node and local service facilities. This location is considered one of the few locations in the borough that would be appropriate for a focussed cluster of towers up to approximately 15 storeys, provided that they are iconic and located right at the public transport hub, acting as way finders.

6.3.12   Medium density housing will be located in the east of the growth area, to the south of Yarnton Way, and around Southmere Lake. Pockets of lower density housing will be located to the north of Yarnton Way, potentially as part of a rationalised Metropolitan Open Land boundary. Housing typologies reflect the spread of

densities proposed the character of the area including the proximity of open space and waterside locations.

6.3.13   Local road network improvements will be undertaken to enhance public transport, reduce severance and provide better facilities for walking and cycling.   These include works at links and junctions along the key corridors of Eastern Way, Harrow Manorway and Yarnton Way to connect with pedestrian and cycle links throughout the local area.

6.3.14   A local town centre will be created around the shops at Wilton Road and the new Crossrail station with medium density retail and improvements to connections, particularly north/south across the railway line.   This new town centre will have a traditional layout of retail units servicing the new high-density residential development, as well as the Crossrail station.   The centre will become similar size to other 'District' Centres such as Northumberland Heath and Blackfen.

6.3.15   The Veridion Park employment area will be reconfigured to better integrate with the existing built form and main highway network, thereby improving its visibility, connectivity to proposed transport enhancements, and ability to be developed as a higher density employment hub.   This will require the reconfiguration of the Bexley Business Academy.

6.3.16   The metropolitan open land boundary north of Yarnton Way will be rationalised to provide a more logical and defensible designation and improve accessibility to open space in the eastern part of Thamesmead.   This would also provide an opportunity to consider the reconfiguration of the educational uses in the area to provide a more efficient layout, better able to take advantage of the interconnections between neighbouring uses to improve the available offer.

6.3.17   A much-improved network of green and blue spaces will be provided, which better connects residents with the area's natural and historic environment and its associated recreational, leisure and educational opportunities as well as improving flood resilience and biodiversity.   Key links include across Yarnton Way and Eastern Way, into the open space to the north and westwards across the borough boundary and into Royal Greenwich.

Belvedere

Existing context – opportunities and challenges

6.3.19   For most of its history Belvedere was the site of grand country homes, including one built in 1762 by famed Georgian architect James "Athenian" Stuart. The area began to change with the construction of the Crossness Sewage Works, part of the sewage system built in the 1850s and 60s to the designs of preeminent Victorian engineer Joseph Bazalgette. No longer considered suitable as the site for a country house, Upper Belvedere was developed as a suburb, linked to London by the North Kent Railway.

6.3.20   At the same time, the area north of the railway line up to the River Thames was developed with industrial uses and related workers housing, although much of the latter was destroyed during the Blitz. In line with its historic development, industrial land is the predominant land use, with sites such as the Hailey Road Employment Area designated as Primary Employment Land.

6.3.21   The Belvedere growth area, focussed on the railway station, and mainly to the north of the railway line, is comprised of a mix of different land uses, with large-scale industrial and low-density residential uses dominating. The residential landscape is mainly terraced and semi-detached housing of generally poor quality and includes a number of housing association properties as well as private rented accommodation.
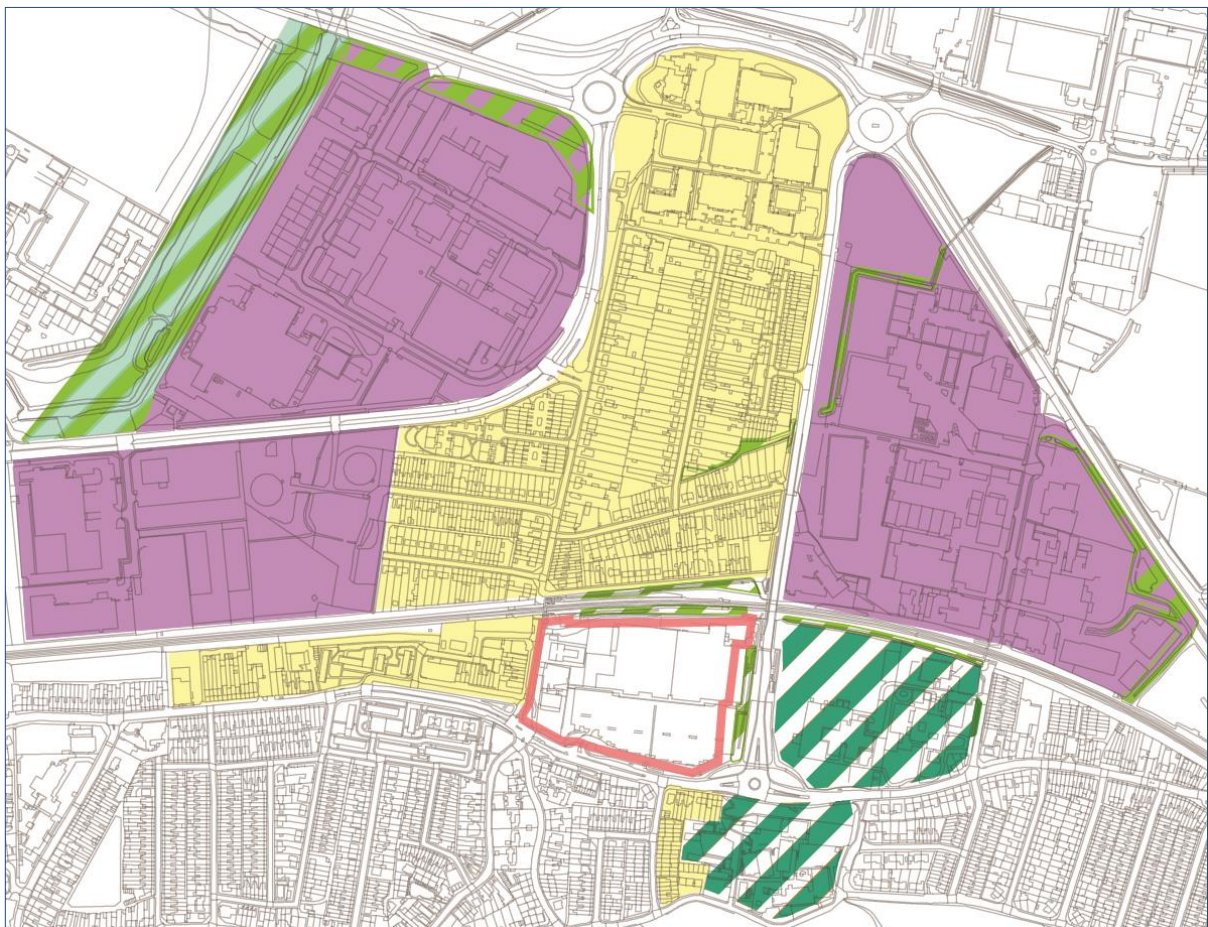

Figure 26: Belvedere existing land uses (UDP designations) – see key on page 66

Recent residential-led development has occurred on former employment land at Belvedere Park, in the far north of the area, which has improved the range and quality of the offer. Public art has also recently been introduced to mark the gateway to the Belvedere Green Links regeneration programme

6.3.22   To the south of the railway is the area's main service centre, a neighbourhood parade which runs along Picardy Street and Station Road, while two large out of centre retail sheds and a number of school and community facilities are located just to the east. In addition, shops, supporting services and facilities can be found at Belvedere district town centre, located approximately 0.8 miles to the south of the growth area.

6.3.23   Despite the railway station and local bus services, the area has relatively low public transport connectivity, whilst the road and rail network themselves create barriers to movement. This is set to improve with the proximity of the Crossrail service at Abbey Wood and emerging proposals for a river crossing between Belvedere and Rainham. The area is also deficient in open space provision even though it lies relatively near to large areas of open space associated with Erith Marshes.

Vision for Belvedere

Belvedere will accommodate more than 8,000 homes and 3,500 jobs, made possible by a step change in connectivity and other essential infrastructure provision. A new neighbourhood will be created around the station providing a range of improved residential accommodation and served by a new town centre offering a variety of local services and facilities. The employment offer will be broadened and improved, with new and emerging sectors, including a major outlet retail location, attracted by improved east/west and cross river links as well as a growing population. Connections to existing high quality open space will be created and new local open space will be provided.

Objectives

6.3.24   The vision will be achieved by:

(i) creating a new local town centre around the station which will effectively link the growth area across the railway line and become a vibrant residential, commercial and transport hub;

(ii) capitalising on the opportunities presented by the arrival of Crossrail at Abbey Wood, and its extension to and beyond Belvedere through the creation of a public transport hub, connected to surrounding development areas by fast and efficient sustainable transport links;

(iii) releasing significant amounts of industrial land in order to contribute to housing and employment growth and optimising these opportunities in the context of improved accessibility and local service provision;

(iv) facilitating innovation and economic development, through the provision of new, high quality, higher density business accommodation, with enhanced transport and digital connectivity, set in a pleasant environment and with access to a local employment pool with appropriate skills;

(v) ensuring high design standards and improvements to the quality of the public realm; and,

(vi) addressing the deficit in public open space and access to nature in the area, and mitigating against all types of flood risk, particularly through design solutions that incorporate flood resilience and resistance in areas at risk of flooding.

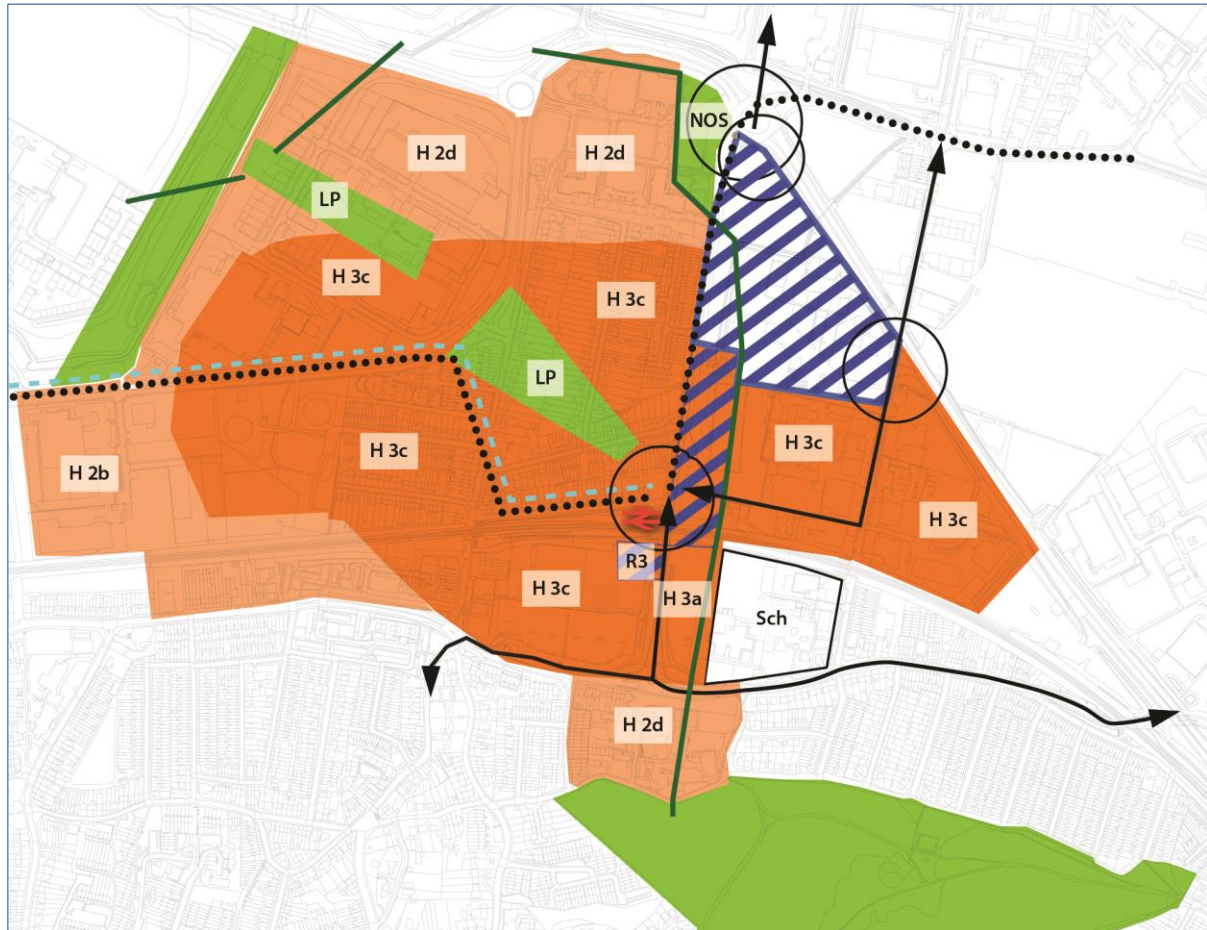## *Belvedere Development Framework*

Figure 27: Belvedere proposed uses (end-state) – see key on page 66

6.3.25 The development framework for Belvedere seeks to achieve significantly improved connectivity and development potential through the creation of a public transport interchange, incorporating an improved Belvedere station as part of a potential extension of Crossrail, a potential extension of the DLR, and a link to a segregated public transport corridor running from North Greenwich to Slade Green, in addition to any new river crossing at Belvedere.

6.3.26 This development potential will be realised through the release of a significant amount of underutilised industrial land for residential and mixed-use development and the renewal of poor quality residential areas.

6.3.27 High quality, high-density residential development will be secured. Medium density typologies are proposed on the outer edges of the growth area to respond to the adjacent green space and suburban hinterland whilst the area around the town centre and railway station has been allocated a high density to reflect its high

connectivity and access to services. This location is considered one of the few locations in the borough that would be appropriate for a focussed cluster of towers up to approximately 15 storeys, provided that they are iconic and located right at the public transport hub, acting as way finders.

6.3.28 A new town centre will be created, to support the increase in residential density and provide jobs. It will include, as an anchor to the town centre, a luxury shopping quarter, comprising a major new outlet retail facility and high-concept retail innovation hub in a highly connected location at the intersection of the potential extension of Crossrail towards Gravesend (C2G) and any Belvedere–Rainham river crossing.

6.3.29 The town centre would fall under the high street typology with a traditional layout of smaller retail units servicing the increased population and footfall around the station. The luxury shopping quarter will serve the new and existing population and become a significant sub-regional visitor attraction, offering a distinct shopping experience.

6.3.30 A green corridor will link Franks Park in the south with Erith Marshes in the north via a series of smaller existing and proposed open spaces, including the creation of a new local park. The new local park has been added to address both existing and future deficiency in this type of open space and will have a multifunctional role including provision for leisure, recreation and biodiversity. Furthermore, public access to existing open space to the west will be improved where possible.

6.3.31 Segregated public transport routes will run through the area, to connect the station with development sites and the wider road network, including any proposed local river crossing.

6.3.32 A number of junction/interchange improvements will be provided, particularly at the roundabout at Anderson Way/Bronze Age Way/ Picardy Manorway and at the new Belvedere Station, where Picardy Manorway crosses the railway line.

Erith

Existing context – opportunities and challenges

6.3.34   The town of Erith has a long and varied history linked to its riverside location, with evidence of settlement since Roman times. Given the Saxon name 'Earhyth', meaning 'old haven', the earliest written evidence of Erith is in a Latin charter of 695 recording a grant by the Bishop of the East Saxons of certain lands at Erith.

6.3.35   Erith was made a Royal Dockyard by Henry VIII but continued as a prominent fishing village until the coming of the railway line in 1849 opened up an artery of land transport to the town and the wharves. This brought new housing but also new industry, with the founding of engineering works and manufacturers of steam engines, armaments, stoneware and mining equipment, as well as bricks and loam from the local pits.

6.3.36   Extensive WWII bomb damage and industrial decline precipitated a comprehensive redevelopment plan in 1966, when almost the entire historic town centre was demolished and replaced with a modernist shopping centre and swimming baths.

6.3.37   The Erith growth area is focused on this modern town centre but extends west along Fraser Road and east towards Slade Green. The main transport corridor comprises the North Kent Line railway and the A206/A2016 (South Thames Development Route), which form significant barriers to movement and dissect the area.

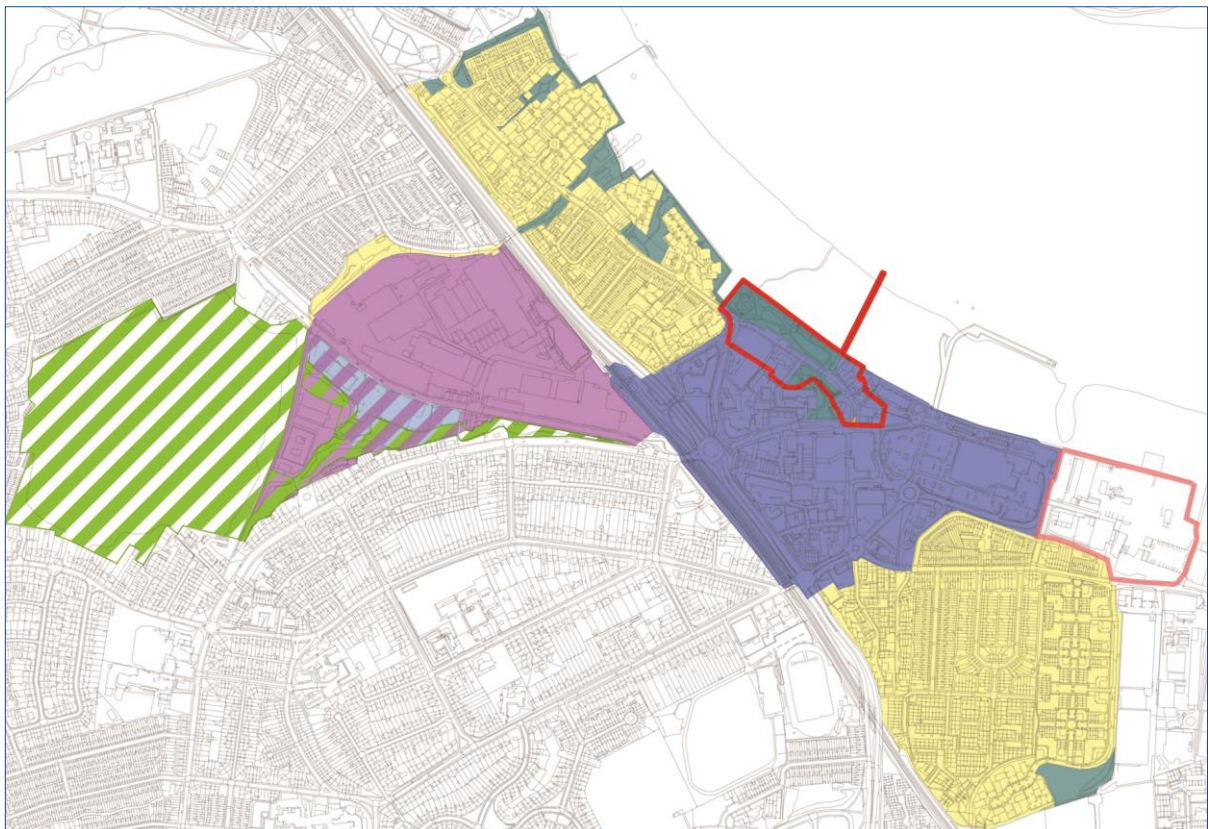6.3.38   The land to the west is characterised by industrial and retail warehouse uses and

Figure 28: Erith existing land uses (UDP designations) – see key on page 66

the Erith Quarry residential development site. Former quarrying activity results in an unusual topography with significant level changes.

6.3.39   The town centre and the Thames riverside dominate the area to the east of the transport corridor. The commercial centre was comprehensively redeveloped in the 1960s and 1970s with most of the retail now concentrated in a refurbished precinct and a large edge of centre supermarket surrounded by surface car parking.

6.3.40   The riverside area has a mix of land uses including residential, open space and commercial activity, including some waste processing. The housing stock in the area is mixed in terms of age, style and quality, ranging from Victorian terraces to modern apartment blocks and sheltered housing schemes. Tenure is also mixed with owner occupation, housing association and private rented stock.

6.3.41   The employment areas are comprised of older industrial buildings dating back to the early twentieth century as well as more modern pre-fabricated sheds. A number of safeguarded wharf facilities also exist on the riverside in the west of the area. There is a small number of Locally Listed Buildings in the town centre and a Statutory Listed Grade II library building. The Riverside Gardens and adjacent High Street is a designated Conservation Area.

6.3.42   A number of regeneration and redevelopment initiatives over recent years have brought some improvement in housing stock, and recent public art installations have also enhanced the town's character. The riverside is underutilised and disconnected from the town centre, and the road network suffers from significant congestion at key junctions.

6.3.43   However, the area is considered to hold significant potential given its riverside location and availability of development sites. A major regeneration programme is under development that should secure major transport improvements and unlock key sites, particularly within the Erith Western Gateway development area whilst the Investors' Prospectus seeks the creation of a major new shared living and working neighbourhood in the town.

Vision for Erith

The Erith growth area will accommodate more than 6,000 homes and 2,000 jobs through the creation of a new, high quality, well served and sustainable settlement, enabled by a step change in transport and digital connectivity. This will include the renewal of Erith town centre, which will act as a focus for new homes, employment and leisure uses, combined with improved access to additional services and facilities. In particular, the centre will become the focus of shared working and innovation facilities to support a major sector shift to new engineering and manufacturing activities associated with the Maker Movement.

The built and natural heritage of the area will be respected whilst also encouraging new and innovative development where appropriate. Improved transport links will provide an opportunity for enhancements to the local transport network, including a new Crossrail station at Erith with the potential extension of Crossrail, whilst existing open spaces will be improved and new ones created, particularly along the river.

Objectives

6.3.44   The vision will be achieved by:

(i)   significantly improving connectivity and development potential through the creation of a new Crossrail station at Erith as part of a potential extension of Crossrail;

(ii) realising this development potential through diversifying and intensifying commercial and residential development within a consolidated town centre which makes better use of available land, and redeveloping industrial and residential estates to enable higher density, higher quality residential and mixed-use development well connected to the station and town centre;

(iii) improving the quality of the built environment through high design standards for new buildings and associated public realm;

(iv) securing improved local transport links including segregated public transport routes into and through the area and the improvement of key road junctions;

(v)   creating new and improving existing open spaces, securing green links and opening up the riverside; and,

(vi) protecting or enhancing the natural and historic built environment and mitigating against all types of flood risk, particularly through design solutions that incorporate flood resilience and resistance in areas at risk of flooding.

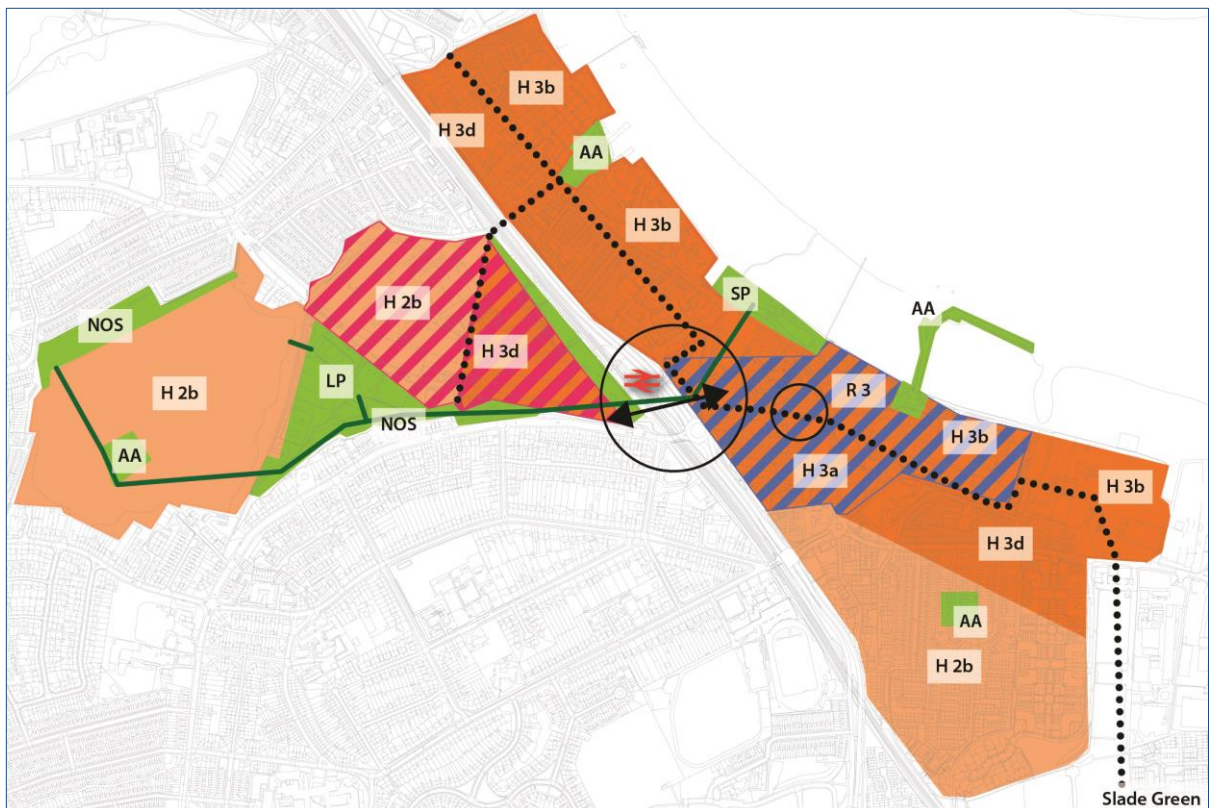## Erith Development Framework

Figure 29: Erith proposed uses (end-state) – see key on page 66

6.3.45   The development framework for Erith seeks to concentrate high-density residential and commercial uses, including shared working and innovation facilities, in the town centre and support the expansion and improvement of the existing provision of shops, business premises and services.   Erith town centre falls under the high-density high street category and will continue to function as a larger district centre with potential densification of retail.

6.3.46   High quality, high-density residential development will be provided in the area immediately around the town centre, reflecting the high connectivity and access to services in its vicinity, whilst medium density housing is planned for further afield to enable a transition to the existing lower density suburban areas in close proximity. Typologies have been suggested to reflect the area's urban character and riverside location as well as opportunities to promote co-living.   Erith is not considered an appropriate location for very tall towers; rather, the high-density will be achieved through four to eight storey mansion block developments.   There is scope, however, for higher-rise developments along the riverside.

6.3.47   The employment area at Fraser Road and the Europa industrial estate will be redesigned as a co-working campus.   Living and working accommodation, together with associated uses, will be refashioned from historic redbrick warehouses and adding new buildings.   High and medium density residential uses could be accommodated to maximise the location adjacent to the potential new Crossrail station and town centre.   Typologies have again been indicated to reflect the area's connectivity and its transition westwards towards lower density areas.   Land use arrangements would reflect flooding issues on the site and the need to avoid residential habitable rooms below flood risk levels.

6.3.48   A green corridor will connect the Erith Quarry development with Riverside Gardens and introduce new green spaces into the Fraser Road/Europa industrial areas to address issues of deficiency in local park provision and provide additional green amenity space.   All large new residential developments will look to incorporate a variety of multifunctional green spaces including play space provision, as well as SuDS schemes wherever possible.

6.3.49   Local public transport connectivity will be significantly improved. Severance will be reduced by providing a number of junction improvements around Erith Town Centre, particularly at Queens Road Roundabout and the junction of Queens Road/James Watt Way as well as a segregated public transport route running east-west through the town centre and beyond.

Slade Green

Existing context: opportunities and challenges

6.3.50 The Slade Green growth area lies to the southeast of Erith. The area historically developed around a rail depot, which remains to this day. Prior to becoming a railway village, Slade Green was an isolated low-lying area, largely uninhabited but for a Saxon manor at "Hoobury."

6.3.51 Its fortunes changed in 1900 when the Slade Green depot, then called Whitehall Engine shed, was built as a modern facility designed to service 100 steam locomotives. It was located at the "end of the line" for services to Dartford, Sidcup and Bexleyheath as well as serving the extensive industrial sidings at Erith. Housing was built for the workers at the depot and a railway village was developed.
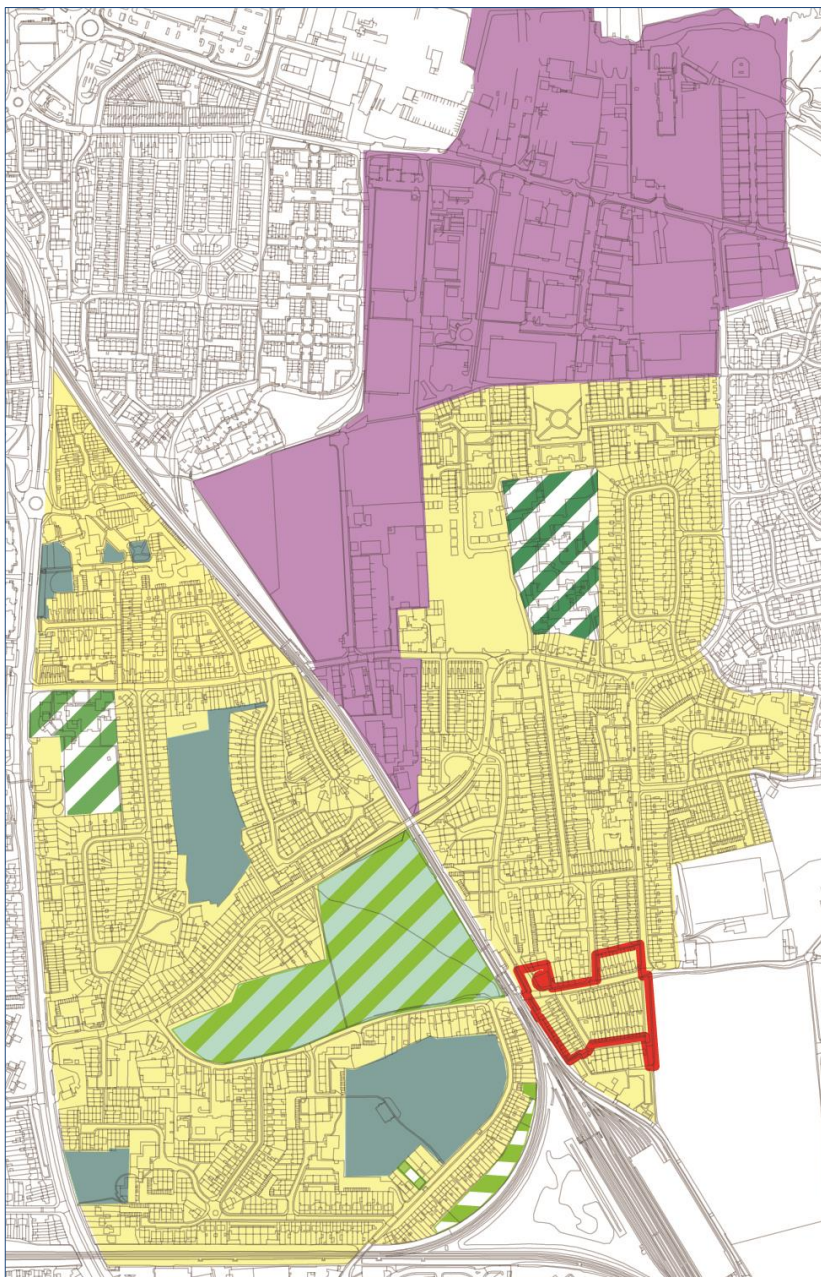

Figure 30: Slade Green existing land uses (UDP designations) – see key on page 66

6.3.52 The area is characterised predominately by low-density residential development, although there are industrial areas to the north and a number of large open spaces. The area is bounded by the River Thames to the north, Crayford Marshes, which are designated Metropolitan Green Belt, to the south and east and the A206 to the west. It includes the Oak Road Conservation Area.

6.3.53 The North Kent railway line cuts across the area from northwest to southeast and is a significant barrier to movement, having a limited number of crossing points. As a result, the area has relatively poor public transport accessibility despite possessing a railway station and a number of bus routes.

6.3.54 The housing is predominantly low rise, early to mid-twentieth century terraced and semi-detached stock, although there are also some high-rise elements dating from the 1960s and 70s. A large proportion of the dwellings are in housing association ownership. An on-going estate renewal programme is seeing significant improvement.

6.3.55 The industrial uses are concentrated around Manor Road and wharves on the Thames, incorporating a mix of activity including small and large warehouse units, open storage and waste processing. Some of this employment land has been vacant for some time and is being redeveloped for housing. Two small neighbourhood shopping parades exist on Forest Road near Slade Green railway station and Bridge Road.

Vision for Slade Green

Slade Green will accommodate more than 8,000 homes and 1,500 jobs through the creation of a sustainable, accessible and well-served neighbourhood centred on a potential new Crossrail station and town centre. Development will be characterised by high quality housing and employment growth, including new leisure and retail facilities as well as a range of other local services and enhanced connections to improved open space.

Objectives

6.3.56 The vision will be achieved by:

(i)   significantly improving connectivity and development potential through the creation of a new Crossrail station at Slade Green as part of a potential Crossrail extension;

(ii) realising this development potential through the release of underused employment land, the renewal of poor quality housing areas and the development of surplus, poor quality open space where appropriate for higher density, higher quality residential and mixed-use development well connected to the station and town centre;

(iii) supporting higher levels and more diverse employment, particularly linked to the new town centre, whilst retaining the best elements of the existing employment areas;

(iv) securing sustainable local transport improvements that will enhance accessibility levels between development sites and other key locations as well as redirecting commercial traffic away from sensitive areas; and,

(v) providing improved public open space and access to nature in the area and mitigating against all types of flood risk, particularly through design solutions that incorporate flood resilience and resistance in areas at risk of flooding.
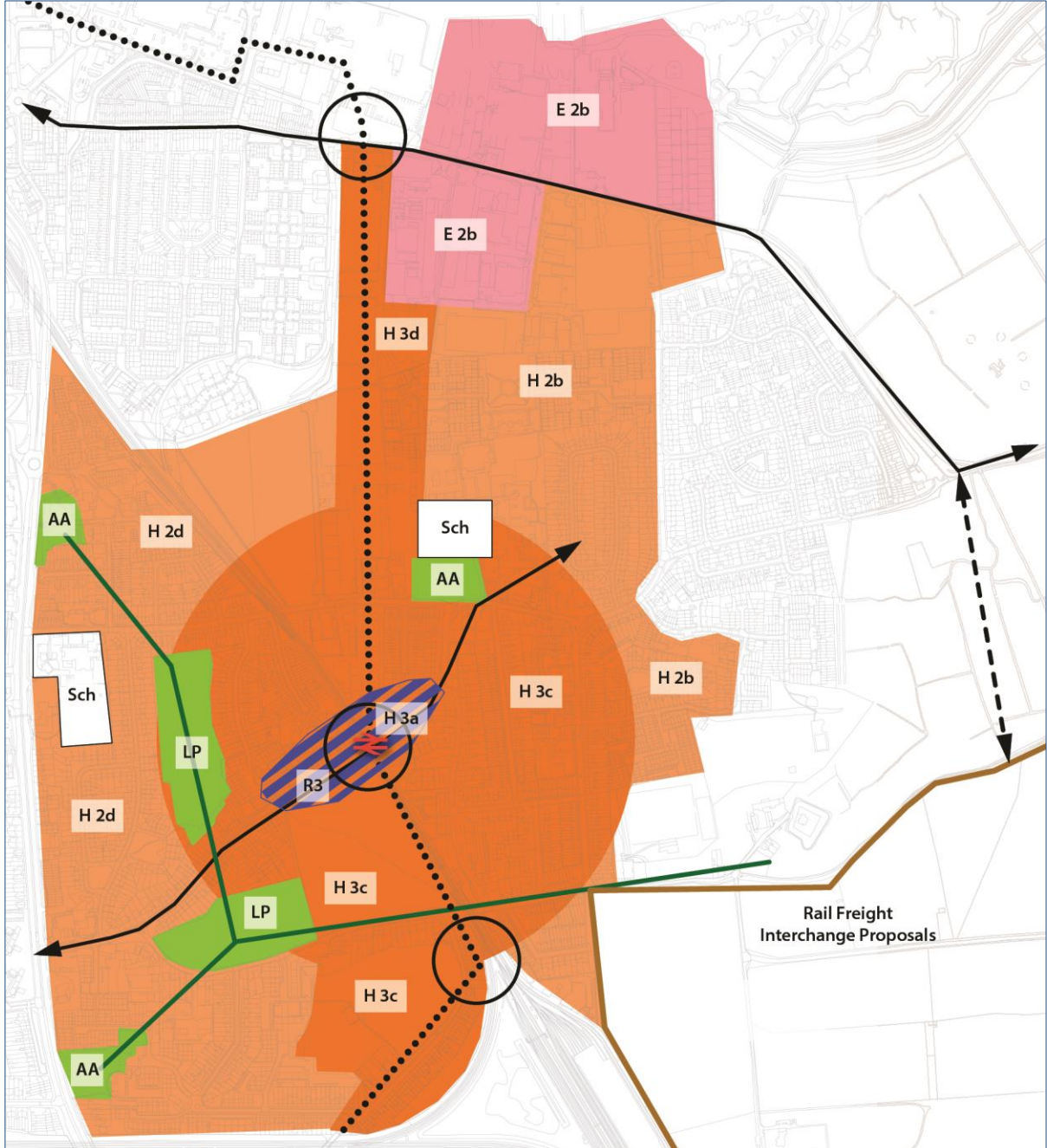
Slade Green Development Framework

Figure 31: Slade Green proposed uses (end-state) – see key on page 66

6.3.57   The development framework for Slade Green introduces a new local town centre around Slade Green station. It would fall under the high-density high street retail typology with a traditional layout of smaller units servicing the new higher density residential and commercial development surrounding it and taking advantage of the footfall around the railway station. It would be of a similar size and function to Bexley's District Centres such as Northumberland Heath and Bexley Village.

6.3.58   High quality, high-density residential development will be focused in and around the town centre and station and along main public transport routes, reflecting the enhanced connectivity and access to services in these locations with medium density typologies beyond so as to ensure a transition to existing lower density areas and open space. The high-density development should be in the form of four to eight storey mansion blocks; tall towers are not considered appropriate for this area.

6.3.59   Surplus, poor quality open space will be reused to create high quality residential development in order to ensure the best use of land in the most accessible locations, allied to a programme of open space accessibility and facility improvements throughout the area. These would include an east-west link between the green belt open space in the east and the Whitehall Lane open space in the west.

6.3.60   Existing businesses will be consolidated and new employment opportunities created in the north of the area and the new town centre. Uses in the northern medium density employment area will form an appropriate transition to adjacent residential uses whilst ensuring the available land is optimised.

6.3.61   A range of local transport enhancements will be secured, including: a new segregated public transport route through the area, connecting the station and town centre to adjacent development sites and beyond; junction/interchange improvements which reduce severance and congestion; and, in the longer term, a Slade Green by-pass, which would redirect heavy traffic from the remaining industrial areas away from Manor Road and directly onto the strategic road network.

Crayford

Existing context: opportunities and challenges

6.3.62   Crayford was a Palaeolithic and Neolithic settlement, Roman station, Saxon village and fortress and Norman barony, but it is first mentioned in the Anglo Saxon Chronicle when the Britons were defeated by Hengist, leader of the Jutes, at the Battle of Crecganford in 457 AD. Its location on the main Roman Road to Dover, at the point where the River Cray could be forded, has made Crayford an important settlement for thousands of years.

6.3.63   The town grew rapidly in the nineteenth century when tanning and silk-making companies were attracted there by the river, and this industrialisation continued into the twentieth century with the arrival of armaments firm Vickers. Much of the surrounding residential development, including that in the Star Hill Conservation Area, was built to accommodate workers in the new industries.

6.3.64   The Crayford growth area is focussed on Crayford town centre and its surroundings. The centre is generally characterised by a mix of small, independent retail outlets along Crayford High Street and Crayford Way, and larger warehouse retail units at Tower Retail Park and along Roman Way.

6.3.65   Adjacent to the town centre are a greyhound track with associated leisure facilities and two employment areas made up of a mix of modern warehouse and trade
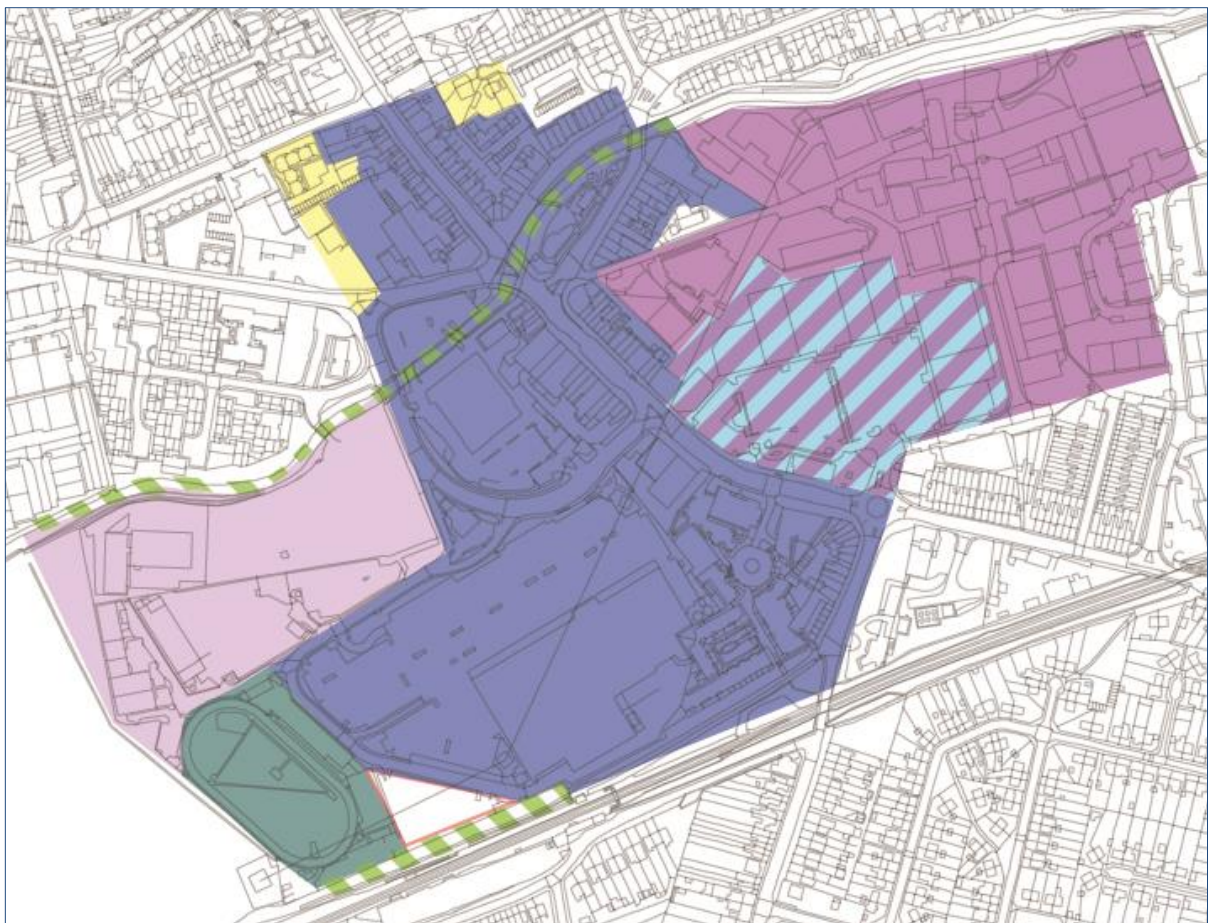

Figure 32: Crayford existing land uses (UDP designations) – see key on page 66

counter units and older industrial buildings of poorer quality. Existing residential areas are predominantly low density terraced and semi-detached stock.

6.3.66   The River Cray is a prominent feature and an element of significant biodiversity value. It runs west to east through the town before feeding into the Crayford Marshes and flowing into the River Thames. The town is subject to flood risk because of changes in the course of the river in the nineteenth century to service industrial activity in the area. Overhead power lines also present a major constraint to development.

6.3.67   A small open space adjacent to the river forms an attractive feature in the centre of the town following a recent improvement scheme. Other public realm enhancements have also been carried out, featuring a number of public art installations that reference the town's long industrial heritage.

6.3.68   The area has also seen significant redevelopment activity, directed through the Crayford Strategy and Action Plan, which sought to identify a number of development sites and improvement opportunities in the town. The most notable of these developments has been the Crayford Town Hall site, a higher density mixed-use scheme in the east of the town. However, the area is in need of further investment to reduce the impact of heavy traffic through the town and realise remaining development opportunities.

Vision for Crayford

The Crayford growth area will accommodate more than 1,000 homes and 1,000 jobs through the consolidation and intensification of the town centre and the realisation of remaining development opportunities within the area. The built and natural heritage of the area will be respected, whilst also encouraging new and innovative development that addresses existing constraints. Improved local transport links and public realm will provide enhancements to connectivity, accessibility and environmental quality.

Objectives

6.3.69   The vision will be achieved by:

(i) encouraging good quality, higher density, residential units in the growth area, including mixed residential and commercial schemes in the town centre;

(ii) releasing some industrial land and, in the longer term, leisure uses to enable medium density residential development;

(iii) reconfiguring the town centre to reflect the focus of retail activity in the west and promote better integration with the core part of the original town centre so as to improve its vibrancy and vitality;

(iv) protecting or enhancing biodiversity and mitigating against all types of flood risk, particularly through design solutions that incorporate flood resilience and resistance in areas at risk of flooding; and,

(v) targeting key junctions and other parts of the road network for improvements, to allow improved movement in and around the centre, reduce severance and improve the general environment.
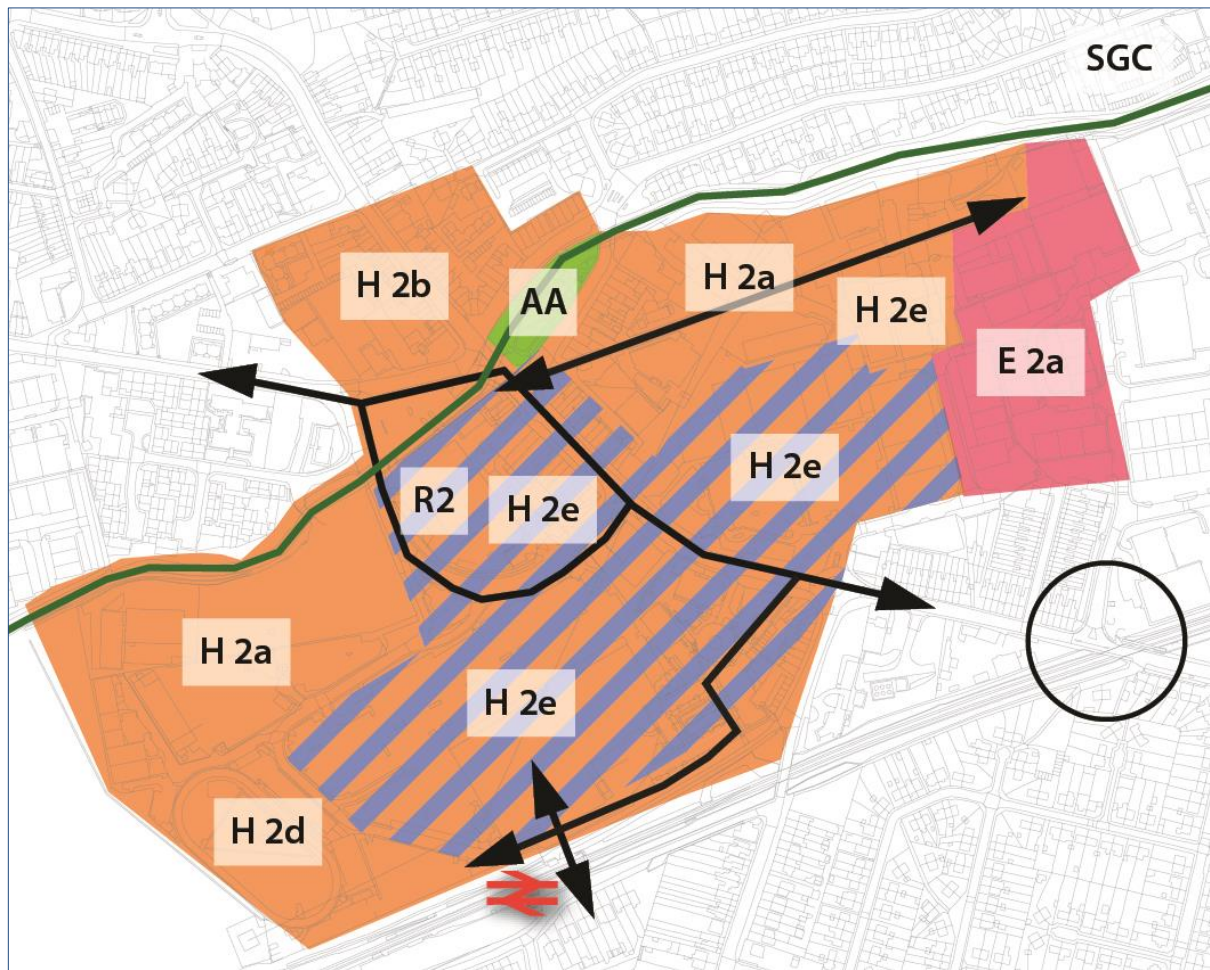
Crayford Development Framework

Figure 33: Crayford proposed land uses (end-state) – see key on page 66

6.3.70   The development framework for Crayford seeks to consolidate Crayford Town Centre to release the area of lower quality secondary frontage to north of the River Cray for medium density residential use and to incorporate Tower Retail Park within the town centre.

6.3.71   Medium density residential and retail typologies will be extended across the newly defined town centre to promote a more efficient use of land within the centre and enhance viability and vitality whilst also acknowledging development opportunities are restricted by particular constraints on development including limited scope for improvements to connectivity. This growth area is not considered appropriate for clusters of towers.

6.3.72   Industrial development will be focussed on the successful Acorn Industrial Park to the east of the growth area and encourage activities appropriate to sites in close proximity to residential development.

6.3.73   Existing underused and poor quality employment sites including the western part of Crayford Industrial Area and the Secondary Employment Area, along with the greyhound stadium, will be brought forward for medium density residential development.

6.3.74   Housing typologies will be specified in other areas that reflect the riverside and open space characteristics of the area and provide an appropriate transition to the lower density suburban development that borders the town centre.

6.3.75   Increased accessibility to the existing open spaces of the River Cray green corridor will be a priority, given the proximity of the growth area to Hall Place, Shenstone Park and Crayford Marshes.

6.3.76   Local transport and highway improvements will be initiated that reduce severance and improve the general environment. This will include links between the town centre and Crayford Station, access to Acorn Industrial Park and the newly residential designated land along Swaisland Drive, and traffic flows through the town centre.

6.4.   The other growth locations of the borough

6.4.1   The town centres of Bexleyheath, Sidcup and Welling and the Foots Cray business area will also play a part in delivering growth within the borough, albeit at a smaller scale. This growth will be achieved without significant interventions in the built environment or a step change in transport connectivity, although specific improvements will be required to ensure sustainable growth.

6.4.2   As such, land use frameworks have not been prepared for these areas. Where site or area briefs, including town centre master plans, are required to inform the detailed nature of development in the relevant locations, these have or will be produced separately as the need arises.

6.4.3   The broad approaches to sustainable development and typologies set out for the main growth areas could be equally applicable, albeit at a smaller scale, in these locations.

6.4.4   In addition, neighbourhood parades, which are often centres of the community and on bus routes, offer development opportunities, where flats can be provided at higher densities above shops.

Figure 34: Higher density flatted development above shops in neighbourhood parades

6.4.5   Other residential areas of the borough also offer opportunities for sensitive suburban infill.   There are a number of design solutions that allow higher density developments to fit well with the existing suburban context.

6.4.6   One example (Figure 35) is the use of maisonettes or small blocks of flats that have the appearance of semi-detached houses. This type of development is successful where it provides many of the reasons people value suburban living – including privacy, back gardens, and entrances directly onto the street – at densities that optimise the use of the site whilst retaining the character of the area.

Figure 35: Sensitive suburban infill example

Bexleyheath

6.4.7   Bexleyheath remains a significant growth area within the borough despite lying outside of the London Plan opportunity areas. It is Bexley's strategic town centre and will continue to be the focus of in-centre retail growth in the borough. It also has a significant night-time economy and leisure offer which will be retained and developed, and an important civic function as the location of the Council's main offices.

6.4.8   The town is well connected, despite being some distance from a railway station, as it sits at the hub of Bexley's bus network and close to the trunk road network. However, improvements will be required to ensure it can continue to serve a growing and developing borough. Enhancements to the public realm have improved traffic flow in the town, and created a pleasant environment for pedestrians, and further works are planned and ongoing to reduce congestion and provide better connectivity.

6.4.9   Within and immediately adjacent to the centre there are a number of significant development sites that offer the opportunity for higher density mixed-use development, taking advantage of the area's accessibility and service provision. This development should be in the form of four to eight storey mansion blocks; tall towers are not considered appropriate for this area. In this context, the town has the potential to deliver some 1,500 new dwellings and over 1,500 new jobs.

Sidcup

6.4.10   Sidcup is characterised by high quality housing stock, significant heritage assets, and two internationally renowned performing arts colleges: Rose Bruford and Bird College.

6.4.11 Significant investment in the town to enhance the public realm and incubate businesses has much improved the retail offer and a number of outlets have or are planning to open in the near future. Further enhancement works and the creation of a Business Improvement District will continue the town's renewal, although some consolidation of the town centre may be appropriate to refocus commercial activity in core frontages.

6.4.12 Increasing development has also been seen in the area around Sidcup station, just to the north of the town centre, taking advantage of the location's relatively good connectivity. Additionally, changes in the operation of Queen Mary's Hospital to the south has resulted in some reconfiguration and development on that green belt site. A number of other key development opportunities are emerging, including a significant character building at the Grade II listed Sidcup Manor House.

6.4.13 The area is considered to offer potential for further modest housing and commercial growth, amounting to over 400 homes and 1,000 jobs. The main opportunities lie in the development of the area's significant cultural offer linked to the performing arts colleges. Sidcup is not identified as a locality for the clustering of tall buildings.

Welling

6.4.14 Welling comprises a large district centre in the west of the borough anchored by two supermarkets and some smaller multiples. The retail offer is otherwise characterised by a variety of independent retailers arranged along a substantial linear High Street. The town has performed relatively well despite the wider restructuring of the retail sector, aided by investment in transport and public realm improvements.

6.4.15 However, some consolidation of the town centre is likely to be justified over time to focus shopping activity into the core areas and open up residential and other development opportunities. The diversification of town centre uses will be promoted to ensure continuing viability and vitality, and particularly the development of local services and a leisure offer throughout the day. The introduction of residential uses on upper floors will also be encouraged where appropriate. In this context, Welling offers the opportunity for modest growth with the potential for over 400 new homes and 800 jobs. Welling is not identified as a locality for the clustering of tall buildings.

Foots Cray

6.4.16 Foots Cray lies in the southeast corner of the borough and incorporates a large industrial area, which is designated as Strategic Industrial Land within the London Plan. The area is well connected to the strategic road network and accommodates a range of commercial activities including office, manufacturing and warehousing. However, there is a need for the modernisation of premises if the area is to continue to function effectively and develop further, enabling a denser and more diverse employment offer.

6.4.17 The potential for the area to contribute to the development of an enhanced cultural offer in the south of the borough is also significant. Issues of road congestion, parking and flood risk however, will need to be considered and addressed effectively. In this context, the area could deliver over 1,000 new jobs.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.1.1 This strategy has looked at the borough's location and built and natural environment and identified what makes it such a unique and special place. It has set out the areas that will grow and what kinds of development they will see. It also talks about the new infrastructure of various types necessary to make sure those places thrive.

7.1.2 The plan is very ambitious and could see some localities change dramatically whilst retaining and improving those features that give Bexley its overall character and identity. However, at the heart of its vision is the creation of new, high quality places in the right locations where people can live safe, healthy, fulfilling lives close to high quality facilities and services and with access to a range of good job opportunities.

7.1.3 While the strategy is for the whole borough, it focusses on the areas that are likely to accommodate the most growth, provided the necessary infrastructure. These are, predominantly, in the north of the borough within areas designated by the Mayor of London as Opportunity Areas and that are collectively described as Bexley Riverside.

7.1.4 It is also a broad strategy that tries to deal with a wide range of relevant issues, although with a particular focus on spatial planning as one of the key tools available to the Council and its partners to influence physical growth. In this context, it is proposed that those elements of the strategy related to planning, and to Bexley Riverside, become Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks (OAPF), which are supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan.

7.1.5 A trajectory for the housing high growth capacity has been prepared, based on a number of factors including a broad assessment of the ability of each site to be developed and the relative timing of potential major transport infrastructure. A similar trajectory for jobs will be developed in due course based on detailed analysis of various relevant factors. The results of this capacity exercise are set out in more detail in **Appendix B**, and summarised below.

7.1.6 The proposed housing growth is up to 31,500 with a large amount of the potential development not taking place until triggered by the development of major transport infrastructure. The proposed job growth is for a net additional job figure of up to 17,500 comprising of circa 7,000 net new jobs within the growth areas, and 10,500 jobs throughout the rest of the borough.

7.1.7 It should be noted that these figures are based on high-level land use frameworks and a range of associated assumptions. They should be seen as robust strategic capacity estimates for the purposes of long term planning whilst giving appropriate flexibility to master planners and developers. They are also wholly reliant on the delivery of associated infrastructure and will not be achieved otherwise.

7.1.8 In summary, Bexley is uniquely placed, once better connected, to make a significant contribution to the expanding economy of London and regionally, within the Thames Gateway. Within an hour of central London, major airports, the Channel Tunnel, and ports, we have the land and we have the ambition to offer an exciting future to current residents and businesses and those looking for new places to invest in and enjoy.

Appendices

Appendix A   Planning policy context

Introduction

A.1.   Planning policies, legislation and guidance from national to local levels provide the strategic framework and context for the Bexley Growth Strategy and underpin its overall content, aims and objectives. The Growth Strategy is an important material consideration informed and influenced by both the Mayor's London Plan and the Bexley Local Plan, and compliant with all relevant legal requirements.

National

A.2.   The 'golden thread' running through both plan making and decision taking is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For Bexley, this means positively and pro-actively seeking opportunities to meet the development needs of the borough, and having in place clear plans to guide how the presumption should be applied.

NPPF (2012)

A.3.   The Growth Strategy seeks to deliver the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) within a local context, reinforcing the presumption in favour of sustainable development and supporting the identified core land-use principles. Specifically, the Growth Strategy seeks to actively manage patterns of growth, focusing significant development in locations that are or can be made sustainable.

NPPG (2014)

A.4.   Providing additional clarity and guidance on implementing the NPPF is the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). Regard to its general content as well as its specific reference to meeting the additional duties set out in primary and secondary legislation form an essential component underpinning the preparation of the Growth Strategy.

National Infrastructure Plan (2014)

A.5.   The National Infrastructure Plan (NIP) outlines how the government is prioritising the public funding of infrastructure and brings together the government's vision and approach for the key economic infrastructure sectors – transport, energy, flood defences, water, waste, communications and science. The NIP is underpinned by the infrastructure pipeline, which sets out details of planned public and private investment to 2020 and beyond.

A.6.   Investment is already committed in a number of national projects that directly correlate and assist with the plans of the Growth Strategy, including improving the Strategic Road Network, protecting homes from flooding, supporting Network Rail programmes, and supporting digital infrastructure to ensure 95% of premises have superfast broadband by 2017.

A.7.   Additionally, the National Network's National Policy Statement (referred to as NPS), sets out the need for, and Government's policies to deliver, development of

nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs) on the national road and rail networks (including strategic rail freight interchanges) in England.

Regional

A City for All Londoners (October 2016)

A.8.   This document is the Mayor's manifesto for developing London according to the principles of 'good growth.' It outlines how he plans to respond positively to pressures on growth, and aims to ensure people from all walks of life are healthy and live well alongside each other.

A.9.   A City for All Londoners sets out a direction for London, which the Mayor will later expand upon in a new London Plan and in detailed strategies, including for transport, housing, economic development, the environment and culture.

A.10.   The Mayor will implement his strategies by working with the London boroughs, local authorities in the wider South East, central government, civil societies and all other organisations that want to join in the interests of Londoners.

London Plan (March 2016)

A.11.   The London Plan, which is currently undergoing a comprehensive review, sets out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the whole of London up to 2036. The London Plan anticipates that London's population will rise to 10.11 million by 2036. For Bexley, this means an anticipated growth in employment by 10.6% to 84,000 jobs, growth in population of 14.5% from 240,000 to over 275,000 people and a current requirement to provide at least 446 new homes each year to 2024/25.

A.12.   In terms of locating new homes, the focus is on town centres, opportunity areas and other large sites, and surplus industrial land with good public transport accessibility. The London Plan identifies 38 opportunity areas that offer scope for change and growth, and can provide a substantial number of new jobs and homes, as well as providing much needed local facilities such as local shops and schools. The ability of these opportunity areas to deliver such growth is strongly linked to existing or potential transport improvements.

A.13.   The Bexley Riverside and the Thamesmead and Abbey Wood opportunity areas are currently identified as having the potential combined capacity to accommodate a minimum of 7,000 new homes and 11,000 new jobs through the intensification of development enabled by improvements in public transport accessibility. The importance of the areas' employment offer and green infrastructure is also noted. Both opportunity areas form a significant and intrinsic part of the Bexley Growth Strategy.

London Plan supplementary planning guidance

A.14.   Supporting the policies within the London Plan is a number of supplementary planning guidance (SPG) documents. They provide detail on how to implement the various policies contained in the Mayor's London Plan. Whilst all may contain elements of guidance relevant to the Bexley Growth Strategy, the key SPGs to note are: Housing (2016); Social Infrastructure (2015); Town Centres (2014); Shaping

Neighbourhoods: Character and Context (2014), Play and Informal Recreation (2014); Land for Industry and Transport (2012); and the All London Green Grid (2012).

Mayoral strategies

A.15.   The Mayor has produced a number of strategies to support the growth of London and many of these are currently being updated in light of the *A City for All Londoners* (Oct 2016) manifesto. The underlying principles set out in *Homes for London, the London housing strategy* (June 2014), the Mayor's *Transport Strategy* (2010) and the Mayor's *Economic Development Strategy for London* (2010) are all relevant to the Growth Strategy.

A.16.   The Growth Strategy plays an important role in delivering the broad objectives of these strategies and securing sustainable growth in the east of London.   It recognises that transport links are decisive in allowing development to progress, and that investment in transport is key to supporting economic growth; enhancing the quality of life for all Londoners; and improving the transport opportunities, safety and security of all Londoners; as well as reducing transport's contribution to climate change.

A.17.   In realising Bexley's economic potential, both locally and in a strategic London-wide context, the Growth Strategy builds on the content and principles of the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy and more recently the London Enterprise Panel's (LEP) economic development plan *London 2036: An Agenda for Jobs and Growth* (2015).   The latter recognises the importance of securing long-term infrastructure and developing economic resilience, focusing on diversification of employment sectors and ensuring that everyone is equipped to compete for jobs in an evolving and increasingly competitive market.

London Infrastructure Plan 2050

A.18.   Commissioned by the Mayor, the draft London Infrastructure Plan or 'LIP' 2050 sets out proposals for London's strategic infrastructure requirements up to the year 2050. The draft for consultation was published in July 2014, with a progress update in March 2015 and an e-book in November 2016. It covers transport, green, digital, energy, water and waste infrastructure, along with estimated costs associated and potential funding and finance options.

Sub-regional

Thames Gateway

A.19.   Bexley's riverside also lies within the Thames Gateway, the largest regeneration area in Europe. The ambition for the Thames Gateway includes building a vibrant economy with at least 225,000 new jobs, improving the quality of life for residents by providing 160,000 new homes, reviving and establishing new town centres, improving services such as education and health, and providing a better environment through the establishment of the Thames Gateway as an eco-region.

A.20.   Following investment around the Olympics and transport improvements in east London, there is renewed focus in the Thames Gateway as signalled by the establishment of the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission. It is clear that the

area retains significant growth potential with development of Ebbsfleet as a Garden City and the Paramount amusement park proposal in Swanscombe. With development and regeneration set to take place in the surrounding areas, it is important for Bexley to capitalise on this renewed momentum and the opportunities that being part of the Thames Gateway has to offer.

City in the East (2015)

A.21. The GLA's *City in the East* document further underlines the importance of the opportunity areas in east London in accommodating growth, enabled through the production of a series of closely integrated development frameworks. The unique approach of sub-regional planning with detailed local proposals provides the opportunity to create a series of distinctive places, well integrated with their existing context, within a coherent wider framework.

Transport for London's East/South-East Sub-regional Transport Plan

A.22. The sub-regional transport plans assist in developing priorities to address the medium to long term transport challenges for London's sub-regions. The key future opportunities identified for Bexley are: the potential extension of Crossrail towards Ebbsfleet/Gravesend; improvements to the Queen's Road Junction in Erith, which is a key junction in the South Thames Development Route; and improved local links and bus priority opportunities linking Abbey Wood to the wider borough. In addition, there are proposals for additional river crossings, including potential crossings at Belvedere and Gallions Reach in Thamesmead. The importance of all of these opportunities is recognised in the Growth Strategy.

Local

Bexley Corporate Plan

A.23. The Bexley Corporate Plan (2014-18) sets out three strategic priorities for the borough. These are:

1. Growing a thriving economy
2. Living long, fulfilling and independent lives
3. Providing value for money

A.24. It seeks to take advantage of the economic upturn, championing the interests of Bexley at a London and national level so that residents and businesses benefit from the investment being planned in the borough. The Growth Strategy helps deliver Bexley's corporate priorities by raising Bexley's profile within London and by providing a clear framework for delivering growth.

Bexley Local Plan: Core Strategy (2012)

A.25. Whilst the Bexley Local Plan, the 'Core Strategy,' was written in the context of a lower growth scenario, it is purposely flexible in content, thus ensuring that its broad development principles still hold true even in times of rapid change. Through the implementation of its 21 strategic policies, the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that investment and development decisions are not made in isolation, but are properly coordinated, with a focus on promoting the principles of sustainable development.

A.26.   The Growth Strategy seeks to broadly realise the vision and key objective of the Core Strategy by directing growth and development primarily, but not exclusively, towards the north of the borough. It also aligns with policies that seek to maximise the potential of the Thames Gateway and London Plan Opportunity Areas, ensuring that higher density, mixed-use developments are located in town centres and other accessible locations with supporting infrastructure.

A.27.   Other relevant local planning documents include the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Saved Policies and Proposals Map, Crayford Strategy and Action Plan, Bexley Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule, Bexley Local Implementation Plan (LIP), Bexley Biodiversity Action Plan, and a number of adopted supplementary planning documents that add detail to the borough's strategic policies to ensure their successful implementation.

A.28.   Given that the Growth Strategy is Bexley's manifesto for developing the borough along the principles of 'good growth,' the current Local Plan will be reviewed following adoption of the Growth Strategy to ensure planning policies align with the new vision and objectives for growth and associated interventions. Timescales in this regard are shown in the Bexley Local Development Scheme. Supporting planning documents will also be produced.

Bexley Investors Prospectus: Untapped Bexley

A.29.   In view of the major investment opportunities arising from growth and the need to act now to identify and facilitate key economic development opportunities, the Council has developed an Investors Prospectus. The first edition targets emerging trends and includes a number of development and infrastructure opportunities that are reflected in the Bexley Growth Strategy. These are:

- Erith's waterfront will become the UK's first dedicated co-living and co-working neighbourhood, to provide a greater choice of homes and the space for new sectors to thrive;
- Belvedere will be the location of a new, highly connected shopping quarter;
- Sidcup will become a cultural hub, drawing on existing links with world renowned performing arts colleges within the area;
- former industrial land will be decontaminated, thereby opening up new sites for a range of development opportunities;
- sustainable waste and water management systems will be provided, ensuring efficient and effective maintenance of the environment;
- district wide renewable energy systems will be installed to provide clean and efficient power;
- dark fibre networks will be built in, creating a digital borough which will accelerate economic development and improve quality of life;
- innovative green infrastructure interventions will be encouraged which improve flood resilience and environmental quality and enable local food production; and,
- transport orientated development (TOD) will be promoted, reducing the need to travel and encouraging modes other than the car.

Appendix B   Development, infrastructure capacity and delivery

B.1.   This section details how development capacity has been calculated in the main growth areas and what this means for the associated infrastructure ask. It should be noted that much more detailed work has been carried out in a development infrastructure funding study (DIFS), which will be further refined as proposals progress in more detailed planning documents, including opportunity area development frameworks. In addition, detailed transport work will need to be undertaken for each of the growth areas, to further develop proposals. Early consideration of potential delivery mechanisms for growth is also provided.

Baseline capacity estimate

Housing baseline capacity / current London Plan

B.2.   The current baseline housing projections are based on Table 3.1 in the London Plan, which presents a minimum annual housing supply monitoring target for Bexley of 446 homes per year for the period 2015 – 2025. This figure is based on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013 (SHLAA), which identified a number of strategic development sites across the borough.

B.3.   The Council's published five year housing supply (2017 – 2022) confirms that this current minimum housing target is deliverable. Many of these potential housing sites fall within the sustainable growth areas set out in 2012 Bexley Core Strategy, particularly around the borough's main town centres and it is considered that this quantum of housing is achievable within existing infrastructure investment commitments.

B.4.   Projected further increases in London's population into the future mean that the current minimum housing targets within the London Plan will need to be reviewed. This is being progressed through a new SHLAA study that will then inform the next London Plan. However, current infrastructure investment commitments within Bexley will not sustain a significant uplift from the current housing target; even an extra 100 units a year would be a 22% increase for the borough. What is fundamental is that this growth is positively managed. Even a modest uplift on current figures is likely to trigger the need for new infrastructure requirements over and above confirmed schemes.

B.5.   Bexley's high growth projections are premised on a significant uplift in infrastructure investment and are, therefore, wholly contingent on large amounts of additional funding being secured. They, therefore, form a distinct and separate process from on-going discussions regarding a revised housing target for the borough in the context of the new London Plan

Employment baseline capacity

B.6.   The most recent baseline employment figures for the borough include the latest employment projections for London to 2036 produced by the GLA and published in working paper 67 (July 2015). This provides a broad trend-based employment projection for London boroughs. These projections assume that the existing sectoral structure in Bexley remains similar and effectively represents a 'business as usual' trajectory of growth. This scenario predicts an overall growth of 12,000 jobs,

with a moderate growth in industrial type uses, and larger increase of jobs in the retail and hospitality sectors.

High growth capacity

B.7.   Initial high-level residential capacity figures were generated by assuming an uplift in accessibility over certain areas of the borough and applying increased densities to these areas to generate a net additional housing figure and associated population rises. Initial job figures were also calculated by altering certain assumptions in the baseline trajectory.

B.8.   A more refined process was also undertaken to generate both housing and job capacities using the broad land use assumptions and development densities set out in the land use frameworks, described earlier in the strategy. This method has been used in other Opportunity Areas, such as London Riverside, to assess future potential development as a result of positively managed growth, and is considered to provide a reasonable basis for strategic planning.

B.9.   Each land use type within the frameworks was ascribed a broad density band based on criteria including proximity to public transport and local services and using density data in the London Plan and the Homes and Communities Employment Density Guide 2015. These densities are set out below:

Table 6: Density bands

Density Level	Residential, habitable rooms per hectare (hr/ha)	Employment areas	Town Centre
		jobs per square metre of commercial development	
Low	150 – 250 hr/ha	1 job per 70-80m^2	1 job per 90m^2
Medium	200 – 450 hr/ha	1 job per 36-47m^2	1 job per 54m^2
High	200 – 700 hr/ha	1 job per 13.8m^2	1 job per 17.5m^2

B.10.   For each housing site within a particular growth location, an area was calculated and a land allowance was then subtracted for various forms of infrastructure including transport, education, health, and open space to provide a net development site capacity. A further percentage of land was also removed to take account of additional social/community and utilities needs arising from the increase in population.

B.11.   This infrastructure need was drawn from a preliminary assessment of requirements using initial population projections. The above densities were then applied to the net developable area to generate a gross capacity figure. For employment sites, as well as subtracting land for infrastructure, a plot ratio was applied to the net land area to generate a floor area for the site against which the job densities could be applied. An estimate of existing housing and jobs in each particular site was then calculated from various data sources and subtracted from the gross capacity figure to give a net capacity figure for the growth areas.

B.12.   For town centre locations the borough's retail capacity study was used to convert projected additional retail floor space into associated job numbers using the town centre densities above. Assumptions were also made about the ratio of other town centre uses to retail to generate an associated floor space and job figure for these

uses. In doing so, assumptions about the relative strength of the office sector were made in response to increased connectivity. Existing town centre jobs were assumed to be retained and the impact of the proposed new shopping quarter at Belvedere was considered neutral is it would introduce a wholly separate regional shopping offer into the area, largely drawing trade from existing outlet facilities such as Ashford.

B.13.   For areas of the borough outside the five development framework areas, potential development sites found through the 2013 SHLAA study were carried forward to the high growth capacity figures. Due to the assumption of an uplift in connectivity throughout the borough, potential sites identified in the borough's other major town centres (Bexleyheath, Welling and Sidcup) received an uplift in potential densities relative to their potential public transport connectivity.

B.14.   The net housing and job increases for the growth areas were then added to the projected figures for the rest of Bexley to give borough-wide figures.

B.15.   A trajectory for the housing high growth capacity has been prepared, based on a number of factors including a broad assessment of the ability of each site to be developed and the relative timing of potential major transport infrastructure. A similar trajectory for jobs will be developed in due course based on detailed analysis of various relevant factors. The results of this capacity exercise are summarised below:

- The proposed housing growth is up to 31,500 with a large amount of the potential development not taking place until triggered by the development of major transport infrastructure; and,

- A net additional job figure of up to 17,500 comprising of circa 7,000 net new jobs within the growth areas, and 10,500 jobs throughout the rest of the borough.

B.16.   It should be noted that these figures are based on high-level land use frameworks and a range of associated assumptions and should be seen as robust strategic capacity estimates for the purposes of long term planning whilst giving appropriate flexibility to master planners and developers. They are also wholly reliant on the delivery of associated infrastructure and will not be achieved otherwise.

Social and community infrastructure requirements

B.17.   From previous information gathered, generally the current infrastructure needs in the borough are being broadly met with the current population. Some services, in particular education and health, are already under pressure but steps are being taken to deal with current requirements. However, as a result of the increased growth in housing, employment and population as part of the Growth Strategy, there will be an increased demand for additional social infrastructure facilities.

B.18.   An initial estimate of these social and community infrastructure requirements has been produced using the available population projections and applying the commonly established standards recognised at the time. This helps to provide a high-level estimate of the likely land take requirements for future social infrastructure, including green infrastructure, to support future growth and has fed into the refined capacity figures described above. It is important that this is monitored and reviewed regularly as assumptions, standards and circumstances

change. The broad level of funding required for this infrastructure and the potential funding sources will be considered as part of the DIF study (see below).

B.19.   Initial results indicate the following broad needs, based on the high-level population projections. It should be noted that this is not a comprehensive list and will be developed in more detail as further information is gathered, including whether existing facilities could be expanded or used more effectively to cater for increased needs, and the potential for the multi-use of existing and new facilities going into the future.

Education:

- Potentially the equivalent need for up to 12 two-form entry primary schools, requiring over 20ha of land
- Potentially the equivalent need for up to four, 1,200 places secondary schools, requiring around 34 ha of land
- Increased early years, Post 16 and adult education provision

Health:

- Potentially over 50 additional GPs required
- Potentially over 20 additional dentists
- Increased provision of pharmacies and opticians
- Increased provision of other primary and secondary healthcare facilities

Green and leisure infrastructure:

- Over 16 hectares of additional open space provision
- Up to 20 new children's play space facilities, requiring over 1 ha of land
- Increase in number of sports, leisure and cultural facilities
- Potential need for future improvements to flood defences

Other infrastructure:

- Up to 20 additional multi-use facilities required, requiring around 1ha of land, including facilities for community activities
- Improved utilities infrastructure including digital, water, gas, electric and waste
- Potentially a decentralised heat network, which could help to provide low-cost heat to residents and businesses
- Potentially community safety infrastructure, including adequate facilities for emergency services

B.20.   Work is underway to identify detailed triggers and development limits to inform the relative phasing of infrastructure and housing/job growth. Further information is provided from work carried out through a development infrastructure funding study (see paragraph B.26 – B.30).

Transport infrastructure requirements

B.21.   As noted above, the proposed growth figures for housing and jobs are based on significant increases in connectivity through improvements to the existing transport infrastructure in Bexley. Transport and development capacity are very closely linked

and the Council and Transport for London (TfL) have worked closely on strategic modelling, to provide evidence to show how future growth in the borough can be achieved in a sustainable way. Key elements of strategic transport infrastructure include:

- A potential extension of Crossrail from Abbey Wood towards Gravesend, introducing high frequency and faster journey times to key employment and leisure destinations. An extension on dedicated infrastructure would require approximately 20km of new lines, signalling and electrification to avoid "performance pollution" resulting from mixing with existing North Kent Line services.

- New river crossings to address severance across the River Thames and provide much improved access between different market areas.

- New public transport systems that introduce high quality local services which link the main areas of activity and major transport nodes, mainly using segregated rights of way.

B.22.   Initial transport analysis carried out by TfL in conjunction with London Borough of Bexley indicates the following key requirements for local transport infrastructure:

- considerable improvements to the borough's bus network, to meet future demand;

- emphasis on reducing the need to travel, and making walking and cycling more appealing for local trips;

- an intermediate type of public transport system on dedicated corridors; and,

- investment in necessary highway capacity at locally strategic road bottlenecks.

B.23.   Further work is required to identify detailed triggers/development limits to highlight how much development could be achieved prior to the implementation of river crossings, a Crossrail extension and public transport systems (including DLR), and this is forming the next stage of collaborative work between the Council and TfL. This work will include closer focus on working up a shortlist of required transport interventions and their broad phasing requirements.

Delivery mechanisms

B.24.   There are a number of different mechanisms available to the Council to help deliver the Growth Strategy and these will be considered further as the strategy is finalised and we move into the implementation phase. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages and it may be that different approaches will be required for different sites or areas depending on the circumstances. Examples of different approaches include:

(a) The Council seeks to deliver growth solely through the development plan and development control process, adopting policies and guidance that set out the broad framework for an area and evaluate the resulting planning applications against these.

(b) The Council works proactively with key partners to encourage growth, facilitating dialogue, marketing and promoting the borough, coordinating input and bringing people together to identify and realise development opportunities and lever in

funding. It could also use its statutory powers, such as Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), on behalf of partners to help bring development sites together.

(c) The Council uses its financial capacity/powers to invest directly in development. This can be done in a number of ways including:

(i) the Council lending money to third parties to bring forward development and recouping it through a charge on the land or a revolving fund arrangement,

(ii) the Council developing land directly in partnership with other parties through some form of partnership vehicle; and,

(iii) the Council developing land directly through a fully owned subsidiary.

B.25.   The Council already employs or is investigating a number of these methods to progress regeneration projects. A good example is partnership working with Peabody, including the use of the Council's CPO powers, to deliver the Housing Zone proposals in Thamesmead. It has also established a growth fund whereby the Council's capital monies are pooled into a single pot to support projects that deliver positive growth. In addition, the Council has established a wholly owned development company. These methods will be further developed and refined over time so as to provide a robust tool kit of interventions.

Development Infrastructure Funding Study

B.26.   The Council has undertaken, with its partners, to develop a development infrastructure funding study (DIFS). This study looks at the borough as a whole, with a focus on the London Plan opportunity areas that are affected by the Growth Strategy. Similar studies have been carried out for other opportunity areas across London, including London Riverside and Vauxhall/Nine Elms/Battersea.

B.27.   The DIFS seeks to identify and quantify at a high level the various forms of infrastructure that will be required to enable the sustainable growth of the area. It is an iterative process that will be updated, and currently focuses on the following types of infrastructure:

- transport infrastructure, including rail, bus, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure;
- social and community infrastructure, including education, health, community & leisure facilities, open space, play space among others; and
- utilities infrastructure, including general utilities (gas/electricity/water), flood mitigation, renewable energy (in particular, decentralised networks) and digital infrastructure.

B.28.   An important objective of the DIFS is to identify a broad overall cost of the infrastructure requirements and the funding already secured or likely to come forward to pay for it. This includes an assessment of the ability of schemes to contribute to infrastructure provision, and the identification of a broad funding gap. A number of options consider the methods of filling the shortfall.

B.29.   The DIFS also provides guidance on the prioritisation of key projects and assesses the delivery and investment plans of key agencies and infrastructure providers. The DIFS and the identified list of potential required infrastructure will need to be updated and monitored as more detailed plans, requirements and costs are identified.

B.30.   The DIFS is key evidence supporting the Growth Strategy, and, as a live document, later iterations will support the preparation of opportunity area planning frameworks in the borough, and a review of the Bexley Local Plan.

The approach to lower growth

B.31.   Should the Council's core infrastructure requirement as broadly indicated above not be secured, then sustainable growth potential in the borough will decline significantly. The spatial arrangement of development, as well as its general character will also alter. The approach broadly outlined in the Council's existing Core Strategy will remain relevant in this scenario with the following key elements:

- the concentration of development around existing public transport hubs and service centres such as Abbey Wood and the boroughs existing major town centres;

- the modest release of employment land at London Plan benchmark levels in accessible locations to facilitate new development;

- modest housing and employment density increases where confirmed infrastructure investment support it;

- appropriate phasing of development to reflect confirmed investment profile and completion of key local infrastructure and service improvements;

- consolidation of town centre boundaries and diversification of uses to reflect changes in retail sector and need to meet new demands;

- maximisation of benefits of Crossrail to Abbey Wood and cross river connectivity improvements and securing of local transport enhancements in key locations; and,

- the progression of the Bexley Investors' Prospectus schemes as appropriate to infrastructure investment secured.

B.32.   The existing/underlying demand for growth, in the absence of the infrastructure needed to accommodate it, may result in additional development that the existing Local Plan cannot adequately control, leading to existing facilities and services being overwhelmed.

Appendix C   Segregated public transport corridors

Locations for implementation

C.1.   These transport route typologies apply to the Thamesmead/Abbey Wood, Belvedere, Erith and Slade Green development framework, but not to the Crayford development framework.   Instead of a completely segregated route through Crayford for public transport, priority for public transport services should be identified as part of a future review of the operation of the Crayford town centre ring road.

C.2.   It is proposed that land is safeguarded within those development frameworks for segregated public transport corridors.   Their purpose is to provide a corridor that maximises the efficient operation of public transport through the main growth areas; and to ensure that the opportunity is taken to maximise integration of the main local public transport corridors with both built development and the wider public realm.

General description and vision

C.3.   Where at all possible, these corridors should be completely separated from general traffic routes.   Other (development) roads may cross the corridors but should be designed so that general traffic is physically discouraged from joining the segregated route.

C.4.   The expectation is that there will ultimately be an uninterrupted segregated public transport corridor from Slade Green through to Abbey Wood and South Thamesmead.   This can form the basis of a future bus rapid transit corridor and/or tram operation.

Benefits of segregation

C.5.   By segregating local public transport services from other motorised road users, those services should be able to operate more efficiently, offering:

- quicker journey times;
- more reliable services (both departure/arrival times and total journey times);
- (for the operator) the prospect of running the same service frequency with fewer vehicles – or a higher frequency with the same number of vehicles, giving greater cost efficiency; and,
- perception of the local public transport offer being part of a more substantial nature.

C.6.   Studies have shown that, in these circumstances, there are considerably better prospects of mode switch from car to public transport.

Multiple uses

C.7.   The transport corridors should be able to be used by various forms of local public transport at any phase of development progress.   In the early phases, buses would use them as the corridors are delivered on the ground.   Bus rapid transit (BRT) services may be introduced in later phases and would use the corridors.   By development completion it is possible that, for example, tram services may be running.

C.8.   No public transport technology (e.g. bus, BRT, tram etc.) should be introduced so that a previous type of vehicle can no longer use the corridor. Tram lines might be laid in the corridor at some stage in the future, but this should not be done to the exclusion of bus/BRT services.

C.9.   If the corridor is initially in the form of a bus way (i.e. a bus-only road), tram tracks could be built into that road later so that tram, bus and bus rapid transit services could all ply along the same corridor and use the same stops as appropriate.

C.10.   Public transport services should be able to take advantage of these corridors over short sections, joining and leaving at intermediate points, if there are good operational reasons to do so, as well as running from one end to the other. This will ensure a maximum integrated service to the key public transport nodes along the corridor.

Segregation hierarchy

C.11.   Where at all possible through the development areas, transport corridors should be provided initially as segregated bus ways (bus-only roads).

C.12.   In some locations, the route of the proposed transport corridor follows existing highways (e.g. Harrow Manorway, Yarnton Road).   In those circumstances, segregated provision should be in the form of 24/7 bus lanes. Consideration should be given not just to providing segregation for buses initially but also to the longer term, when BRT or even tram vehicles may be running. With common kerbside bus lanes, there is a risk of the priority lane being blocked by vehicles servicing frontage properties. This is less of an issue for a bus; but a tram cannot get through on obstructed tram tracks. On a dual carriageway for example, it may therefore be better to allocate one complete carriageway to public transport priority or even opt for central priority lanes. The latter require care in the design of stops and pedestrian crossing points.

C.13.   In town centres (notably at Belvedere and at Erith), it may not be possible to provide 100% segregation for public transport vehicles navigating through those centres. In those cases, street design should seek to maximise efficient running of public transport services through techniques such as priority at traffic signals if physical segregation is not possible.

Design principles

C.14.   Through the new development areas, these transport corridors should be a minimum of 15 metres wide, unless there are good design and operational reasons to provide something narrower.

C.15.   Within this 15m corridor, there should be a 7.3m wide carriageway for public transport vehicles; on each side of this, there should be a minimum 2m wide footway.

C.16.   Where stops are to be provided, room should be allowed for passenger shelters, which may require local widening of a footway from 2m to up to 5m; if stops are to be provided opposite one another local widening beyond the typical 15m corridor width will be needed.

C.17.   Corridors should accommodate cyclists as well by allowing cycling in the carriageway itself or by widening one or both footways for dual use by cyclists and pedestrians and/or providing a separate cycle track.

C.18.   Remaining space within the corridor can be landscaping, a utilities margin, or other public realm elements integrated into the wider design of the development.

C.19.   It is not intended to provide a guided bus way. Implementing guided bus ways can be expensive and efficient bus ways do not necessarily need external vehicle guidance systems. Advantages of such systems relate to vehicle access control, width constraints and consistency of precise vehicle paths. However, it is not expected that external guidance will be required in north Bexley.

Examples

C.20.   There are several good examples of similar segregated bus ways on the Fastrack bus rapid transit system in and around Dartford, for example:

- between East Hill and Princes Road, parallel to Darenth Road;
- on the south side of Princes Road, on the northern edge of the Fleet Estate; and
- through The Bridge development in north Dartford.

C.21.   At The Bridge, the Fastrack bus way forms a route from one side of the development to the other and is not available to other motorised traffic. Within the development, roads cross the route but do not join it. The bus way is centrally aligned within the development and stops are easily reached with direct walk access from nearby residential and non-residential areas alike.

Appendix D   Examples of housing typologies

TYPE H1: Suburban Medium (40-80 units or 150-250 hab rooms per hectare)

Existing suburban areas with a medium PTAL of 2-3 not expected to receive substantial infrastructure investment. These densities are based on the presumption that there are no low PTAL 0-1 areas within the growth locations and that suburban low density would not be acceptable in high PTAL 4-6 locations.

Code: H1	Typology: Suburban medium family

Example scheme:

Ratio, Phases 1 & 2, Slade Green

- 372 dwellings over 7.94 hectares
- **Density: 47 units per hectare**
- 455 parking spaces (1.2 per unit)
- 20% affordable
- 56% 3-bed plus family homes

Code: H1	Typology: Suburban medium family

Example scheme:

Queen Mary's Place, Roehampton, SW London

- 359 residential dwellings
- **Density: 64 units per hectare**
- 459 parking spaces (1.3 per unit)
- 25% affordable
- 34% 3-bed plus family homes

## TYPE H2: Urban Medium (55-145 units or 200-450 habitable rooms per hectare)

Within the middle ranges of the density matrix, at 95-170 u/ha, schemes are likely to be made up of a larger proportion of apartments, although houses may still appear to dominate the mix due to the fact that they occupy more site area than apartment buildings. Mixed-use schemes within town centres are likely to be entirely flatted development. Within this density band, up to six-storey apartment buildings are possible, with single aspect apartments avoided. Some of the typologies transition from adjacent existing lower height properties or provide a buffer.

Code: H2a	Urban medium riverside typology

Example scheme

Chandlers and Chichester Wharves, Erith

- 235 residential dwellings
- **Density: 106 units per hectare**
- 223 x 2 bed and 12 x 1 bed apartments
- 350 parking spaces (1.5 per unit)
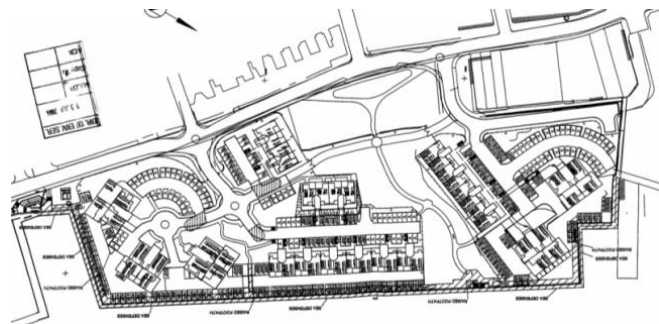
Code: H2b	Urban medium transitional typology

Example scheme:

Erith Park (Larner Rd), Erith Phase 1

- 343 units over 5.32 hectares
- **Density: 64 units per hectare**
- 304 parking spaces (0.9 per unit)
- 37% 3-bed plus, 80% affordable

Phase 2

- 244 units over 3.4 hectares
- **Density: 72 units per hectare**
- 253 parking spaces (1 per unit)
- 19% 3-bed plus, 78% affordable

Code: H2c	Urban medium buffer typology, with green and blue spaces

Example scheme

Stanmore Place, Harrow

- 798 homes over 6.2 hectares
- **Density: 129 units per hectare**
- 20% 3-bed plus family units
- 697 parking spaces (0.9 per unit)
- Car parking is provided mainly in a screened multi-storey car park, which provides a buffer from the industrial estate beyond.

Code: H2d	Urban medium typology, providing additional open space

Example scheme

Kidbrooke Village, Phase 6, Greenwich

- 713 homes over 7.07 hectares including parkland
- **Density: 101 units per hectare**
- 611 1-3 bed apartments
- 14% 3-bed plus family houses
- 363 parking spaces (0.5 per unit)

- South-facing, landscaped podium gardens apartment buildings; publicly accessible pocket parks and gardens; SINC retained as an ecological garden; houses with private gardens and roof terraces; apartments with generous balconies; duplex apartments with significant private roof gardens.

Code: H2e	Urban medium mixed-use typology

Example scheme

Hillcrest Court, Amersham

- 31 residential dwellings
- **Density: 129 units per hectare**
- Car parking: 53 spaces (1 per unit plus for retail)
- A mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments with private and shared amenity space, and three ground floor retail units (including a restaurant)
- Design is modern but sensitive to surrounding properties
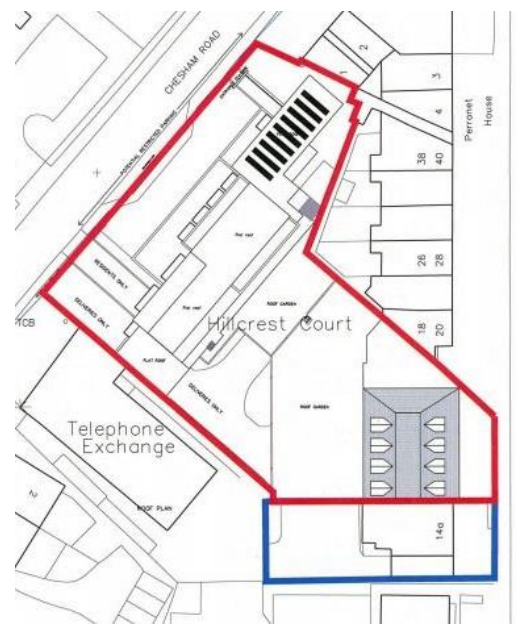
TYPE 3: Urban High (70-260 units or 200-700 habitable rooms per hectare)

In the upper ranges of the density matrix, at densities of up to 260 u/ha, typically created by mansion blocks of between four and eight storeys, with towers up to approximately 15 storeys in appropriate locations

Code	H3a	Name	Urban high town centre mixed-use typology

Example scheme

Walthamstow Arcade, London

- 121 residential dwellings
- **Density: 263 units per hectare**
- three to six storey mansion blocks
- Car parking: car free development with three disabled spaces. Residents not eligible for local parking permits. 850 space public car park.

- Above the leisure complex, new flats and houses surround a communal garden. 9 screen multiplex cinema, 2,000m^2 of shops and restaurants all fronting on to a public square.

Code	H3b	Name	Urban high riverside mixed-use typology

Example scheme

Charter Quay, Kingston-upon-Thames

- 244 residential dwellings over 1.3 hectares
- **Density: 188 units per hectare**
- Car parking (underground): 244 (1 per unit)
- Eight commercial units, business centre, gym and theatre
- 239 flats in six and seven storey blocks arranged around two pedestrian squares, with five town houses along the riverside

Code	H3c	Name	Urban high typology in a previously low density area

Example Scheme

Zenith House, Barnet

- 308 residential dwellings
- **Density: 282 units per hectare**
- Car parking: 226 spaces (0.7 per unit)
- High density residential in a low density area of suburban houses and 'big box' retail
- Half the site is landscaped open space, 1,600m^2 of B1 or D1 and 100m^2 of retail
- 16 storey tower surrounded by six storey mansion blocks stepping down to mews houses to form a low rise boundary to neighbouring gardens

Code	H3d	Name	Urban high typology

Example scheme

Crayford Town Hall, Crayford

- 186 residential dwellings over 1.1 hectares
- **Density: 169 units per hectare**
- Car parking: 215 spaces (1.2 per unit)
- 30% affordable
- One, two and three bedroom apartments with 2,298m^2 of non-residential uses including library, community centre, surgery and shops

Code	H3e	Name	Urban high town centre mixed-use typology

Example scheme:

Formally Erith Small Business Centre (inc. Odeon site), Erith

- 106 dwellings over 0.526 hectares
- **Density: 202 units per hectare**
- 2,955m2 retail and community uses including a library
- 140 car spaces
- Five to seven storeys over retail on ground floor
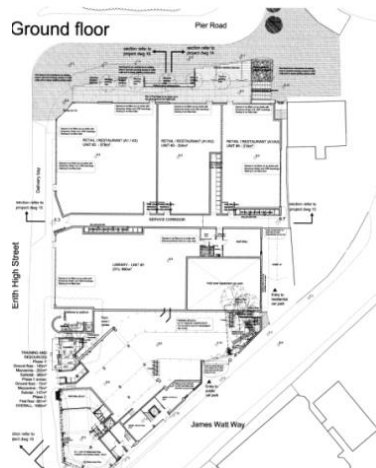
Appendix E   Glossary and abbreviations

A		
	A City for All Londoners (2016)	The Mayor's manifesto for developing London according to the principles of 'good growth,' ahead of a major revision to the London Plan.
	Article 4 Direction	A special planning regulation adopted by a local planning authority in all or part of the borough that withdraws certain automatically permitted development rights granted by the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO).
B		
	Bexley Core Strategy (2012)	Provides a long-term vision for the future of Bexley and contains 21 strategic policies to guide development in order to achieve the strategic vision (see also Bexley Local Plan).
	Bexley Local Plan (2012)	This is Bexley's plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. This currently comprises the Bexley Core Strategy and the remaining policies and proposals map from the Unitary Development Plan.
C		
	Co-living	A form of housing designed to support a modern, urban lifestyle, through the creation of shared spaces and facilities that provide people with convenience and the opportunity to connect with others.
	Co-working	The use of an office or other working environment by people who are self-employed or working for different employers, typically to share equipment, ideas and knowledge.
	Crossrail (the Elizabeth line)	A new railway for London and the South East, running from Reading and Heathrow in the West, through 42km of new tunnels under London to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east. The line, currently being constructed by Crossrail, will be named after the UK's longest serving monarch when it becomes operational through central London in 2018.
C2G	Crossrail towards Gravesend	A potential extension of Crossrail 1 from Abbey Wood towards Gravesend and Hoo Junction. The route is currently safeguarded.

D			
	Dark fibre network	This is the common practice of leasing fibre optic cables from a network service provider. Through this method, a large amount of network cable infrastructure is installed at an early stage, to provide for future expansion and/or network redundancy in case any cables fail; and, to prevent roads/public realm being dug up and disrupted, as the required infrastructure will already be in place.	
DIFS	Development Infrastructure Funding Study	A study identifying the infrastructure requirements of growth, including when the demands for infrastructure arise, how much those infrastructure requirements cost, and how those infrastructure requirements might be paid.	
F			
	'Fab Lab'	Abbreviation of 'fabrication laboratory'. Fosters an entrepreneurial spirit by providing the space, equipment and help for people to rapidly turn ideas into working prototypes.	
G			
	Garden City	A holistically planned new community with a focus on provision of open space and greenery.	
GDPO	General permitted development order	An order made by the Secretary of State granting a 'blanket planning permission' to certain types of developments, such as house extensions, commercial development, telecommunications, etc. The order sets details thresholds within which the development is considered to be permitted. Development that is outside of these thresholds requires planning permission.	
GLA	Greater London Authority	The GLA is a unique form of strategic citywide administration for London. The GLA Act of 2007 introduced additional and enhanced powers for the Mayor of London and London Assembly in several areas including housing, tackling climate change, planning and waste, health and culture. The GLA aims to provide strategic direction for the future of London, including production of the Spatial Development Strategy (the London Plan).	
H			
HMO	House in multiple occupation	A house in multiple occupation is a property rented out by at least three people who are not from one 'household' (e.g. a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. It is sometimes called a 'house share.'	

L		
LDS	Local Development Scheme	The LDS specifies (among other matters) the documents which, when prepared, will comprise the Local Plan for a local planning authority area. It should be kept up-to-date and published on the local authority's website.
LEP	London Enterprise Panel	The London Enterprise Panel is the local enterprise partnership for London. Chaired by the Mayor of London, the LEP is the body through which the Mayoralty works with London's boroughs, business and Transport for London to take a strategic view of the regeneration, employment and skills agenda for London.
	London Plan	This is the Spatial Development Strategy for London. Produced by the Mayor of London, it provides the overall spatial vision for the entire region, identifying the broad locations for growth, often by identification of sub-regions, and major infrastructure requirements, including housing supply monitoring targets. The London Plan forms part of each London borough's Development Plan.
M		
	Mayor of London	An elected politician who, along with the London Assembly of 25 members, is accountable for the strategic government of Greater London.
N		
NIP	National Infrastructure Plan 2010	Sets out the government's strategy for meeting the infrastructure needs of the UK economy. The plan contains major commitments for investment in important infrastructure projects.
NPS	National Network National Policy Statement (2014)	The NPS sets out the need for, and central government's policies to deliver, development of nationally significant infrastructure projects on the national road and rail networks in England.
NPPW	National Planning Policy for Waste	This document sets out detailed waste planning policies, and should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework.
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance	The NPPG sits alongside the NPPF and provides further guidance as to how policies should be applied.
	Network Rail	The authority responsible for the railway network in the UK.

O		
OA	Opportunity Area	London's principal opportunities for accommodating large scale development to provide substantial numbers of new employment and housing, each typically more than 5,000 jobs and/or 2,500 homes, with a mixed and intensive use of land and assisted by good public transport.
OAPF	Opportunity Area Planning Framework	An OAPF is supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan and sets out the strategy for development within opportunity areas.
P		
PCPA	Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	This Act of Parliament substantially reformed the town planning and compulsory purchase framework by amending and repealing significant parts of the existing legislation including the abolition of Local Plans and Structure Plans, and replacing these with Local Development Frameworks.
	Policies Map	An Ordnance Survey based map showing the location and extents of land-use policies in a local planning authority's Development Plan documents, updated as necessary to reflect changes in such documents (also referred to as a Proposals Map).
R		
RP	Registered Providers	Those providing social housing, both private (not-for-profit and for-profit) and public (local authority). Most not-for-profit providers are also known as Housing Associations.
S		
SHLAA	Strategic housing land availability assessment	A SHLAA is a technical study that informs future planning policy development by identifying and assessing the availability, suitability and deliverability of land for housing. It also assists in the monitoring of whether there is an adequate supply of deliverable housing land to meet the objectively assessed housing need for the area.
SHMA	Strategic housing market assessment	A SHMA is a technical study that defines a housing market area and then assesses the current and future need for market and affordable housing in that housing market area. Bexley is in an established housing market area for South East London, comprising the London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark.
SMEs	Small and medium-size enterprises	Enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euros.

SRN	Strategic Road Network	Across England, the strategic road network consists of the motorways and the most significant A-roads. Within London, responsibility for managing this network may be shared between the Highways Agency, Transport for London and London Borough of Bexley.
SPD	Supplementary planning document	Guidance that expands on policies and proposals in a planning authority's Local Plan.
SPG	Supplementary planning guidance	Guidance associated with the Mayor's London Plan, including opportunity area planning frameworks.
T		
TOD	Transport orientated development	An approach to development that underpins the creation of liveable, lifetime neighbourhoods through the promotion of concentrated, high quality residential development adjacent to public transport nodes and local shops, services and facilities. The provision of healthy streets and pleasant routes within and between each development node offer good networks for walkers and cyclists and facilitate reduced reliance on the car.
TfL	Transport for London	One of the GLA groups of organisations, accountable to the Mayor, with responsibility for delivering an integrated and sustainable transport strategy for London.
	Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission	Announced in the Budget 2016, the Commission seeks to develop an ambitious vision and delivery plan for North Kent, South Essex and East London up to 2050. Amongst other matters, it will look at how to make the most of opportunities from planned infrastructure such as the Lower Thames Crossing.
	Thames Gateway	Government initiative for the area comprising a corridor of land on either side of the Thames extending from east London through to north Kent and south Essex.
		The London part of the area extends eastwards from Deptford Creek and the Royal Docks and includes parts of the lower end of the Lee Valley around Stratford. It includes parts of the boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Greenwich, Havering, Lewisham, Newham and Tower Hamlets as well as limited parts of Hackney and Waltham Forest.

U		
UDP	Unitary Development Plan	A statutory plan produced by each unitary planning authority, which integrates strategic and local planning responsibilities through policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the area. UDPs were produced prior to the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which introduced Local Plans (Development Plan Documents, or DPDs).
		Bexley's UDP was adopted in 2004. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Secretary of State 'saved' many of Bexley's UDP planning policies in 2007. All 'saved' general (strategic) policies were replaced by the Bexley Core Strategy in 2012, with the remaining policies to be replaced by the Bexley Local Plan (see also Bexley Local Plan).