



# Bexley Growth Strategy





# **Bexley Growth Strategy**

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# Leader's Foreword

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Following two years of detailed technical work and consultation, I am delighted to present the Bexley Growth Strategy that sets out how we plan to ensure our borough thrives and grows in a sustainable way.

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. We have great schools and two world-class performing arts colleges plus exciting plans for a new Place and Making Institute in Thamesmead that will transform the skills training for everyone involved in literally building our future.

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. But we can only do that if we plan carefully and ensure we attract the right kind of quality investment supported by the funding of key infrastructure by central government, the Mayor of London and other public bodies. In consultation, our residents made this very clear and are quite right to do so.

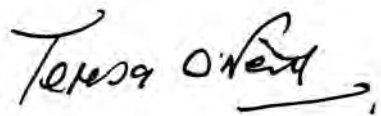
Bexley has huge potential to grow in exciting ways, attracting new residents and businesses into the borough. There is growing momentum here that promises to open up amazing possibilities. The arrival of the Elizabeth Line providing services to Abbey Wood will provide fast and reliable links into central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

Our aim is clearly set out in this strategy. Bexley is about far more than building homes and workplaces, we want to create sustainable, healthy, high quality neighbourhoods where people choose to live, play, learn and earn. Further transport improvements could enable us to develop large underused sites around stations in the north of the borough. These better-connected places could see new higher density neighbourhoods offering a range of homes for all life stages 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. 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 and will be followed by work on a revised Local Plan next year. It looks at Bexley's built and natural environment to identify what makes it such a special place. It sets out the areas that we believe have the potential to grow the most and what kinds of development we might see and it talks about the new infrastructure necessary to make sure these areas will work properly.

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 and makes this such a special place.

Teresa O'Neill OBE

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa O'Neill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Leader of the Council

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# Preface

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## **The purpose and status of this document**

The Bexley Growth Strategy is a robust, evidence-based document that forms an essential first step towards a coordinated effort across organisations to maximise the benefits of growth for the borough's current and future residents and businesses. Key to this are the shared priorities for Bexley's vision of 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.

The document details how the Council, working with a range of partners, proposes to positively manage housing and economic growth and its associated supporting infrastructure in the borough into the future. It is a broad strategy that addresses a wide range of relevant issues across a 30-year time horizon to 2050. With a particular focus on spatial planning, this will become one of the key tools available to the Council and its partners to influence and shape physical growth.

At its heart is the concept of place making where strong communities are created and strengthened and the best elements of the borough are preserved and improved. The Growth Strategy is not a planning policy document, but it does merit material consideration when determining proposals for development within the borough.

As well as underpinning future planning policy, this document should inform the investment plans and decisions of individual landowners and developers, and the development and investment priorities of other public sector bodies and agencies, particularly those charged with providing essential infrastructure.

## **Document development**

A significant amount of work has gone into the preparation of this strategy. This document has been informed by early engagement with Bexley's delivery partners, including those that provide specialist housing, health services and schools in the borough.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL) have been key to the progression of the strategy, with proposals within this document emerging through joint working with them and other partners (see Figure 1 for governance structure). A range of studies was carried out, including a development infrastructure funding study (DIFS), a fundamental piece of evidence that considers the need for infrastructure in the area and how this might be delivered.

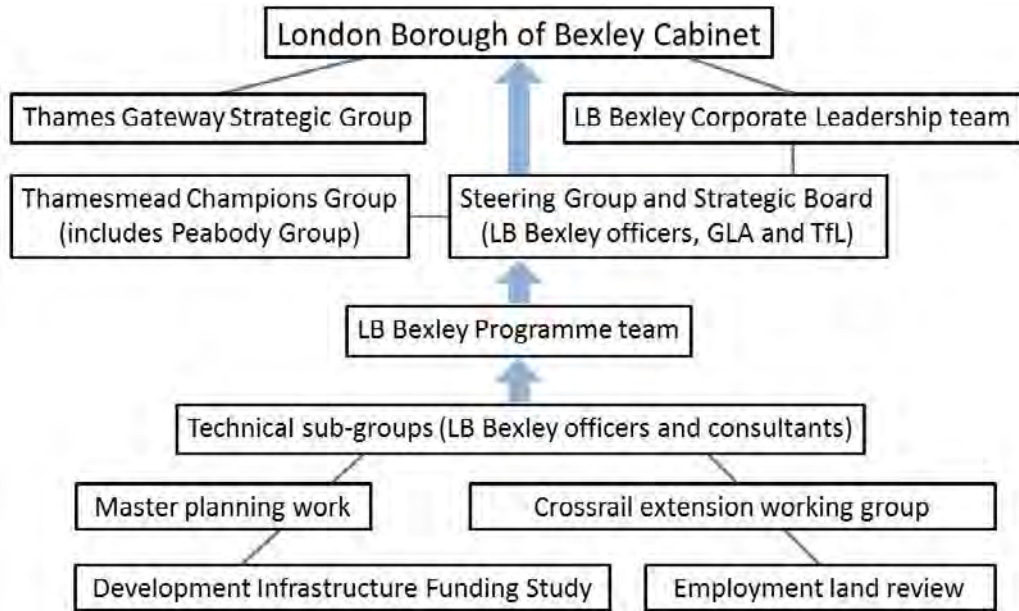


Figure 1: Growth Strategy governance structure.

Engagement with the community was undertaken at an early stage in 2014. This six-week consultation introduced the Council’s core propositions with regard to growth.

Responses from this consultation consequently informed a Direction of Travel Statement. Jointly produced by Bexley and the GLA and published in June 2015, the Statement 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.

Following on from the Direction of Travel Statement, evidence gathering and preparation of the Growth Strategy progressed, culminating in the production of the Bexley Growth Strategy: Public Consultation Draft, which was published in May 2017.

The final document has therefore been shaped by the many comments received from residents, businesses and key stakeholders. A Statement of Consultation has been prepared that summarises the responses received and how the main issues raised from these responses have been addressed in the final Growth Strategy.

### **Next steps**

The Growth Strategy 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. 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.

The Growth Strategy will also inform two Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks, which will be supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan, and master plans for key areas outside of the main growth areas, including for Bexleyheath town centre. These plans will undergo public engagement and the final, approved documents will in turn feed into the new Local Plan.

The Council is cognisant that changes to the national and regional policy context with regard to growth will emerge over time. Its response to these changes will be based on the principles and proposals set out in this Growth Strategy, as it is considered a sound, evidence based document that addresses the growth challenges faced by the borough.

I The Cob statue, Belvedere.





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The document is a broad strategy that deals with a wide range of issues across the whole of London Borough of Bexley.

## **Part I    The context for a ‘positively managed’ approach to good growth**

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. Part I addresses this context, explains the need for well-managed change in the borough, notes the main opportunities and the challenges that impact the delivery of good growth, and sets out the vision.

It is clear that growth is already taking place in Bexley 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.

The Council and its partners propose to positively manage housing and economic growth and its associated supporting infrastructure in Bexley across a 30-year time horizon to 2050. Proposals within the Growth Strategy 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 that can feed into a vision for growth (extract below) describing the sort of place the borough should become as it accommodates change.

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.

How this links with activity in the wider sub region, particularly with regard to major infrastructure investment, is a key influence on the consideration of the geographical scope of the vision for growth. The conclusion is that the emphasis should be 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 along the Thames Gateway.

Subject to the provision of the right levels of infrastructure, in the right locations, the document sets out how up to 31,500 new homes and 17,500 new jobs can be delivered across the borough.

In particular, growth areas at Belvedere, Erith, Thamesmead, Slade Green and Crayford hold significant development potential given the right conditions, and town centres and employment areas outside of the opportunity areas do as well. This is set out in the vision extract below.

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 movement of artisans and other manufacturers. 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.

The vision is illustrated by the key spatial diagram (Figure 2) and embeds environmental, economic, and social sustainable development objectives. It will ensure the financial impact represents value for money, and it will be communicated through a variety of methods of engagement to maximise influence.

### **Key outcomes from the Bexley Growth Strategy**

By abiding by these core objectives, 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 look to secure strategic outcomes, including: achieving a step change in key transport infrastructure; increasing housing availability for all; making the best use of private and public sector landholdings; enhancing educational, skills and employment prospects, and green infrastructure; increasing vitality and creating flexible, affordable working spaces; and, protecting the things that already make Bexley a good place to live and work. By being ambitious in seeking to develop new assets for future generations, the right conditions will be set for developers to invest in the borough, and for businesses to stay and prosper.

The vision is supported by key themes for good growth in Bexley and these are the focus of the second section of Part I. These themes are spatial and non-spatial in nature and address Bexley's economy (including its town centres), housing, transport, social infrastructure (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 ambitions, including identified outcomes, are then proposed that set out how these themes will be taken forward in the context of good growth.





Figure 2: Key diagram showing proposed transport improvements and the focus of new development.

## **Part II Land use and urban design principles for good growth**

Part II sets out the detailed principles, having examined Bexley's case for growth in the context of its position in London and the Thames Gateway, and set ambitions and proposed outcomes for each growth theme in Part I.

These principles will secure sustainable development so new places will enjoy the right mix of design, uses, and infrastructure to support the economic, social, and environmental well-being of residents and businesses. The first section of Part II establishes the broad approaches to the different land uses as well as a series of typologies for each land use. It also presents a series of principles for managing change that set out how place making will progress over time.

Large areas of land currently protected for employment uses will be intensified and partly re-purposed to allow alternative uses, particularly for housing, other commercial activities, live/work units, and land for necessary services and facilities such as schools, medical centres and open space. An evidence-led approach will be taken, based on identifying future employment needs and managing the release of some industrial land together with the densification of remaining industrial areas. In addition, there are existing residential areas where estate renewal can deliver higher density housing. Finally, town centres in the borough can play their part as the desired locations for shops, community facilities, new employment opportunities and additional housing.

The second section of Part II considers the character of Bexley, and lists urban design principles that should guide development and other forms of place making. These will help ensure the creation of high quality, sustainable, accessible, safe and durable places, improving the function of the borough as a whole whilst maintaining the character residents enjoy now and that attracts new people to move here.

## **Part III A strategy for implementing good growth in Bexley**

Part III draws on the Council's proposals set out in the first two parts of the document and puts forward a strategy for implementation. The first section sets out the development figures and infrastructure requirements, and explains the methodology used to determine the maximum potential for good growth.

The proposed housing growth is up to 31,500 with a large amount of the potential development not taking place until triggered by the completion 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 jobs within the growth areas, and 10,500 jobs throughout the rest of the borough.

A process has been undertaken to generate both housing and job capacities using the broad land use approaches and density principles set out in Part II with each land use type ascribed a broad density band based on a number of area based criteria including proximity to public transport and local services. This was based on a number of factors including a broad assessment of the ability of sites to be developed and, crucially, the relative timing of potential major transport infrastructure.

These figures are robust strategic capacity estimates for the purposes of long term planning whilst giving appropriate flexibility to master planners and developers. They are also wholly predicated on the assumption that sustainable development cannot happen without the delivery of key infrastructure, and these requirements are listed in detail.

While the strategy is for the whole borough, the second section of Part III focusses on the areas that are likely to accommodate the most growth and the associated delivery mechanisms. It sets out the areas that will grow the most and what kinds of development they will see. These are, predominantly, in the north of the borough within areas designated by the Mayor of London as 'London Plan Opportunity Areas.' Growth areas are identified, particularly around existing or proposed transport hubs 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.

Strategies for land use and proposals for the main growth areas of Thamesmead, Belvedere, Erith, Slade Green and Crayford are set out, and the other key growth locations of the borough are considered. 'Development frameworks' for each area focus on the location, density and typology of the main future land uses: residential; commercial (town centre); industrial/employment; green spaces and transport infrastructure. Each development framework also includes the new infrastructure of various types necessary to make sure those places thrive.

The development framework for each area is diagrammatic at this stage although a good indication is provided of the area the Council and its partners will seek to directly manage for significant change. Detailed proposals will be drawn up in planning documents. In this context, the spatial elements of the Growth Strategy will inform Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks (OAPFs), which are supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan.

Growth provides an opportunity to address historic issues of poor design and places that no longer work well whilst ensuring that the best elements of existing areas are preserved and enhanced to create a sense of place born of the past, existing in the present and well placed for the future.





| A view across rooftops, Bexleyheath.



# PART I: CONTEXT



# Chapter 1

## The need for change

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### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Council's 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, supported by key pieces of evidence such as the Development Infrastructure Funding Study.

1.1.2 The Growth Strategy is a broad strategy that deals with a wide range of relevant issues across the whole of London Borough of Bexley. Part I of the document sets out the context for growth, considering the main opportunities and challenges that positively managed growth can address and with a particular focus on spatial planning as one of the key tools available to the Council and its partners to influence physical growth.

1.1.3 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, and the land use and development principles to achieve this are set out in Part II.

1.1.4 The thread that binds these elements together is the premise that sustainable development in Bexley will only succeed if secured by a major uplift in supporting infrastructure in the borough, particularly with regard to public transport connectivity improvements.

1.1.5 The key infrastructure projects that will act as triggers for increasingly higher degrees of cumulative growth will be:

- the completion of a public transit corridor, in phases, from North Greenwich to Slade Green;
- the completion of a docklands light rail (DLR) extension from Gallions Reach through Thamesmead to Belvedere;
- the extension of the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail) east of Abbey Wood towards Ebbsfleet; and,
- the completion of road based river crossings connecting Belvedere with Rainham and Thamesmead with Gallions Reach.

1.1.6 As such, growth will start slowly but will pick up speed as each project is secured, so that in the final phase more than three times as much development will come forward than in earlier phases, in high-density, sustainable locations. This relationship is considered in more detail in Part III.

1.1.7 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, Bexley has both the land and the ambition to offer an exciting future to current residents and businesses and those looking for new places to invest in and enjoy.

## **1.2 The planning policy context for the Growth Strategy**

1.2.1 Planning policies, legislation and guidance from national to local levels provide the strategic framework and context for the Growth Strategy and underpin its overall content, aims and objectives. The ‘golden thread’ running through both plan making and decision taking is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

1.2.2 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.

1.2.3 This document is Bexley's proposal for growth and is the Council's response to the broad development requirements set out nationally and regionally. It will also inform the Council's response to these requirements as they are reviewed and amended in the future.

1.2.4 The Growth Strategy therefore is an important material consideration when planning decisions are taken, informed and influenced, by national policy, the Mayor's London Plan and the Bexley Local Plan, and compliant with all relevant legislative requirements.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

1.2.5 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.

1.2.6 Government provides additional clarity and guidance on implementing the NPPF in its online Planning Practice Guidance. Regard to the NPPF's 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.



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### London spatial development strategy

- 1.2.7 The London Plan sets out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the whole of London. 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 Growth Strategy follows the same assumptions when determining the right locations in Bexley for growth whilst noting the borough's town centres do not enjoy the same level or choices of transport infrastructure as many others in the capital.
- 1.2.8 Opportunity Areas are identified in the London Plan 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. There are two such areas in Bexley, and these are the Bexley Riverside and the Thamesmead and Abbey Wood opportunity areas. Both form a significant and intrinsic part of the Growth Strategy.
- 1.2.9 At the time of this Growth Strategy's publication, the Mayor is consulting on a replacement London Plan. It sets out an approach for Good Growth that encourages high-density development in sustainable locations supported by infrastructure. The draft document envisions that small sites and conversions will play a much greater role in accommodating London's housing need, with a presumption in favour of small housing development. At the same time it increases protection for industrial land, including a general principle of "no net loss of industrial floor space" in designated strategic industrial locations and locally significant industrial site, and for open space such as Metropolitan Open Land and the Green Belt.
- 1.2.10 The Growth Strategy proposes no net loss of existing industrial floor space in overall terms across the borough, but some existing industrial land could be redeveloped for residential uses. Where this occurs the equivalent of lost floor space will be re-provided through intensification and densification of remaining industrial land. This process will be managed carefully through planning documents, taking into account strategic and local assessments of industrial land demand and supply.
- 1.2.11 The Mayor of London has also produced a number of detailed strategies, including for transport, housing, economic development, the environment and culture, which outline how he plans to respond positively to pressures on growth so communities are healthy and live well alongside each other.
- 1.2.12 The Growth Strategy plays an important role in delivering the broad objectives of these strategies by interpreting them at the local level to secure sustainable growth. It recognises that transport links are decisive in allowing development to progress, and that investment is key to supporting economic growth and mobility, enhancing the quality of life, safety and security, as well as reducing transport's contribution to climate change.

### **Bexley Local Plan**

- 1.2.13 The Bexley Core Strategy was written in the context of a lower growth scenario; however, it is purposely flexible, 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.
- 1.2.14 The Growth Strategy seeks to reinforce 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. Moreover, proposals for higher levels of growth are in line with Core Strategy ambitions, which reference enhanced development capacity if the key infrastructure necessary to deliver this is in place.
- 1.2.15 Nonetheless, the current Local Plan will be reviewed following adoption of the Growth Strategy to ensure planning policies clearly align with the new vision and objectives for growth and associated interventions. Timescales are shown in the Bexley Local Development Scheme. Supporting planning documents will also be produced, particularly area based master plans and planning frameworks.

## **1.3 Bexley's opportunities in London and the Thames Gateway**

- 1.3.1 Whilst the Bexley Growth Strategy is for the whole borough, it necessarily focuses on the areas that are likely to accommodate the most growth, including the wider infrastructure needed such as schools and healthcare. These are, predominantly, in the north of the borough. This area is part of the Thames Gateway, a much larger regeneration opportunity that extends north and south along the River Thames from London out into the estuary.
- 1.3.2 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 existing, 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, supported by the principles of the government's Thames Estuary 2100 Plan .
- 1.3.3 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 leisure attraction proposal on Swanscombe Peninsula.
- 1.3.4 In order to achieve good growth, Bexley needs a programme of quality investment that is coordinated between sectors, responds to change, and above all else, is supported by the



Figure 3: Bexley's place within the Thames Gateway growth corridor.

funding of key infrastructure that is delivered in good time by central government, the Mayor of London and other public bodies. 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.

- 1.3.5 Within London, the Thames Gateway is the focus of the eastward regeneration 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, as illustrated by Figure 3.
- 1.3.6 In addition, important growth opportunities exist within and around Bexley's town centres in the centre and south of the borough.

## **1.4 The main challenges to achieving good growth in Bexley**

- 1.4.1 There are a number of challenges to securing good growth. These include creating development opportunities by assembling land in different ownership, gaining commitment from government for the infrastructure required, and effectively addressing constraints such as flood risk and land contamination, in order to ensure quality development which is viable. The north of the borough must become a location where more people choose to live, work, and invest in, changing the dynamic of the area. The Council must play its part by using its resources and coordinating actions across a large number of organisations.
- 1.4.2 Growth is made both necessary because and possible by challenges faced by Bexley. The area 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, and town centres that predominantly serve local communities with limited spending power. Poor connectivity has been the main contributor to Bexley's historic position as a low growth borough, despite its location within the Thames Gateway and adjacent to significant growth nodes in North Kent, Royal Greenwich and the Royal Docks.
- 1.4.3 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.
- 1.4.4 The Growth Strategy will help to overcome these and other challenges, which include:
- large areas of vacant or underused industrial land;
  - pockets of deprivation within its residential community;
  - limited public transport in many locations, which result in long journey times, a limited choice of modes and a lack of quality and reliability of services, with impacts on environmental quality, economic competitiveness and social cohesion;
  - a poor environment associated with the area's industrial past and present; and,
  - areas of housing that are dated and in need of renewal.
- 1.4.5 Notwithstanding this, population growth has continued in recent years with its 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.
- 1.4.6 There are already positive improvements which create opportunities to secure good growth, including:
- on-going housing estate renewal and retail investment;
  - enhancements in educational offer and historic and leisure attractions;
  - improvements to connectivity such as the Elizabeth Line to Abbey Wood, as well as the prospect for additional major transport improvements;
  - a huge investment in Thamesmead by Peabody and other partners including a Greater London Authority 'Housing Zone' centred on Harrow Manorway; and,
  - a potential Place and Making Institute.





Figure 4: Bexley's opportunities and constraints.

- 1.4.7 Changes in the economy create potential to release or repurpose large areas of industrial land for other uses whilst making better use of the remaining industrial land through more efficient forms of development. These changes will act as a catalyst for further growth, providing the opportunity for significant development, job creation and new homes.
- 1.4.8 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 more efficient use of current industrial land.
- 1.4.9 An example of good growth with a mixed-use approach is Fish Island in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Once a largely industrial area, it is home to a mixture of factories, residential flats and studios and workshops for those working in creative industries. It is being developed as a mixed-use community with land for housing, employment and open space, and improved access links.



*Figure 5: Fish Island, London Borough of Tower Hamlets.*

- 1.4.10 Elsewhere, proposed developments such as Ebbsfleet Garden City and Barking Riverside could be of huge benefit to the borough if linked up in the right way, although Bexley also wants to become a major growth node in its own right.
- 1.4.11 In realising Bexley's economic potential, both locally and in a strategic London-wide context, the Growth Strategy 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.

## 1.5 The need to positively manage growth

- 1.5.1 Regionally, London's growing population is driving a renewed interest to the east. Locally, Bexley's population is also increasing significantly. Currently, this growth in the size and nature of the population has largely been accommodated by intensification in the use of the existing housing stock, creating additional pressures on local services, including education.
- 1.5.2 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 very limited options and a particular need to improve connectivity both locally and to major employment areas in central London and north Kent. The Growth Strategy is critical in being clear why this is so essential and what can be achieved if the right investment is made.
- 1.5.3 In light of the need to positively manage growth and the opportunities for change, the current projection is that up to 31,500 new homes and 17,500 new jobs can be delivered across the borough over the next 30 years to 2050, subject to provision of appropriate levels of infrastructure.
- 1.5.4 How this links with activity in the wider sub region, particularly with regard to major infrastructure investment, allows for the consideration of the geographical scope of the vision for growth. The conclusion is that the emphasis should be 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 within the Thames Gateway.
- 1.5.5 In particular, growth areas at Belvedere, Erith, Thamesmead, 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 to a more limited extent as well.
- 1.5.6 The Council's **vision for good growth** in Bexley is set out as the following:

## 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 movement of artisans and other manufacturers. 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** focussed on a public transport interchange including a potential new Crossrail station and a new town centre that will host a sub-regional shopping destination. Up to 8,000 new homes will be accommodated, 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 up to 6,000 new homes, with the area supporting up to 2,000 new jobs through a shift to new engineering and manufacturing activities.

**Thamesmead** will provide up to 4,000 new homes and 5,000 new jobs, triggered by the Mayor's 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.

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 up to 8,000 new homes and 1,000 new jobs.

**Crayford** will provide the opportunity to consolidate and redefine the town centre, opening up the north of the area to up to 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.

**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 up to 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 up to 400 homes and 1,000 jobs, will ensure that the area continues to thrive. Neighbouring **Foots Cray** will provide the opportunity for initiatives such as the expansion of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, creating a further 1,000 jobs.





Figure 6: Key diagram showing proposed transport improvements and the focus of new development.

1.6.1 The vision is illustrated by the key spatial diagram (Figure 6) and supported by the following objectives:

- **Economic sustainability**  
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.
- **Environmental sustainability**  
To protect and enhance 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.
- **Social sustainability**  
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.
- **Financial impact**  
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.
- **Communications**  
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.

### **Key outcomes from the Bexley Growth Strategy**

1.6.2 By abiding by these core objectives, 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 look to secure the following outcomes, seeking to achieve these primarily through setting the right conditions for developers to invest in the borough and for businesses to stay and prosper:

- 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;
- enhance social and green infrastructure for the wellbeing of the borough’s residents and its environment;
- secure and enhance educational, skills and employment prospects locally and on the London employment-stage including the Place and Making Institute;
- create a network of flexible working spaces;

- increase the flow and diversity of housing availability for all tenures, households, sizes and life stages;
- 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.

## **1.6 The approach to a lower level of good growth**

1.6.1 The Growth Strategy projections for higher levels of housing growth in Bexley are premised on a significant uplift in infrastructure investment and are, therefore, wholly contingent on large amounts of additional funding being secured.

1.6.2 Should the Council's core infrastructure requirements not be secured, then the sustainable growth potential of the borough will decline significantly. The pressure for growth will continue, and the Council will still seek good growth, albeit at lower levels.

1.6.3 Therefore, as set out in the Bexley Local Plan, the current approach to the spatial arrangement, nature and scale of development 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 borough's existing major town centres;
- the modest release of employment land in accessible locations to facilitate new development;
- modest housing and employment density increases where confirmed infrastructure investment support it;
- the appropriate phasing of development to reflect the confirmed investment profile and completion of key local infrastructure and service improvements;
- the consolidation of town centre boundaries and diversification of uses to reflect changes in the retail sector and the need to meet new demands; and,
- the maximisation of benefits of Crossrail to Abbey Wood and cross river connectivity improvements and securing of local transport enhancements in key locations.

# Chapter 2

## The Council's growth themes

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In November 2017, the Council adopted #BrilliantBexley, a five-year Corporate Plan for the borough. The document sets out key priorities, and growth is front-and-centre. The Growth Strategy supports this through a set of key themes.

### 2.1 Theme 1 – Economic development

#### Context – opportunities and challenges

- 2.1.1 Bexley, like many outer London boroughs, has a high proportion of working residents who live in the borough to take advantage of the quality of life offered but commute into the City, Canary Wharf and the wider central London area to access a variety of jobs. Additionally, the borough 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.
- 2.1.2 Key sectors include logistics, construction and manufacturing. In recent years, growth has also been in education, health, scientific and technical activities. In 2017, there were 8,860 businesses in Bexley, providing some 73,000 jobs, representing a high rate of economic activity.
- 2.1.3 Local employment is concentrated in designated employment areas and in the borough's town centres. The employment areas are connected to the strategic road network, albeit unresilient, 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.
- 2.1.4 Other towns in the borough provide less comparison goods and focus more on convenience goods and services for the local communities, with a smaller cultural and leisure offer 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.

2.1.5 However, currently 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:

- relatively poor job growth in the borough, and slower growth in employment rates generally, with the number of Bexley residents in employment now 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 and a higher proportion of Bexley's working age population being above the age of 50, compared to the London average;
- a low skilled population, with the percentage of Bexley's employed residents educated to NVQ level 2 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, with, as a result, higher unemployment levels, and lower income levels when compared with the London average;
- very low public transport accessibility in many of Bexley's employment areas, which suffer from environmental issues such as poor air quality, flood risk 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.

2.1.6 In September 2014, the Council consulted on a draft Economic Plan for the borough, and the main aims and objectives of that draft plan have been incorporated into the Growth Strategy. It has also been influenced by the Government's recently published Industrial Strategy, which sets out how productivity and earning power will be boosted across the country by focussing on five foundations of ideas, people, infrastructure, business environment and places.



## **Ambitions for economic development in Bexley**

### **Economic ambition 1: Use growth to secure economic development**

2.1.7 Plans must seek 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 outputs are pursued:

- a) ensure investment in infrastructure and growth supports the aims and ambitions 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 Ebbsfleet (C2E) as well as improved local connections;
- c) ensure Bexley's businesses benefit from the economic opportunities arising from the construction of 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 and leisure based destinations.

### **Economic ambition 2: Create a broader, more resilient and higher quality economic base**

2.1.8 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.

2.1.9 The reintroduction of manufacturing activity into the borough and the development of a high-class cultural offer, capitalising on the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, are priorities. 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.

2.1.10 The Council is also interested in facilitating grass roots manufacturing called the Maker Movement. This is a trend in which individuals or groups create and market products that are manufactured and assembled outside traditional factory environments, combining technologies such as computation, electronics, robotics, and 3D printing with metalworking, woodworking, and other arts and crafts. The Maker Movement has led to the creation of a number of technology products and solutions by utilising the increasing amount of information available to individuals and the decreasing cost of electronic components. Products are often created within the circular economy, using unused, discarded or broken electronic, plastic, silicon or virtually any raw material and/or product from a computer-related device. Maker Movement activity can happen on a small scale and is therefore conducive to taking place in live/work environments and other places suitable for co-location. Bexley sees the

emergence of the Maker Movement as the modern manifestation of the entrepreneurial spirit that characterised the borough in its industrial heyday.

2.1.11 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 outputs 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 world 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 enterprise amongst the local population and other entrepreneurial Londoners by modernising and relaunching its own innovation hub (currently The Thames Innovation Centre), encouraging co-living and co-working environments and innovative production and development spaces such as 'fab labs;'
- g) foster 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 ambition 3: Make Bexley a thriving and ambitious place of opportunity through education and employment**

- 2.1.12 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.
- 2.1.13 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.
- 2.1.14 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.
- 2.1.15 The Council is also working to establish a Place and Making Institute in Thamesmead. This will be a campus where all involved in construction and place making come together to learn together from NVQ level 2 to post graduate study. The aim is that it will be home to a range of world class educational organisations working alongside businesses to train and upskill the people who will plan and build future homes and communities using the latest construction methods and technologies.
- 2.1.16 There will be other opportunities as well 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.
- 2.1.17 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. In particular, the Place and Making Institute will offer academic and vocational qualifications for the development and construction sectors to meet industry demands and to deliver growth. The related outputs 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 ambition 4: Enhance Bexley's image

- 2.1.18 Growth, and the investment it brings, provides a huge opportunity to realise economic development aspirations. It is critical a positive image of the place is secured to ensure the right kind of change occurs. This will involve marketing Bexley's unique attributes and why it is such a great place to live and work. Outputs 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) promoting Bexley's assets including heritage, leisure, culture and recreation and their value for residents and visitors;
  - c) working with partners to provide clear messages and on-going information about Bexley; and,
  - d) using brand ambassadors to promote Bexley on the bigger stage, engaging with businesses and representative bodies through international events.

#### Economic development outcomes

- 2.1.19 Part A of the Technical Appendix sets out the aims, ambitions and anticipated outcomes for economic development in Bexley.



*Figure 7: Bexley's built and natural environment offers opportunities for heritage tourism.  
(Hall Place and Gardens)*

## **2.2 Theme 2 – Housing development**

### **Context – opportunities and challenges**

- 2.2.1 Bexley has been typified as a suburban outer London borough dominated by predominantly privately owned, inter-war, low density residential neighbourhoods. This is what many residents love about the place and why many move here.
- 2.2.2 Due to on-going demographic change, Bexley is experiencing increased pressures across many of its services and facilities including education, and Bexley has not received the level of infrastructure investment needed to support the level of growth secured elsewhere in London. Nowhere is this felt more acutely than in housing. The growth in population has not been matched by the number of new homes built in the borough, which has resulted in an increased demand, reducing affordability, rising homelessness and an associated need for more temporary accommodation as well as issues around providing suitable dwellings for an ageing population.
- 2.2.3 Owner occupation is reducing whilst the private rented sector has grown substantially, and the existing housing stock is being more intensively used. Pressure on housing in the borough is set to continue into the foreseeable future. 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.
- 2.2.4 Bexley still currently remains relatively affordable compared to other locations in London in terms of property prices and low to medium income households elsewhere in the capital, that are looking to buy or rent their first home or have been affected by benefit changes, may seek to relocate here.
- 2.2.5 It will be essential that these wider pressures do not result in reinforcing existing patterns of deprivation within our growth areas, which would undermine the overarching ambitions of this strategy. Infrastructure investment is key to stop this happening.

### **Ambitions for housing development in Bexley**

#### **Housing ambition 1: Create lifetime neighbourhoods**

- 2.2.6 It is essential that neighbourhoods support strong, stable and healthy communities that provide a sense of security, encourage mutual support, promote aspiration, and engender a sense of both belonging and shared purpose. In this way, places become more attractive and self-sustaining. This can only 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.
- 2.2.7 As well as enabling residents to stay close to friends and family and maintain informal support networks as their circumstances change, a mix of accommodation types will mean that local housing stock provides a wide range of choices around, for example, size and tenure. This means that local residents will have the option to stay in Bexley if they wish, including young people getting onto the housing ladder. New residents will be more able to join local communities too, ensuring renewal and maintaining vibrancy.



**Housing ambition 2: Build more new homes at higher densities across all tenures and affordable to households across a range of incomes and sizes**

- 2.2.8 The Council's published five-year housing supply for Bexley to 2023 identifies a capacity of 3,207 new housing units. The five year housing supply is updated annually, and includes planned development either under construction, with planning permission or in the pipeline to be delivered in that time. This indicates that growth is already happening, which needs to be positively managed using the principles set out in this strategy.
- 2.2.9 This will be achieved primarily by increasing development density in appropriate locations that, 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.
- 2.2.10 The Council is progressing options that would enable the ability to actively intervene in accelerating housing development including the establishment of its own delivery Company. The Council already assists in the regeneration of areas by influencing the type and quality of any development and acting as a catalyst to accelerate the regeneration of existing privately owned sites. This may include assembling land in different ownerships either by private treaty and/or the use of the Bexley growth fund. The use of compulsory purchase powers is also an option but will only be used as a last resort in the longer term to enable the delivery of larger development sites which provide a clear public benefit.
- 2.2.11 The Bexley Core Strategy sets an overall aim for housing that 50% of all provision should be affordable housing over the plan period as a whole. In private residential schemes of more than 10 new homes, the Council will seek a minimum of 35% affordable housing with an affordable tenure split appropriate to the locality.
- 2.2.12 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.

### **Housing ambition 3: Prevent homelessness**

- 2.2.13 Bexley's housing allocations service nominates households for most of the empty housing association homes in Bexley. The Council has an adopted allocations policy to enable properties to be allocated to best meet the identified housing pressures facing the borough.
- 2.2.14 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.
- 2.2.15 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.

### **Housing ambition 4: Develop a range of well-designed and managed dwellings**

- 2.2.16 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.
- 2.2.17 The Council will continue to develop links with landlords and estate agents in the private rented sector as a means of ensuring 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 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.
- 2.2.18 An additional and selective licencing scheme for Bexley is in place for all houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and for selective licensing covering all private rented properties within two postcode areas, estimated to encompass some 3,000 properties.
- 2.2.19 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 Bexley's Development Plan.

- 2.2.20 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.
- 2.2.21 Certain larger HMOs currently need to be licenced and the Council publishes a public register of licences granted. The Council also has additional planning controls over HMOs through an Article 4 Direction that came into force in September 2017; the aim of extending control of HMOs was to ensure they provide suitable accommodation where required.

#### **Housing ambition 5: Meet a range of housing needs**

- 2.2.22 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, is unlikely to be suitable for the next generation of retired households. Changing aspirations and the fact that people are living longer, more active lives means that different levels of graduated care are needed.
- 2.2.23 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.
- 2.2.24 With regard to other needs, a key priority is to provide options for individuals to move to more appropriate accommodation that meets their requirements and enables 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.
- 2.2.25 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.
- 2.2.26 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.

### **Housing development outcomes**

- 2.2.27 Part A of the Technical Appendix sets out the aims, ambitions and anticipated outcomes for housing development in Bexley.



## 2.3 Theme 3 – Transport provision

### Context – opportunities and challenges

- 2.3.1 Good transport provision links people with the goods and services they need and the places they need to go - to employment, education, shopping and leisure activities. Good transport is an essential pre requisite for good 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.
- 2.3.2 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.
- 2.3.3 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.
- 2.3.4 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.

### Ambitions for transport provision in Bexley

#### Transport ambition 1: Improve the connectivity of places

- 2.3.5 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);
  - 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. encouraging the use of the River Thames as a transport corridor especially for freight, including the safeguarding of wharves used for this purpose;

- g. keeping car use at reasonable, manageable levels whilst avoiding a “free-for-all”; and,
- h. managing residential parking flexibly, including by seeking to influence car ownership and recognising prevailing levels of car ownership (at least in the earlier phases where parking needs may be higher) as well as emerging technological advancements that may influence this in the future.

**Transport ambition 2: Create healthy streets and liveable neighbourhoods to provide opportunities for local living**

2.3.6 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.

2.3.7 Underpinning the creation of liveable, lifetime neighbourhoods is the concept of transport-orientated development (TOD), 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.

**Transport ambition 3: Ensure effective connections within, between and to/from each growth area, including links with the rest of the borough and beyond**

2.3.8 It is essential that transport is planned out at different scales and with different travel objectives in mind, to ensure all travel needs are considered. The Growth Strategy deals with movement at three separate levels, illustrated by Figure 8:

- a. neighbourhood level – development layouts that encourage active movement for local journeys;
- b. local level – longer journeys within the borough made by public transport, by cycling or by walking, and less often by car; and,
- c. 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.

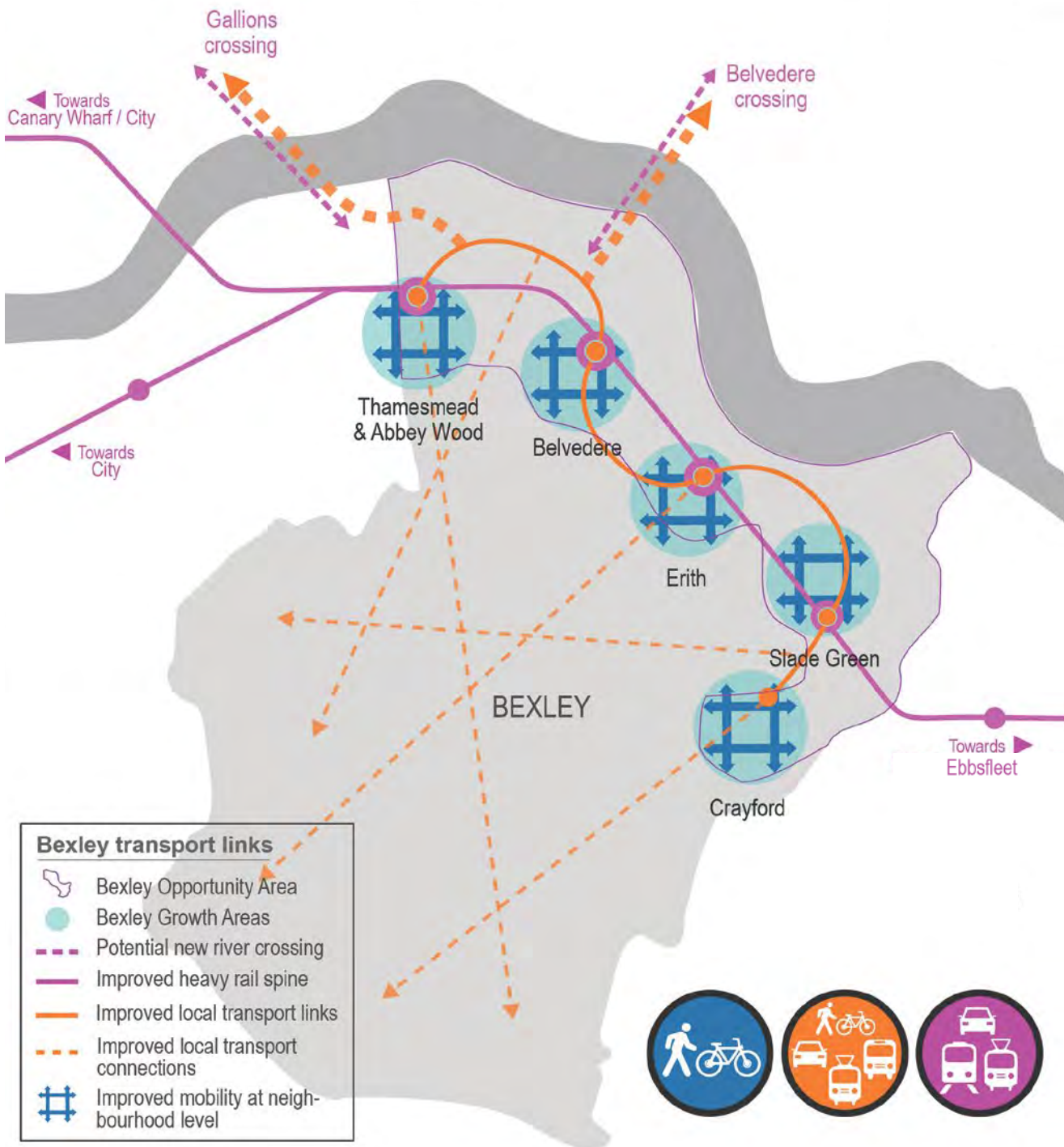


Figure 8: Ensuring effective connections within, between and to/from each growth area, including links with the rest of the borough and beyond.

**Transport ambition 4: Maximise connectivity by a choice of means of travel thereby reducing reliance on the car**

2.3.9

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. Figure 9 illustrates this principle. 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 (C2E), 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.
- 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.



Figure 9: Reducing reliance on the car.

2.3.10

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.

**Transport ambition 5: Secure the required transport infrastructure investment in a timely and cost-effective fashion**

2.3.11

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.

2.3.12

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**

- better cycle and walking routes within the growth areas and linking them to the communities beyond;
- major enhancements to the local bus network (better frequencies, new routes); and,
- upgrades to services and stations on the borough's railway lines;

**Medium/long term**

- 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;
- a high quality intermediate mode public transport service, with segregated right of way;
- the potential eastward extension of Crossrail from Abbey Wood towards Ebbsfleet;
- new Thames crossings at Belvedere and Gallions Reach (with associated new, high quality public transport links); and,
- the extension of the Docklands Light Railway from Gallions Reach through Thamesmead to Belvedere.

2.3.13 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 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.

**Transport provision outcomes**

2.3.14 Part A of the Technical Appendix sets out the aims, ambitions and anticipated outcomes for transport provision in Bexley.



## **2.4 Theme 4 – Social infrastructure provision**

### **Context – opportunities and challenges**

- 2.4.1 Social infrastructure comprises many different types of services and facilities, including health, education, social services, leisure, heritage, culture, open space and the public realm (health and wellbeing, and green and blue infrastructure are set out in sections 2.5 and 2.6). A full analysis of all infrastructure requirements that will support positive growth is set out in a Development Infrastructure Funding Study (DIFS).
- 2.4.2 Planning for social infrastructure to support growth must be based on careful consideration of all potential demographic changes (including age, income, health etc.), 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.
- 2.4.3 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. 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.

### **Education**

- 2.4.4 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.
- 2.4.5 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 (despite a large number of Bexley children attending schools in Kent). 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 nursery places, and better opportunities in further and higher education.
- 2.4.6 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 also be important to plan in new provision as appropriate.

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## Heritage and culture

- 2.4.7 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.
- 2.4.8 Heritage brings real economic value to the borough. Heritage tourism makes a £20.2 billion contribution to national GDP (Oxford Economics, 2015) and brings tens of thousands of visitors to Bexley every year (22,000 annually to Red House alone).
- 2.4.9 The borough's industrial heritage, 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. This includes those based on the Maker Movement, which is seen as a 21st century manifestation of the industrial creativity and activity that took place across Bexley in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- 2.4.10 Moreover, proximity to heritage assets boosts house prices, with properties within conservation areas selling for a premium of 9% on average, for example (Historic England, 2017). 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.
- 2.4.11 Bexley also has strong cultural associations, exemplified by the location of world-class 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. The Council's ambitions have recently resulted in a strong partnership bid to become the London Borough of Culture.
- 2.4.12 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, thus ensuring that the character of Bexley's neighbourhoods retain their authenticity.
- 2.4.13 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 infrastructure**

- 2.4.14 The importance of providing other types of local services and facilities, such as community centres and meeting places, play space, nurseries/crèches, integrated facilities for people with disabilities 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.
- 2.4.15 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.

### **Ambitions for social Infrastructure provision in Bexley**

#### **Social infrastructure ambition 1: Create and maintain a robust evidence base**

- 2.4.18 In order to provide social infrastructure as part of Bexley's planned future growth, there needs to be a renewed 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.
- 2.4.19 Once a new baseline is established, it will be possible to plan for the provision of future social infrastructure to meet the needs of local communities. Such plans will then be reflected in the Council's latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan, supported as needed through updates to the Development Infrastructure Funding (DIF) Study.

#### **Social infrastructure ambition 2: Manage and protect assets effectively**

- 2.4.20 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.
- 2.4.21 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.

### Social infrastructure ambition 3: Plan phasing of provision of services and facilities

- 2.4.22 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 some 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.
- 2.4.23 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.

### Social infrastructure ambition 4: Develop a funding strategy for infrastructure

- 2.4.24 The Council has used the DIF study to help to identify the range and quantity of various types of infrastructure required to support growth, including broad cost estimates. When linked to the likely phasing of development, this allows phasing, potential funding gaps and potential funding sources to be planned for the supporting infrastructure. That information then informs the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The DIF study will be updated as necessary over time.
- 2.4.25 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.

### Social infrastructure ambition 5: Ensure a flexible approach, with continuous communication and collaboration

- 2.4.26 The Growth Strategy sets out the long term plans for the growth and development of the borough. Inevitably, longer-term planning projections are based on assumptions that may well alter over time. In addition, different providers will have different strategies and programmes of delivery. Joint working with key partners, stakeholders and service providers from all sectors will be essential to ensure that information is shared effectively on growth and its impacts.
- 2.4.27 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. A series of principles in this regard are set out in Part II.

### Social infrastructure provision outcomes

- 2.4.28 Part A of the Technical Appendix sets out the aims, ambitions and anticipated outcomes for social infrastructure provision in Bexley.

## **2.5 Theme 5 – Achieving good health and wellbeing**

### **Context – opportunities and challenges**

- 2.5.1 A healthy community supports healthy behaviours and 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.
- 2.5.2 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.
- 2.5.3 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 (King's College, London, 2015). Environmental improvements can play a big part in improving physical and mental health.
- 2.5.4 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 both to care in the community and to 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.
- 2.5.5 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.
- 2.5.6 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.
- 2.5.7 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.
- 2.5.8 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.

### **Ambitions for achieving good health and wellbeing**

#### **Health and wellbeing ambition 1: Encourage people to be active through creation of walkable neighbourhoods and availability of recreation facilities**

- 2.5.10 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 2.3.7.
- 2.5.11 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.

#### **Health and wellbeing ambition 2: Improve the mental wellbeing of residents**

- 2.5.12 Provision 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.
- 2.5.13 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.

#### **Health and wellbeing ambition 3: Improve the environment to address its impact on health**

- 2.5.14 New development offers the opportunity to improve environmental quality, through improvement or better use of existing green infrastructure, the provision of new parks, or the integration of green spaces and planting within the development itself, including green roofs and walls.
- 2.5.15 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.

### **Good health and wellbeing outcomes**

- 2.5.16 Part A of the Technical Appendix sets out the aims, ambitions and anticipated outcomes for achieving good health and wellbeing in Bexley.

## **2.6 Theme 6 – Green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity**

### **Context – opportunities and challenges**

- 2.6.1 Bexley is one of London's greenest boroughs (Figure 10). Bexley's green infrastructure comprises 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.
- 2.6.2 Green and blue infrastructure, depending on its quality, location and management, provides multiple benefits, such as flood defence, food production, air quality improvement, urban heat reduction, improved connectivity, enhanced biodiversity and space for leisure and recreation. Much like transport infrastructure, green infrastructure can be classified into different scales from strategic to local importance. However, green infrastructure is not limited to open spaces; it includes green walls and roofs, back gardens, and road and railway verges.
- 2.6.3 Blue infrastructure includes tidal/inland waterways and water features. It 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.
- 2.6.4 Within Bexley, there are several watercourses including the Rivers Cray and Shuttle. The River Thames defines the northern edge of the borough and the River Darent 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.
- 2.6.5 In planning for the growth in Bexley's population, it is necessary to plan for the provision of appropriate levels of quality and accessible green and blue infrastructure, in all its variants, as an integral part of development.

### **Ambitions for green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity**

#### **Green and blue infrastructure ambition 1: Improve access to open space and nature**

- 2.6.6 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.
- 2.6.7 Areas of deficiency can be addressed through new development, where opportunities will be taken to enhance the quality of these spaces. 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. In growth areas, these spaces offer the opportunity for redevelopment.

2.6.8 The Green Grid comprises 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.

2.6.9 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 be enhanced through these initiatives.

### **Green and blue infrastructure 2: Supporting maintenance and enhancement of blue infrastructure**

2.6.10 The watercourses in Bexley are an important 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.

2.6.11 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.

2.6.12 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.

2.6.13 Improvements within the Growth Strategy for Thamesmead provide an opportunity to enhance the Thamesmead canal network, Southmere Lake and the Thames foreshore for biodiversity through enhanced management.

### **Green and blue infrastructure ambition 3: Ensuring existing and new green infrastructure is maintained and enhanced to a high standard**

2.6.14 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.

2.6.15 Increasingly, local authorities lack the resources to take on non-statutory functions, placing a greater reliance on alternative means 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.

2.6.16 Whilst not all will be appropriate in every circumstance, use of less traditional methods of funding and governance are becoming increasingly necessary and will be explored in the light of Bexley's ambitious plans for growth.

2.6.17 New and existing residents in 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 quality and desirability, and enhance amenity value and views from residential areas.

2.6.18 The Charlton to Crayford Integrated Water Management Strategy (IWMS) is a key document that sets out a series of water management and sustainability objectives, including measures that provide a clear framework for developers and other key stakeholders. The aim of the IWMS is to provide spatial planning and technical recommendations on managing the flood risk, water security, water quality and drainage challenges to inform the OAPFs for the area.

#### **Green and blue infrastructure ambition 4: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and strategic green corridors**

2.6.19 Bexley has a rich network of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) 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.

2.6.20 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.

2.6.21 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.

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



Figure 10: Bexley's green and blue infrastructure.





| Tramway House, Erith.



# PART II: PRINCIPLES



# Chapter 3

## Development, land use and managing change

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### 3.1 Sustainable development principles

3.1.1 Sustainable development is synonymous with good growth. It ensures we create lasting places that work economically, socially, and environmentally in the long term to the lasting benefit of their residents and businesses. These principles are basic concepts of land use planning and are secured, in the context of the Growth Strategy, through the creation of:

- **Transport-orientated development** where higher density mixed-use development is concentrated around public transport nodes, thereby making the most efficient use of the best-connected land;
- **Safe, walkable neighbourhoods** where everyday facilities are reached by walking and cycling, reducing car use, improving the environment and promoting health;
- **Lifetime communities** that offer a range of housing types enabling people to stay local and close to family – building strong, stable, less dependent, more self-supporting communities and promoting mental health; and,
- **High quality environments** with safe and pleasant open spaces, well designed buildings and an outstanding cultural and heritage offer.

### 3.2 Land use approaches

3.2.1 Bexley is a borough of contrast with large areas of popular, 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.

3.2.2 Many of these areas will continue in their current roles, providing a variety of housing, local job opportunities, facilities and services. Where land use change occurs, it will be guided by a broad approach to different land uses, designed to achieve the good growth set out in the vision.

## **Employment**

- 3.2.3 Changes in the structure of the local economy have seen a decline in large scale manufacturing industry, one of Bexley's historic employment uses, and the rise of new employment opportunities especially within new locations such as town centres. This level of change will require a new approach to employment land.
- 3.2.4 The key elements of this approach are to:
- Release vacant or underused industrial land in areas with the potential to be well connected and particularly around railway stations and town centres (figure 11);
  - Secure no net loss of industrial floorspace in overall terms across the borough through the intensification of the remaining employment areas to ensure they are used more effectively and efficiently through, for example, increases in site coverage and plot ratios, development of mezzanines and multi-storey schemes, encouragement of co-working, creation of shared facilities and improvements to digital and transport connectivity; and,
  - Where appropriate seek to reconfigure employment sites to create a better-integrated, higher density and higher value location, in the context of proposed connectivity improvements.
- 3.2.5 An assessment of the types and numbers of businesses currently in employment areas likely to be released for housing will be undertaken by the Council as key evidence supporting the Local Plan, along with the availability of alternative employment opportunities and the potential for the relocation of existing occupiers to other sites around the borough.



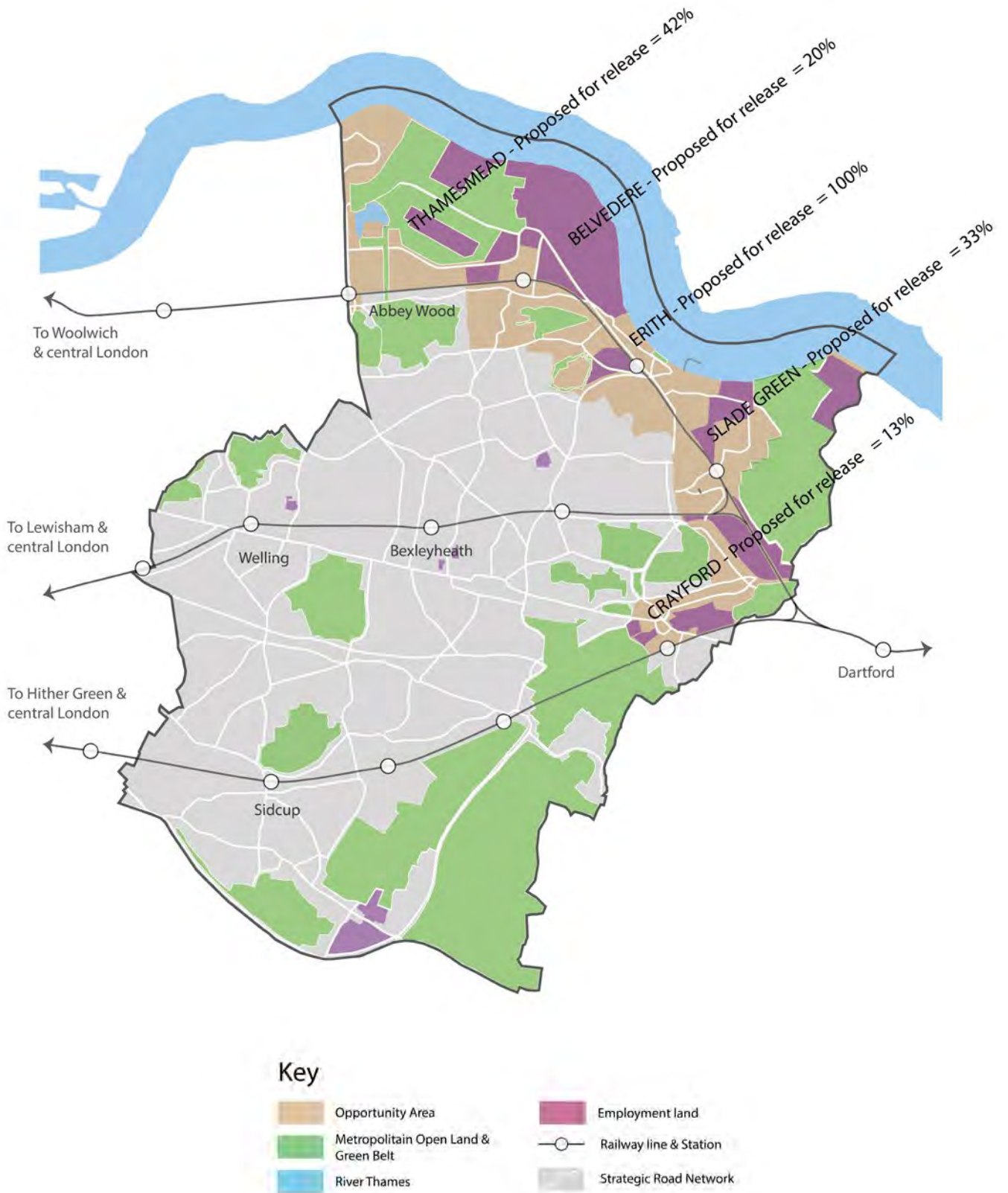


Figure 11: Proportion of employment land proposed for managed release.

## Housing

3.2.6 The key elements of the approach to housing is set out below:

- Support new homes at densities commensurate with the area's character and connectivity;
- Intensify existing residential areas through sensitive incremental redevelopment or infill, with design solutions that allow higher density development that fits well with the existing context; and,
- 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.

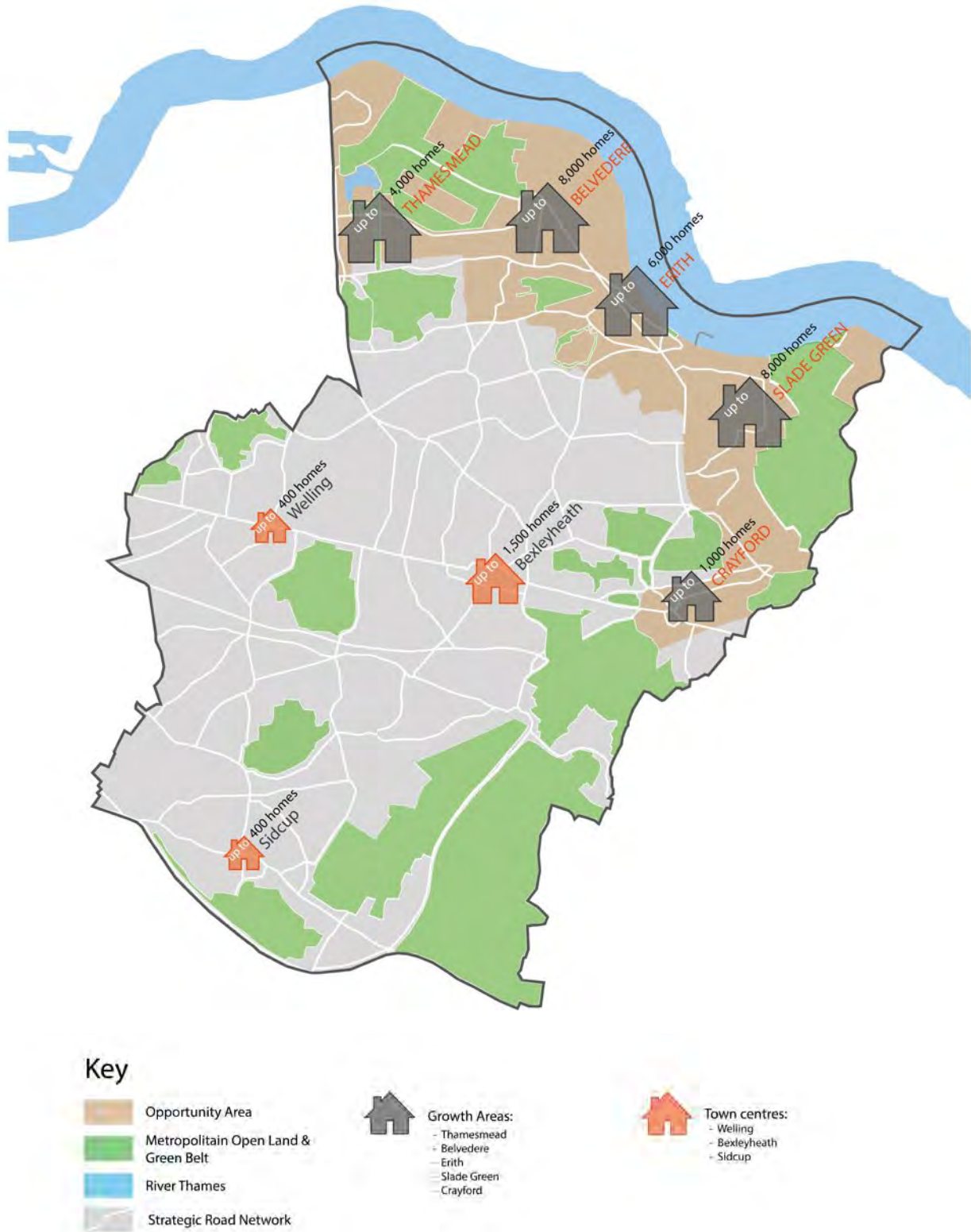


Figure 12: Upper limits of residential development in growth areas and town centres (infrastructure dependent).

### **Town centres and retail**

3.2.7 The key elements of the approach to town centres is set out below:

- Maintain the borough's town centre hierarchy and strengthen through the promotion of appropriate commercial and housing development, improvements in connectivity and environmental enhancements;
- Consolidate town centre boundaries and provide additional flexibility with regard to the mix of uses and how they are assessed, to allow centres to adapt more effectively to changing roles. However, it will be important to maintain an appropriate balance of activities and safeguard against the overconcentration of certain uses so as not to undermine viability and vitality;
- Create new town centres within the major growth areas that currently lack them so as to more effectively and sustainably serve a growing population whilst complementing the existing hierarchy. Significant increases in connectivity may also support a major new regional retail facility within one of these centres;
- Support Bexley's designated neighbourhood centres as important local facilities.

## **3.3 Density principles**

3.3.1 The intensification of development is a key component of the Growth Strategy. This is primarily achieved through an increase in densities or the amount of homes and jobs on a given area of land. There is an important link between the intensification of development and connectivity as better public transport in an area leads to less reliance on the car and reduces the need for car parking, thereby allowing the more efficient use of sites.

3.3.2 The greater the connectivity, the higher the density that is possible; however, greater density also demands high quality design to ensure developments provide an appropriate environment for living and working and a sensitivity to the existing character of an area.

3.3.3 A range of typologies has been developed to illustrate appropriate types of buildings for the main land uses, in areas with different characteristics and levels of connectivity. They are used illustratively in the development frameworks within Part III of the Growth Strategy and have been utilised to calculate the capacity of different sites and areas.

3.3.4 The typologies are not prescriptive and can be varied depending on the circumstances of the site, the existing context, and other relevant factors. The main typologies are set out here, with additional typologies and examples of housing typologies provided in Technical Appendix B.

### Housing typologies

3.3.5 The range of housing typologies is summarised in Table 1.

#### Suburban medium – 35-95 units, or 150-250 habitable rooms, per hectare

3.3.6 This typically includes a mix of town houses and some flats with 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.

#### Urban medium – 45-170 units, or 200-450 habitable rooms, per hectare

3.3.7 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.

3.3.8 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.

3.3.9 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.

#### Urban high – 45-260 units, or 200-700 habitable rooms, per hectare

3.3.10 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 approximately 15 storeys.

3.3.11 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.



	Housing typology description	Habitable rooms per unit range	Units per hectare range	Habitable rooms per hectare range
Suburban medium	Family typology	2.7 – 4.6 hr/u	35 – 95 u/ha	150 – 250 hr/ha
Urban medium	Transitional typology, with a mix of storeys	3.8 – 4.6 hr/u	45 – 120 u/ha	
	Riverside typology	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	
	Buffer typology for adjacent industry or green and blue spaces	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	200 – 450 hr/ha
	Typology where new open space is included	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	
	Town centre mixed-use typology	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 170 u/ha	
Urban high	High density	3.8 – 4.6 hr/u	45 – 185 u/ha	
	Mixed-use riverside typology	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 225 u/ha	
	Mixed-use town centre typology	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 260 u/ha	200 – 700 hr/ha
	Transitional, high density in a previously low density area	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 260 u/ha	

Table 1: Housing typologies.

## Employment typologies

- 3.3.12 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 . The approach taken is based on a tried and tested methodology used widely in employment land reviews, whilst taking into account local 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.
- 3.3.13 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.

	Employment typology description	Density
Low density employment	<b>Warehouse and distribution - Use Class B8</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large scale and high bay warehousing</li> <li>Storage and distribution centres</li> <li>Very large scale: ‘dark store’ (24/7 operation shift work with ancillary offices)</li> </ul>	80m <sup>2</sup> (GEA) per FTE 77m <sup>2</sup> (GEA) per FTE 32m <sup>2</sup> (GEA) per FTE
	<b>Sui Generis</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broader industrial groups</li> </ul>	Variable
Medium density employment	<b>Light and general industrial - Use Classes B1 and B2</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B1(c) Industrial processes appropriate for a residential area</li> <li>B2 General industry not within B1</li> </ul>	47m <sup>2</sup> (NIA) per FTE 36m <sup>2</sup> (GIA) per FTE
High density employment	<b>Offices - Use Class B1(a)</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other than financial and professional services providing for members of the public.</li> </ul>	13.8m <sup>2</sup> (NIA) per FTE

Table 2: Employment typologies.

**Retail typologies**

- 3.3.14 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.
- 3.3.15 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.

	<b>Retail typology description</b>	<b>Density</b>
<b>Low</b>	Retail warehousing and cinemas	Avg. 90m <sup>2</sup> per FTE
<b>Medium</b>	A mixture of traditional high street and retail warehousing	Avg. 54m <sup>2</sup> per FTE
<b>High</b>	Traditional high street	Avg. 17.5m <sup>2</sup> per FTE

*Table 3: Retail and town centre typologies.*

### Transport corridor typologies

- 3.3.16 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.
- 3.3.17 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.
- 3.3.18 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 4.

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 where 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

Table 4: Transport corridor typologies.

### **3.4 Managing change**

3.4.1 Growth provides an opportunity to address historic issues of poor design and places that no longer work well whilst ensuring that the best elements of existing areas are preserved and enhanced to create a sense of place born of the past, existing in the present and well placed for the future.

3.4.2 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.

3.4.3 These 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**

3.4.4 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.

#### **Infrastructure**

3.4.5 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.

3.4.6 Development should not negatively impact on existing infrastructure provision and related services, and must be properly mitigated where it will. New development should not preclude infrastructure that is required later, and will be expected to make allowance for – and in some cases provide and/or fund – key elements of infrastructure on or off site (or set aside land required for that infrastructure). The Council will advise developers of likely infrastructure requirements.

3.4.7 Where development is to be provided in phases, it is not expected that all infrastructure required by the final development must necessarily be made available at the very start. It is important however that there is sufficient infrastructure put in place for each development phase.



### **Parking requirements and car ownership**

- 3.4.8 In the early stages of growth, new residential development in particular will have higher parking requirements that reflect the higher levels of car ownership in the borough in the absence of any public transport offer. The prevailing levels of local car ownership prior to 2020 reinforce the understanding that the required alternative means of travel (and associated infrastructure) are just not in place yet.
- 3.4.9 In the future, it is expected that car ownership will start to decrease particularly as good alternative means of travel are introduced. Within new development, parking layouts should therefore be designed flexibly, with less private on-plot parking. Parking areas can then be redeveloped as the need for them goes down. This allows for further densification as new travel alternatives are delivered and accessibility increases.

### **Open space**

- 3.4.10 Open space can be provided on a temporary basis in earlier phases which can then be developed in subsequent phases. There must be a clear distinction between public open space retained for public/biodiversity interest on a permanent basis and land which is only temporarily open space but will be developed later. 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.

### **Maintaining and strengthening communities**

- 3.4.11 Development should be arranged and phased to mitigate the impact of construction and future adaptation on existing communities as well as to facilitate the intergration of new residents to preserve and enhance community cohesion.

### **Characterisation**

- 3.4.12 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, whilst remaining sensitive to existing development with established communities.

### **Inter-relationship between sites**

- 3.4.13 Developments should not prejudice further development. Wherever possible, design should facilitate future development of adjoining sites including for example the creation of new linkages.

**Safeguarding land**

- 3.4.14 The OAPFs and master plan documents may identify long-term requirements and uses for some sites. Where land has been safeguarded, developments will be expected not to prejudice these uses.

**Decant**

- 3.4.15 Appropriate decant strategies will be developed by the Council in partnership with relevant organisations that reflect good practice guidance on estate regeneration following the adoption of the Growth Strategy.
- 3.4.16 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.

# Chapter 4

## Urban design principles

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### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section 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.
- 4.1.2 Quality is key and 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.
- 4.1.3 These design principles do not represent a departure from the typologies that currently characterise Bexley, but seek to reimagine them in a higher density context. They take inspiration from Bexley's popular 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.
- 4.1.4 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. 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.

### 4.2 Existing character – opportunities and challenges

- 4.2.1 Key character features of Bexley's growth areas include:
- 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;
  - a quantity of housing stock, some in need of renewal while other areas offer popular and affordable accommodation set in pleasant surroundings with good local amenities;
  - 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;

- a public realm of inconsistent quality, with some areas lacking in permeability and legibility and failing to create a sense of place;
- 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;
- 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,
- unique heritage and natural features such as riverside marshes, Lesnes 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.

4.2.2 In addition to these features, each of the growth areas has unique characteristics that help to define them as individual and distinct places in their own right. These are considered further in the development frameworks set out in Section III.

## **4.3 Broad design principles**

4.3.1 The general design principles set out below will facilitate the achievement of the highest quality architecture and urban design.

### **General principles**

1. Ensure that new development is fully integrated with the existing area and has regard to the area's heritage, thus ensuring that the character of Bexley's neighbourhoods retain their authenticity.
2. Create variety and add identity to instil a unique sense of place, taking inspiration from the existing character and context without being overly restricted by it. Where heritage assets are present, they should be protected and utilised, providing an important part of the context and inspiration for new development and being integrated into that new development wherever possible.
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 healthy streets principles to create 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 must be meticulously justified. Towers are only 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 do not set precedents 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.

4.3.2 More detailed principles relating to different development locations and types are provided in the Technical Appendix C.





Thamesmead growth area from the air.



PART III:  
STRATEGY AND  
IMPLEMENTATION



# Chapter 5

## Development figures and infrastructure

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### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This chapter sets out the strategy for how the principles of good growth will be implemented, explaining the methodology for the Council’s scenario for good growth, the headline capacity figures, and the infrastructure required to support the proposed level of growth.

### 5.2 Higher ‘good growth’ scenario methodology

5.2.1 A process was undertaken to generate both housing and job capacities using the broad land use approaches and density principles set out in Part II. This method has been used in other opportunity areas, such as the London Riverside Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF), to assess future potential development as a result of positively managed growth, and is considered to provide a reasonable basis for strategic planning.

5.2.2 Each land use type was ascribed a broad density band based on a number of criteria including proximity to public transport and local services, and density data in the London Plan and the Homes and Communities Agency’s Employment Density Guide 2015. These are set out in Table 5:

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

Table 5: Broad density bands.

5.2.3 For each growth location, an area was calculated and a land allowance was then subtracted for various forms of infrastructure, including transport, education, health, utilities and open space to provide a net development site capacity. This infrastructure need was informed by the development infrastructure funding study (DIFS), drawn from an assessment of requirements using preliminary population projections. The above densities were then applied to the net developable area to generate a gross housing capacity figure.

- 5.2.4 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 housing and employment in the growth areas.
- 5.2.5 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 types of town centre uses to generate an associated floor space and job figure and about the relative strength of the office sector were made in response to increased connectivity. Existing town centre jobs were expected to be retained and the impact of the new town centres were considered neutral as they would cater for additional need.
- 5.2.6 For areas of the borough outside the five main growth areas, potential development sites identified through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2013 were included within 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.
- 5.2.7 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.

#### **Capacity figures: higher 'good growth' scenario**

- 5.2.8 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 sites to come forward for development, and the relative timing of potential major transport infrastructure, illustrated by Figure 13. A similar trajectory for jobs will be developed in due course based on detailed analysis of various relevant factors. The results of the capacity exercise are summarised below:
- Proposed housing growth of up to 31,500 new homes, 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 jobs within the growth areas, and 10,500 jobs throughout the rest of the borough.
- 5.2.9 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.



## **5.3 Infrastructure**

- 5.3.1 Recognising the importance of infrastructure to support growth, the Council, with its partners, has produced 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.
- 5.3.2 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.
- 5.3.3 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 are considered in order to overcome this shortfall.
- 5.3.4 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.
- 5.3.5 The DIFS is a key piece of 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 the review of Bexley's Local Plan.

### Transport infrastructure requirements

5.3.6

The proposed growth figures for housing and jobs are based on significant increases in connectivity through improvements to the existing transport infrastructure in Bexley, as illustrated by Figure 13. 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. The main elements of strategic transport infrastructure that will trigger growth in the borough are:

- a new transit system that introduces high quality local services, which link the main areas of activity and major transport nodes, the expectation being that there will ultimately be an uninterrupted segregated public transport corridor from Slade Green through to Abbey Wood and South Thamesmead, forming the basis of a future bus rapid transit corridor and/or tram operation;
- a DLR extension from the Becton line under the River Thames to Thamesmead, which could be extended on to Belvedere;
- an extension of Crossrail from Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet, introducing high frequency and faster journey times to key employment and leisure destinations – an extension on dedicated infrastructure that would require approximately 20km of new lines, signalling and electrification to avoid ‘performance pollution’ resulting from mixing with existing North Kent Line services; and,
- new river crossings to address severance across the River Thames and provide much improved access between different market areas.

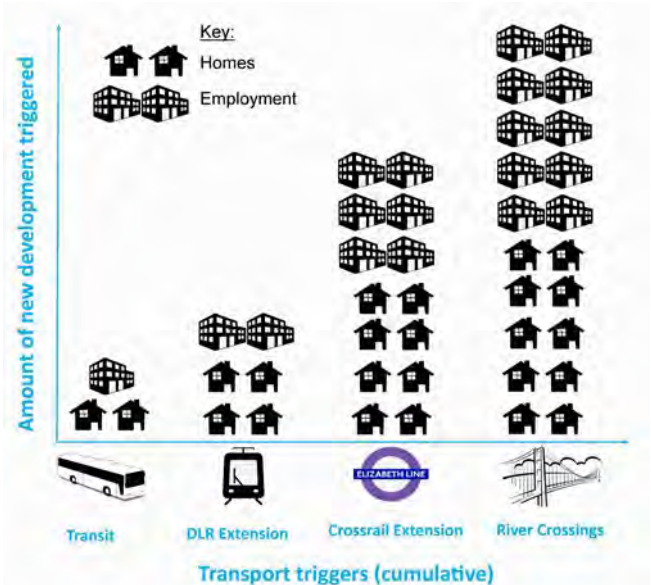


Figure 13: Relationship between delivery of key transport projects and growth.

5.3.7

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.

- 5.3.8 Discussions with TfL have identified potential transport infrastructure triggers, which will be expressed in the Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks.

### **Social and community infrastructure requirements**

- 5.3.9 From previous information gathered, the current infrastructure needs in the borough are being broadly met with the current population. Some services, in particular education and health, are 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 projected as part of the Growth Strategy, there will be a demand for additional social infrastructure facilities.
- 5.3.10 An initial estimate of these social and community infrastructure requirements has been produced in the DIFS 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 growth 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 DIFS.
- 5.3.11 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:**

- The equivalent need for up to nine three-form entry primary schools, requiring over 20ha of land;
- The equivalent need for up to three, 1,900 pupil secondary schools, requiring around 34 ha of land;
- Increased early years, Post 16 and adult education provision; and,
- A Place and Making Institute.

#### **Health:**

- Over 50 additional GPs;
- Over 20 additional dentists;
- Increased provision of pharmacies and opticians; and,
- Increased provision of other primary and secondary healthcare facilities.

#### **Green and Leisure Infrastructure:**

- Up to 16 hectares of additional open space provision;
- Up to 20 new children's play space facilities, requiring over 1 ha of land;
- Increased provision of sports, leisure and cultural facilities; and,
- Space to contribute to the mitigation of flooding.

**Other Infrastructure:**

- Up to 20 additional multi-use facilities, requiring around 1ha of land, including facilities for community activities; and
- Community safety infrastructure, including adequate facilities for emergency services.

**Utility infrastructure requirements**

- 5.3.12 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 located under the highways and as a result, utilities works often have a direct impact on the operation of the highway network.
- 5.3.13 The delivery of growth relies on close coordination of highway and utility planning, operation and maintenance. 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.
- 5.3.14 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.
- 5.3.15 The Council 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.
- 5.3.16 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.
- 5.3.17 Utility projects which have been identified include:
- Strengthening of flood defences;
  - A major reinforcement of the water supply network; and,
  - A decentralised heat network, which could help to provide low-cost heat to residents and businesses.
- 5.3.18 Individual requirements for each growth area are included in the development frameworks in the next chapter.

# Chapter 6

## Growth area development frameworks

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### 6.1 Introduction

The Growth Strategy is borough-wide, but has a focus on particular areas. This chapter sets out strategies for land use and proposals for the main growth areas of Thamesmead, Belvedere, Erith, Slade Green and Crayford, and the other growth areas are considered. The general locations of the growth areas are shown in Figure 14.

- 6.1.1 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.
- 6.1.2 The residential, commercial and industrial/employment development categories are subdivided into 'high', 'medium', and 'low' densities. This is an indication of the level of intensity of each use, which will vary from area to area, and within areas.
- 6.1.3 The development frameworks indicate the key locations of green spaces 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.
- 6.1.4 The development frameworks illustrate an 'end state,' in that they indicate how each growth area may appear following a 30 year development timeframe. Delivery of infrastructure, particularly transport, will be of key importance. 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.
- 6.1.5 Further detailed constraints mapping will be undertaken as part of the development of opportunity area planning frameworks, or subsequent master planning exercises, where the impact on timing and design will be considered more fully.



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

- a. broadly illustrate the patterns and types of use that would be appropriate in the growth areas, whilst retaining a degree of flexibility. The frameworks 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;
- b. illustrate rather than specify development typologies. The examples provide an idea of the likely scale and nature of buildings in each area;
- c. 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;
- d. still allow 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; and,
- e. aid discussions with key partners, landowners and developers.

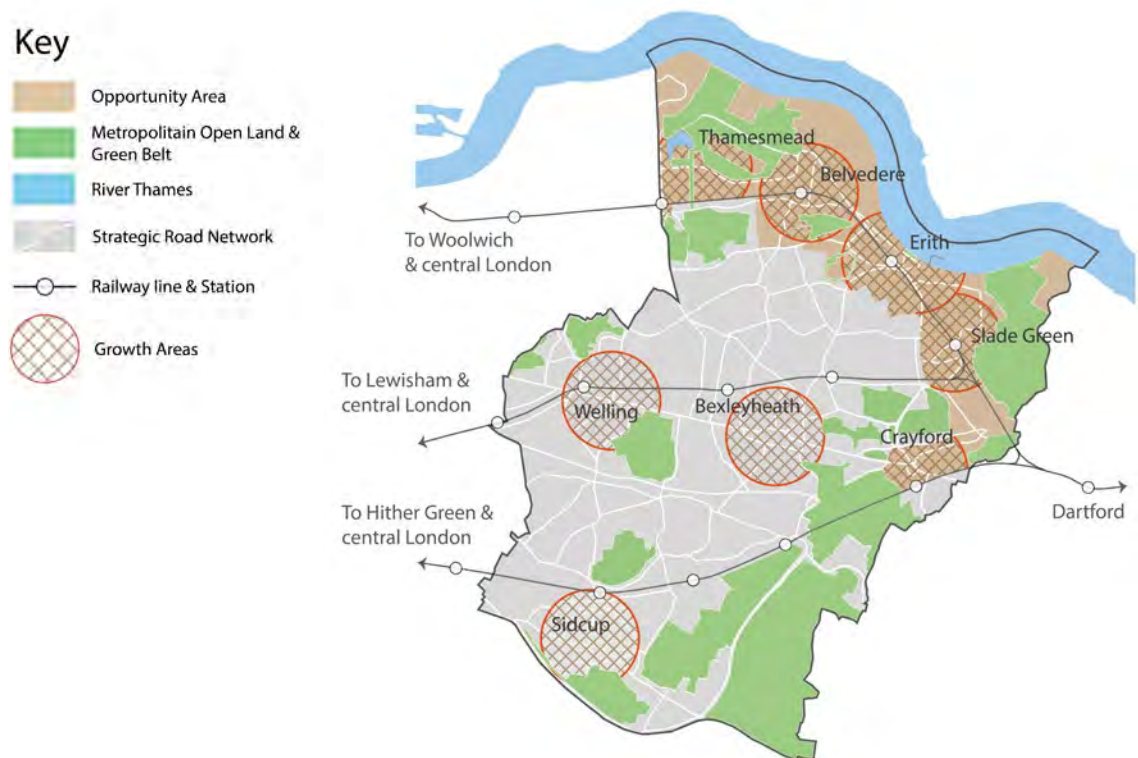


Figure 14: Overview of Bexley showing growth areas.

# THAMESMEAD

Growth area development framework

# THAMESMEAD

## Growth area development framework

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### 1. An introduction to Thamesmead

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

First inhabited by Augustinian monks from Lesnes Abbey who reclaimed and drained the land in the marshes, the area that would become Thamesmead was gradually given over to military uses as part of the Royal Arsenal.

By the twentieth century, however, the military site was surrounded by residential development and there was growing concern about the manufacture and testing of guns and ammunition so near to densely populated areas. In the 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 Thamesmead 'new town' in conjunction with the local boroughs of Greenwich and Bexley.

The growth area today is therefore mainly residential in character, with the 1960s high rise development from the 'new town' being prominent. The townscape is also dominated by a large-scale road network including wide carriageways, flyovers and walkways that have a significant visual impact and cause severance. There is also a series of lakes and waterways and an abundance of open space, which, while offering a range of leisure and recreational activities remain anonymous and underutilised.

Thamesmead has significant strengths and opportunities including a number of community facilities, a significant amount of employment land, areas of nature conservation value and a number of heritage assets. Connectivity is also set to improve significantly for Thamesmead with the arrival of Crossrail services to Abbey Wood in late 2018.

Moreover, Peabody, as a new major landowner, has driven a new vision for the area. Peabody has committed to investing heavily in its estate and has produced a Thamesmead Futures document, setting out a broad strategy for the improvement of the area.

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 development across a number of sites, as well as improved social and transport infrastructure including a new library and the expansion of local primary schools to provide additional school places. It is within this challenging but potentially improving context that the growth proposals for Thamesmead are set.

## 2. The vision for Thamesmead

Thamesmead will provide up to 4,000 new homes and 5,000 new jobs, triggered by the Housing Zone, a new Crossrail station and a Place and Making Institute, and supported by local transport improvements in the surrounding area. In addition a transit node located on Yarnton Way will be served by a segregated transport route and an extension of the DLR. 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 improved green and digital infrastructure.

## 3 Thamesmead's growth area objectives

The vision for Thamesmead includes:

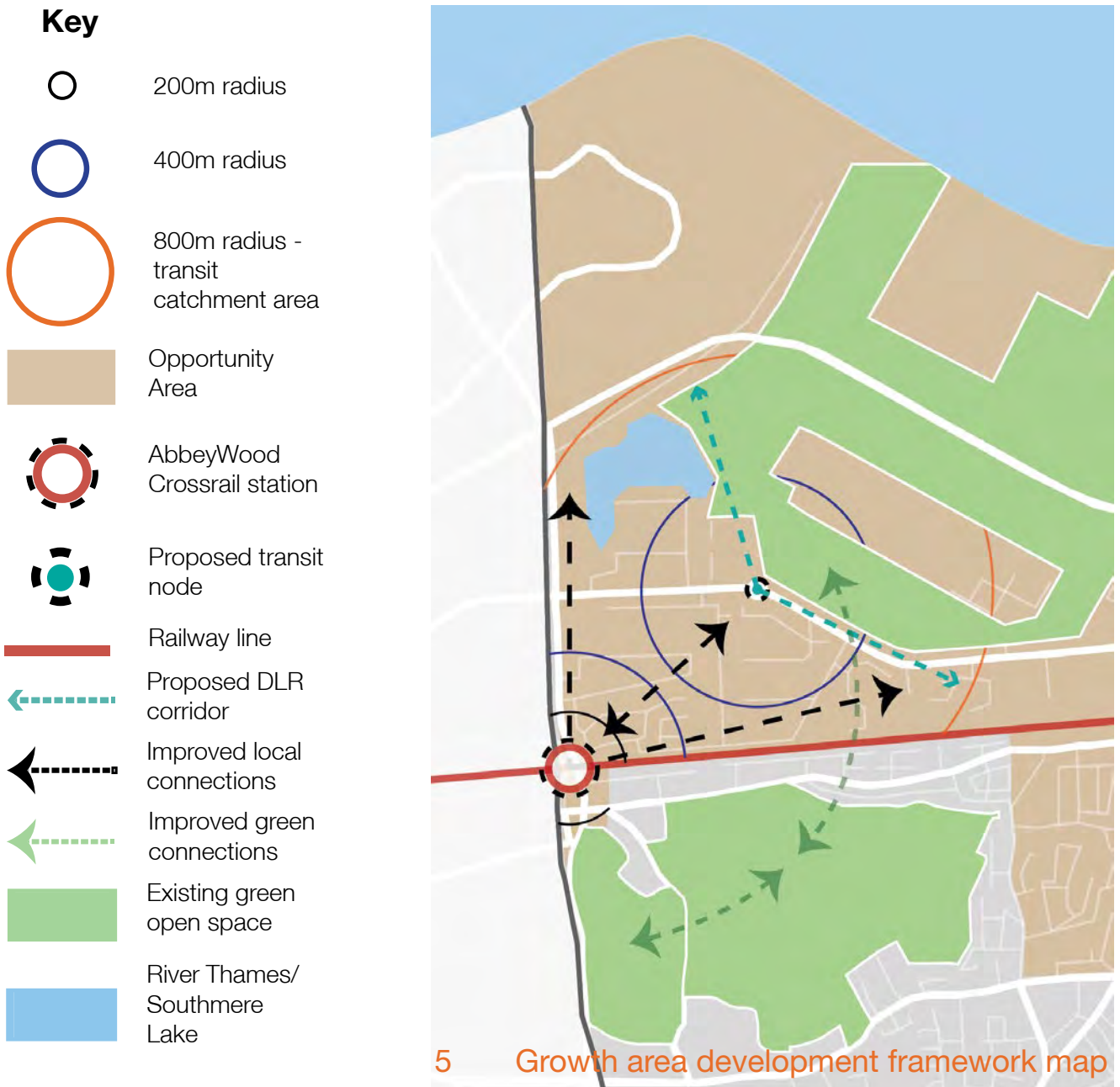
- **Building high quality new homes:** A range of medium and high density new, mixed tenure homes will be provided. New homes will feature flood resilient design and be well connected to walking, cycling and public transport routes.
- **Utilising the full potential of Thamesmead's blue and green assets:** These spaces will be improved to create leisure, cultural, recreational and biodiversity benefits. Green links will provide better access to Thamesmead's green spaces.
- **Improving transport connectivity:** The connectivity benefits resulting from the arrival of Crossrail at Abbey Wood station will be maximised in the surrounding areas through significant improvements in the local transport network, including a transit node potentially served by a segregated transport route and the DLR at Yarnton Way.
- **Improving digital connectivity:** A step change in the quality of digital connections will facilitate an uplift in local skill levels and economic competitiveness as well as improved residential internet services.
- **Creating a new local centre:** Wilton Road will be designated as a local centre in order to build on the shopping and service provision in the area.
- **Facilitating economic development:** Local employment land will be improved and a new local centre will create further economic opportunities. A new Place and Making Institute will offer a world-class centre of excellence for learning related to the built environment and placemaking.

## 4 Thamesmead's development framework actions

The following development framework actions set out what will be done to achieve Thamesmead's objectives.

- **Use a density gradient across the area:** The development framework seeks to locate high quality, higher-density housing around and immediately to the east of Abbey Wood station and within the proposed new local centre to make the most of Crossrail and local service facilities. The station area is considered one of the few locations in the borough that would be appropriate for a focused cluster of towers up to approximately 15 storeys, provided that they are iconic and located directly around Abbey Wood station, acting as way finders. 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. Proposed housing typologies reflect changing densities across the area, and the character of the area including green open spaces and waterside locations.
- **Improve the road network and local connections:** Road network improvements will be undertaken within Thamesmead to reduce severance and provide better facilities for walking, cycling and public transport. These include improvements to junctions and interchanges along the key corridors of Eastern Way, Harrow Manorway and Yarnton Way to fully connect them with pedestrian and cycle links throughout the local area.
- **Expand Wilton Road to create a new local centre:** A local centre will be created around the shops at Wilton Road and the new Crossrail station with medium density retail serving the new high-density residential development as well as the Crossrail station. The centre will become a similar size to existing centres such as Northumberland Heath and Blackfen.
- **Improve the employment area at Veridion Park:** The employment area could be reconfigured to better integrate it into its surroundings and the strategic road network. Visibility of the employment area would therefore be increased and local transport enhancements made the most of. These changes will increase development potential and enable development as a higher-density employment and education hub.
- **Reconfigure land uses along Yarnton Way:** The metropolitan open land boundary could be rationalised to provide a more logical and defensible designation and improve eastern Thamesmead's accessibility to open space. This would also provide an opportunity to locate a Place and Making Institute either here or in the employment area, improve the offer and provide a more efficient layout that takes better advantage of the interconnections between neighbouring land uses and the proposed DLR extension.
- **Improve Thamesmead's green and blue spaces:** A much-improved network of green and blue spaces will be provided to better connect residents with the area's natural and historic environment and the associated recreational, leisure and educational opportunities. The improvement of Thamesmead's green and blue spaces also provide an opportunity to improve flood resilience and biodiversity locally. Key green links will be strengthened.





## 6 Thamesmead’s infrastructure requirements

These are the Council’s estimates for Thamesmead’s infrastructure requirements. They have been produced by applying established assumptions to high level population projections. As more information is available about the timing and amount of development, these infrastructure assumptions will be reviewed. Where at all possible, the Council wishes to see development progress and infrastructure provision go hand in hand.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  1 new primary school                                     |  6ha of green open space<br>2ha of allotment space      |
|  9 additional GPs<br>2 additional Dentists                |  Crossrail, DLR, and segregated public transport routes |
|  1 new community facility<br>2 new children’s play spaces |   |

### Thamesmead Transit Node Catchment Area

Up to 800m from Thamesmead's transit node

**Use priority:** Mainly **residential**. Employment uses on **employment** land.

**Residential Typology**  
*'Urban Medium: Riverside'*

**Density:** 55 to 145 units / ha.

**Building style:** *Mansion blocks up to six storeys addressing the waterfront.*



**Residential Typology**  
*'Urban Medium: Transitional'*

**Density range:** 45 to 120 units / ha.

**Building style:** *A mix of family housing with gardens and apartments with balconies.*



**Employment Typology**  
*'High: Offices, B1(a)'*

**Density range:** 13.8 sqm (NIA) per full-time-employee.

**Industrial type:** *Office uses other than financial and professional services.*



### Abbey Wood and Thamesmead Urban Areas

Between 200m & 400m from Abbey Wood Crossrail station;  
up to 400m from the transit node

**Use priority:** Mainly **residential** development.

**Residential Typology**  
*'Urban High'*

**Density range:** 45 to 185 units / ha.

**Building style:** *Mansion blocks.*



### Abbey Wood Station Local Centre

Up to 200m from Thamesmead's new Crossrail station

**Use priority:** Mixed-use developments, comprising of **retail** and **residential**.

**Retail Typology**  
*'High'*

**Density:** *an average of 17.5 sqm per full time employee.*

**Building style:** *A traditional high street of smaller units at ground floor.*



**Residential Typology**  
*'Urban High: Mixed-use'*

**Density range:** 70 to 260 units / ha.

**Building style:** *Mansion blocks; with some taller elements; retail on the ground floor.*



# BELVEDERE

Growth area development framework

# BELVEDERE

## Growth area development framework

---

### 1 An introduction to Belvedere

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 upgraded Crossness Sewage Works in the 1950s and 60s, modernising the sewage system built to the designs of pre-eminent Victorian engineer Joseph Bazalgette. No longer considered suitable as the site for a country house, Belvedere was developed as a residential suburb, linked to London by the North Kent Railway.

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

The focus of the Belvedere growth area is the railway station and includes much of Belvedere, the area of predominantly low lying land in the River Thames flood plain. Consequently, Belvedere is dominated by expansive low-level industrial and commercial sites, low-density housing and large scale transport infrastructure. The residential landscape is clustered around Belvedere station which has little presence or character. The housing stock is comprised of terraced and semi-detached housing and includes a number of housing association properties as well as private rented accommodation.

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 housing offer. Public art has also recently been introduced to mark the gateway to the Belvedere Green Links regeneration programme.

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.

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.

## 2 The vision for Belvedere

Belvedere will accommodate up to 8,000 new homes and 3,500 jobs, made possible by a step change in connectivity and other essential infrastructure provisions. 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 facilities, 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.

## 3 Belvedere's growth area objectives

The vision for Belvedere includes:

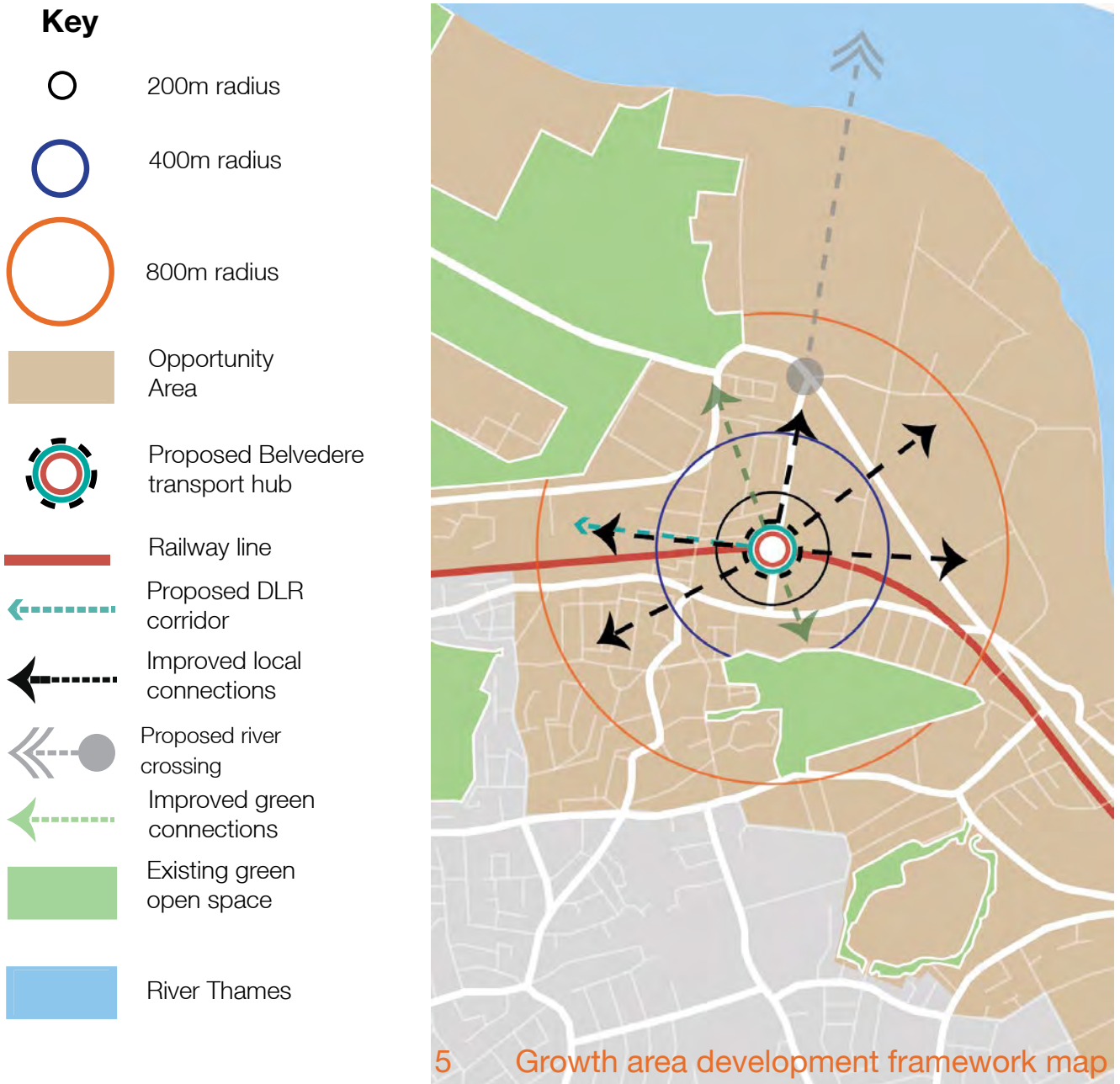
- **Creating a new mixed-use town centre:** Focused on a repositioned station, a new town centre will effectively link the growth area across the railway line and become a vibrant residential, retail and transport interchange.
- **Creating a new transport interchange:** The opportunities presented by the arrival of Crossrail at Abbey Wood, and its possible extension to and beyond Belvedere will be capitalised upon by creating a public transport interchange, connected to the surrounding areas by fast and efficient sustainable transport links.
- **Maximising the potential for housing growth:** Opportunities will be sought to release significant amounts of industrial land to contribute to housing and employment growth.
- **Facilitating economic development:** New high quality, higher density business accommodation will be provided. Enhanced transport and digital connectivity, a pleasant environment and access to a local employment pool with appropriate skills will help attract new and emerging sectors.
- **Ensuring high design standards:** Improving the quality of the public realm and the standard of local architecture will ensure that Belvedere benefits from a higher standard of design.
- **Improving access to nature and tackling climate change:** New green open space will be provided in order to address the area's deficit in public open space. Also, access to nature will be improved. Flood risk will be tackled by promoting design solutions that incorporate flood resilient and resistant design in areas at risk of flooding.



## 4 Belvedere's development framework actions






The following development framework actions set out what will be done to achieve Belvedere's objectives.

- **Create a new transport interchange:** The development framework for Belvedere seeks to achieve a significant improvement in 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.
- **Unlock development:** The release of a significant amount of underutilised industrial land for residential and mixed-use development will mean that the development potential of Belvedere can be realised. Residential areas that are in a poor state of repair would also benefit from renewal.
- **Use a density gradient:** High quality, higher density development will be secured in the town centre and around the transport interchange in order to benefit from a connected and accessible location. Density will reduce with distance from the town centre. Medium density development will be secured on the outer edges of the growth area to respond to the adjacent green space and suburban hinterland.
- **Create a new shopping destination:** New retail development will focus within the new town centre. A high density retail typology of smaller retail units will focus around the transport interchange, servicing an increasing population and greater footfall around the station. Elsewhere in the town centre a shopping quarter, comprising of high quality retail outlets, would anchor Belvedere's new town centre, serving the existing population as well as becoming a significant sub-regional visitor attraction, offering a distinct and complementary shopping experience to Belvedere and the borough as a whole.
- **Implement a segregated public transport route:** A segregated public transport route will run through Belvedere local centre, connecting the new transport interchange with development sites and the wider road network, including a potential new Belvedere river crossing.
- **Improve road junctions:** A number of junction improvements will be provided including around a repositioned Belvedere station.
- **Create green links and green open spaces:** Green links across Belvedere would connect existing open spaces via a series of new smaller existing and proposed open spaces, including the creation of a new local park. The new local park will address future and existing deficiency in this type of open space and will have a multifunctional role, providing for leisure, recreation and biodiversity.



## 6 Belvedere’s infrastructure requirements

These are the Council’s estimates for Thamesmead’s infrastructure requirements. They have been produced by applying established assumptions to high level population projections. As more information is available about the timing and amount of development, these infrastructure assumptions will be reviewed. Where at all possible, the Council wishes to see development progress and infrastructure provision go hand in hand.

-  4 new primary schools  
1 new secondary school
-  6ha of green open space  
5ha of allotment space
-  13 additional GPs  
7 additional Dentists
-  Crossrail, DLR, and segregated public transport routes
-  4 new community facilities  
4 new children’s play spaces  
1 new library

### Belvedere Inner Town Centre

Up to 200m from Belvedere's new transport hub

**Use priority:** Mixed-use developments, comprising of **retail** and **residential**.

#### Retail Typology

'High'

**Density:** an average of 17.5 sqm per full time employee.

**Building style:** A traditional high street of smaller units at ground floor.



#### Retail Typology

'Medium'

**Density:** an average of 54 sqm per full time employee.

**Building style:** A mixture of traditional high street and retail warehousing.



#### Residential Typology

'Urban High: Mixed-use'

**Density range:** 70 to 260 units / ha.

**Building style:** Mansion blocks; with some taller elements; retail on the ground floor.



### Belvedere Outer Town Centre

Between 200m & 400m from Belvedere's new transport hub

**Use priority:** Mainly **residential** development.

#### Residential Typology

'Urban High: Transitional'

**Density range:** 70 to 260 units / ha.

**Building style:** Mansion blocks with some taller elements for way finding.



#### Green Open Space Typology

'Local parks and smaller green spaces'

**Local Parks:** 2 to 20 hectares.

**Amenity Areas:** 0.4 to 2 hectares.



### Belvedere Urban Area

Between 400m & 800m from Belvedere's new transport hub

**Use priority:** Mainly **residential** development.

#### Residential Typology

'Urban Medium'

**Density range:** 55 to 145 units / ha.

**Building style:** Family housing with private gardens and apartments with balconies.



# ERITH

Growth area development framework

### 1 An introduction to Erith

The town of Erith has a long and varied history linked to its position by the River Thames including use as a Royal Dockyard and a prominent fishing village. The arrival of the railway in 1849 brought both new housing and industry: engineering works began to manufacture steam engines, armaments, stoneware and mining equipment, as well as bricks and loam from the local pits. By 1966, in the aftermath of WWII, the combination of extensive bomb damage and industrial decline precipitated a comprehensive redevelopment plan. As a consequence, much of the historic town centre was demolished and replaced with a modernist shopping centre and swimming baths, the former now modernised and the latter demolished.

It is this town centre that is the focus of the Erith growth area. The main transport corridor is comprised of the North Kent railway line and the A206/A2016 (South Thames Development Route). However, these create significant barriers to movement locally, dissecting the growth area. Land to the west is characterised by industrial and retail warehouse uses and the Erith Quarry residential development site. Unusual topography is also evident with significant level changes existing from past quarrying activity as well as the Abbey Ridge.

To the east lies the town centre. Retail is focused within the redeveloped shopping precinct and a large 'edge-of-centre' supermarket surrounded by surface car parking. The riverside area has a mix of uses including residential, open space and commercial. Erith's housing stock also demonstrates variety: dwellings range from Victorian terraces and villas to modern apartment blocks and sheltered housing schemes. Housing differs across Erith in age and style as well as in quality. Tenure within the area is also a varied mix of owner occupation, housing association and private rented.

The employment areas are comprised of both older industrial buildings (some of which, like in the Frasier Road area, providing characterful examples from the early twentieth century) as well as more modern pre-fabricated sheds. A number of safeguarded wharf facilities also exist on the riverside. There are 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.

In recent years, a number of regeneration and redevelopment initiatives have made positive improvements to some of Erith's housing stock and enhanced the character of the town centre through introducing public art. However, despite these improvements and efforts Erith's underutilised riverside continues to be disconnected from its town centre, surrounded by a road network that suffers significant congestion at key junctions.

With its riverside location, Erith is considered to hold significant potential. With a focus on securing significant transport improvements, a major regeneration programme is currently being developed to unlock key sites, particularly within Erith Western Gateway, and including a new shared living and working neighbourhood.



## 2 The vision for Erith

The Erith growth area will accommodate up to 6,000 new homes and 2,000 new 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, Erith town centre will become the focus of shared working and innovation facilities to support a substantial employment sector shift towards new engineering and manufacturing activities associated with the 'Maker Movement'. Erith's built and natural heritage 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 potential new Crossrail station at Erith. Existing open spaces will be improved and new open spaces will be created, with particular attention given to Erith's river front.

## 3 Erith's growth area objectives

The vision for Erith includes:

- **Increasing transport connectivity:** A new Crossrail station at Erith, as part of a possible extension of Crossrail, would significantly improve connectivity and development potential for the growth area. This would be reinforced with improved local transport links, including segregated public transport routes into and through the area and upgrades of key road junctions.
- **Optimising the use of land:** Development potential will be realised through the diversification and intensification of retail and residential development within a consolidated Erith town centre. Development potential will also be realised through the redevelopment of industrial and residential estates within the growth area. This will enable higher density, higher quality residential and mixed-use development to be located in close proximity to both the town centre and Erith station.
- **Ensuring high design standards:** The quality of the built environment will be improved across Erith by demanding high design standards for new buildings and improvements to the public realm.
- **Utilising the full potential of Erith's green and blue assets:** Natural assets will be protected or enhanced. The improvement of existing, as well as the creation of new, green open space will help create green links, joining green assets to a more accessible Thames riverside.
- **Incorporating heritage and mitigating flood risk:** The historic built environment will be protected or enhanced. Flood risk will be mitigated, particularly through the use of design solutions that incorporate flood resilience.

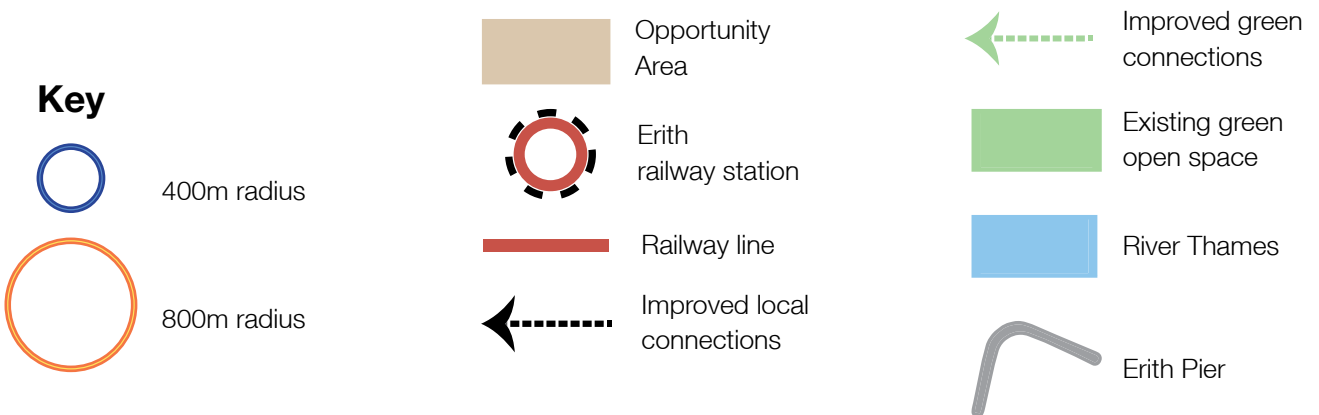
## 4 Erith's development framework actions

The following development framework actions set out what will be done to achieve Erith's growth area objectives.

- **Improve and densify the town centre:** The development framework for Erith seeks to concentrate higher density residential and commercial uses, including shared working and innovation facilities, into the town centre and to support the improvement and expansion of existing shops, business and services to allow Erith to continue to function as a larger district centre. Erith's town centre will fall under a 'traditional high street' typology.
- **Use a density gradient across Erith:** High quality, high-density residential development will be provided within the town centre, reflecting the high connectivity and access to services in the vicinity. Medium density housing will sit further out and enable a transition to the existing lower density suburban areas on the periphery of the growth area. Residential typologies have therefore been suggested that reflect the area's urban character, an opportunity to promote co-living and the riverside location. Erith is not considered an appropriate location for towers; rather, higher densities would be predominantly achieved through four to eight story mansion blocks with the scope for slightly higher developments along the river.
- **Reimagine employment areas:** Some employment areas will be redesigned as a co-working campus. Living and working accommodation, together with associated uses, will be refashioned from historic warehouses and by adding new buildings. High and medium density residential uses could be accommodated to maximise the benefits brought by proximity to the potential new Crossrail station and to the town centre. Land use arrangements would be shaped by flooding issues and the need to avoid residential habitable rooms below flood risk levels.
- **Create green links and green open spaces:** Green links across Erith will connect open spaces and introduce new usable green spaces to address issues of deficiency in open space provision. All large new residential development will seek to incorporate a variety of multifunctional green spaces within them including play space provision and SuDS schemes wherever possible.
- **Implement a segregated public transport route:** Local public transport connectivity will be significantly improved by the operation of a segregated public transport route running east-west through the town centre and beyond.
- **Address barriers to movement:** Severance will be reduced by providing a number of junction improvements around Erith town centre.








5 Growth area development framework map



## 6 Erith's infrastructure requirements

These are the Council's estimates for Thamesmead's infrastructure requirements. They have been produced by applying established assumptions to high level population projections. As more information is available about the timing and amount of development, these infrastructure assumptions will be reviewed. Where at all possible, the Council wishes to see development progress and infrastructure provision go hand in hand.

- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
|  | 2 new primary schools<br>1 new secondary school                                   |  | 4ha of green open space<br>3ha of allotment space |
|  | 9 additional GPs<br>5 additional Dentists   |  | Crossrail and segregated public transport routes  |
|  | 3 new community facilities<br>3 new children's play spaces<br>1 new sports centre |  |   |

### Erith Town Centre

Up to 400m from Erith railway station

**Use priority:** Mixed-use developments, comprising of **retail** and **residential**.

#### Retail Typology

*'High'*

**Density:** an average of 17.5 sqm per full time employee.

**Building style:** A traditional high street of smaller units at ground floor.



#### Residential Typology

*'Urban High - Riverside mixed-use'*

**Density:** 55 to 225 units / ha.

**Building style:** Mostly mansion blocks with some family housing.



#### Residential Typology

*'Urban High'*

**Density range:** 45 to 185 units / ha.

**Building style:** Mansion blocks.



### Erith Urban Area

Between 400m & 800m from Erith's railway station

**Use priority:** Mainly **residential** development.

#### Residential Typology

*'Urban Medium - Transitional'*

**Density range:** 45 to 120 units / ha.

**Building style:** Family housing with private gardens and apartments with balconies.



# SLADE GREEN

Growth area development framework



# SLADE GREEN

## Growth area development framework

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### **1 An introduction to Slade Green**

The Slade Green growth area lies to the southeast of Erith on flat low-lying land adjacent to Thames Marshland. For much of its history, the area remained largely uninhabited but for a Saxon manor at 'Hoobury'. In 1900, its fortunes changed with the building of the Whitehall Engine shed, now renamed Slade Green depot. Built to service 100 steam locomotives, the depot 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 developed.

Running through Slade Green from north-west to south-east the North Kent railway line cuts across the area and is a significant barrier to movement. Slade Green has relatively poor public transport accessibility despite a railway station and a number of bus routes.

Around the station a residential suburban character is dominant. Housing is typically a combination of post war semi-detached and terraced houses with modern infill development including late twentieth century low to medium rise blocks of flats. Despite the presence of some high-rise elements dating from the 1960s and 70s there is no sense of overdevelopment. Some historic railway cottages are also present in the vicinity of the station. A large proportion of the dwellings are in housing association ownership. An on-going estate renewal programme is seeing significant improvement.

To the north is a distinctly industrial area made up of a mix of activities including small and large warehousing, open storage and waste processing. However, some of this employment land has been vacant for some time and is now being redeveloped for housing. Small neighbourhood shopping parades exist on Forest Road near Slade Green railway station and Bridge Road. There is no recognised town centre in Slade Green. Opportunities exist for the opening up of the river, the addition of new housing into the existing area, the improvement and reconnection of open space and the creation of a new focus to the community.

## 2 The vision for Slade Green

Situated next to one of London's most important remaining floodplain marshlands along the River Thames, Slade Green will accommodate up to 8,000 new homes and 1,500 new 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 improve open space.

## 3 Slade Green's growth area objectives

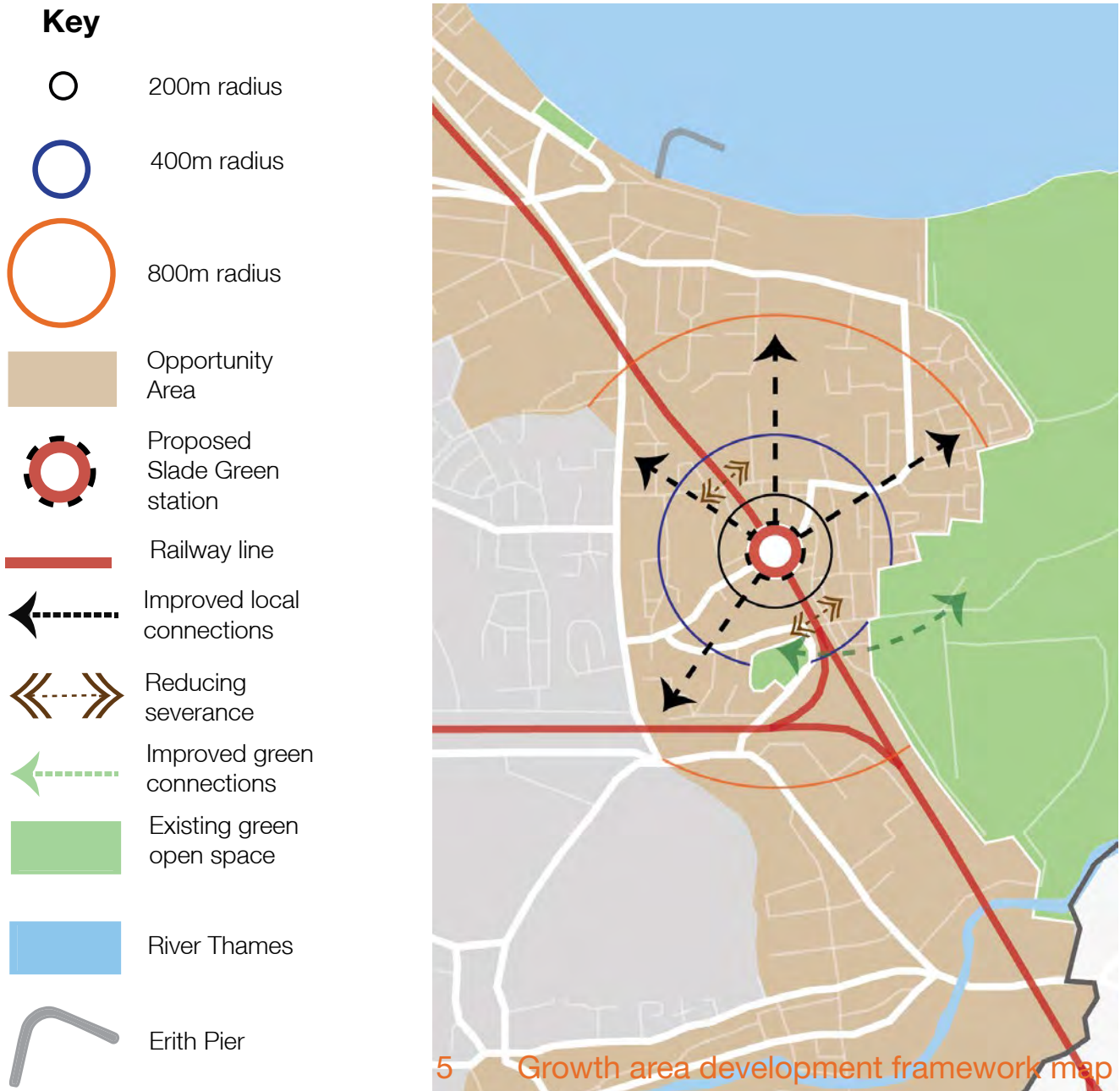
The vision for Slade Green includes:

- **Creating a new mixed-use local centre:** A new local centre around a repositioned Slade Green station will serve as the focus for high quality residential and retail development well integrated in to the existing built form linking the growth area across the railway line.
- **Improving transport connectivity:** The creation of a new Crossrail station at Slade Green as part of the potential Crossrail extension will significantly improve Slade Green's connectivity and development potential. Further, local transport improvements will enhance accessibility levels between development sites and other key locations as well as redirecting commercial traffic away from sensitive areas.
- **Maximising the potential for growth:** Opportunities will be sought to release underused land so that high quality residential and mixed-use development can take advantage of improved connectivity and a new local centre.
- **Creating new employment:** A new, more diverse employment offering, with strong links to Slade Green's new local centre will be supported. The best elements of Slade Green's existing employment will be protected.
- **Improving access to nature and mitigate flood risk:** Green spaces will be enhanced to improve access to nature. Flood risk will be addressed by promoting design solutions that incorporate flood resilient and resistant design.

## 4 Slade Green's development framework actions






The following development framework actions set out what will be done to achieve Slade Green's growth area objectives:

- **Create a new focus for the community:** There will be a new local centre around a repositioned Slade Green railway station. It will be of similar size and function to existing centres such as Northumberland Health and Bexley Village. New shops would fall under a traditional high-density high street typology with a layout of smaller units servicing higher density residential and commercial development surrounding it and taking advantage of the foot fall around the railway station.
- **Consolidate and create employment:** In the north of the growth area existing businesses will be consolidated and new employment opportunities created. Uses in the northern medium density employment area will form an appropriate transition to adjacent residential uses whilst ensuring the available land is optimised.
- **Establish a density gradient across Slade Green:** New high quality, high-density development will be focused in and around the new town centre, the station and along main public transport routes, reflecting the enhanced connectivity and access to services in these locations. For these areas, a residential typology of four to eight storey mansion blocks has been suggested; towers are not considered appropriate for Slade Green. Beyond these areas, medium density typologies have been suggested for new development so as to ensure a transition to existing lower density areas and open space.
- **Implement a segregated public transport route:** A new segregated public transport route through the area will connect the new railway station and town centre to adjacent development sites and beyond.
- **Improve the road network:** Securing junction and interchange improvements would reduce severance and congestion. In the longer term, the building of a Slade Green relief road could redirect heavy traffic from the remaining industrial areas directly onto the strategic road network and away from Manor Road.
- **Improve the quality of open space:** Existing open space will be enhanced, enabling the limited release of underused open space in highly accessible locations.



## 6 Slade Green's infrastructure requirements

These are the Council's estimates for Thamesmead's infrastructure requirements. They have been produced by applying established assumptions to high level population projections. As more information is available about the timing and amount of development, these infrastructure assumptions will be reviewed. Where at all possible, the Council wishes to see development progress and infrastructure provision go hand in hand.

- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
|  | 3 new primary schools<br>1 new secondary school                             |  | 1ha of green open space<br>4ha of allotment space |
|  | 12 additional GPs<br>8 additional Dentists                                  |  | Crossrail and segregated public transport routes  |
|  | 4 new community facilities<br>2 new children's play spaces<br>1 new library |  |   |

### Slade Green Local Centre

Up to 200m from Slade Green's new transport hub

**Use priority:** Mixed-use developments, comprising of **retail** and **residential**.

#### Retail Typology

*'High'*

**Density:** an average of 17.5 sqm per full time employee.

**Building style:** A traditional high street of smaller units at ground floor.



#### Residential Typology

*'Urban High: Mixed-use'*

**Density range:** 70 to 260 units / ha.

**Building style:** Mansion blocks; retail on the ground floor.



### Slade Green Inner Urban Area

Between 200m & 400m from Slade Green's new transport hub

**Use priority:** Mainly **residential** development.

#### Residential Typology

*'Urban High: Transitional'*

**Density range:** 70 to 260 units / ha.

**Building style:** Mansion blocks.



### Slade Green Outer Urban Area

Between 400m & 800m from Slade Green's new transport hub

**Use priority:** Mainly **residential** development with consolidation of **employment**.

#### Residential Typology

*'Urban Medium: Transitional'*

**Density range:** 45 to 120 units / ha.

**Building style:** Family housing with gardens and apartments with balconies.



#### Employment Typology

*'Medium: General Industry, B2'*

**Density range:** 36 sqm (GIA) per full-time-employee.

**Industry type:** Industrial not within B1.





# CRAYFORD

Growth area development framework

# CRAYFORD

## Growth area development framework

---

### 1 An introduction to Crayford

Set within a broad river valley, Crayford is centred on an ancient village founded at the point where the River Cray could be forded. A settlement since Palaeolithic times, Crayford has been an important settlement for thousands of years.

In the nineteenth century the town grew rapidly, encouraged by the presence of tanning and silk-making companies that were attracted by the river. 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.

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.

Adjacent to the town centre is a greyhound track with associated leisure facilities and two employment areas made up of a mix of modern warehouse and trade counter units and older industrial buildings of poorer quality. Existing residential areas are predominantly low density terraced and semi-detached stock.

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. Changes in the course of the river in the nineteenth century to service industry have increased flood risk. The Cray riverside provides the potential for a pleasant riverside development though this potential is balanced against significant physical constraints to growth such as flooding, contamination and overhead power lines.

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.

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. 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.

## 2 The vision for Crayford

The Crayford growth area will accommodate up to 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.

## 3 Crayford's growth area objectives

The vision for Crayford includes:

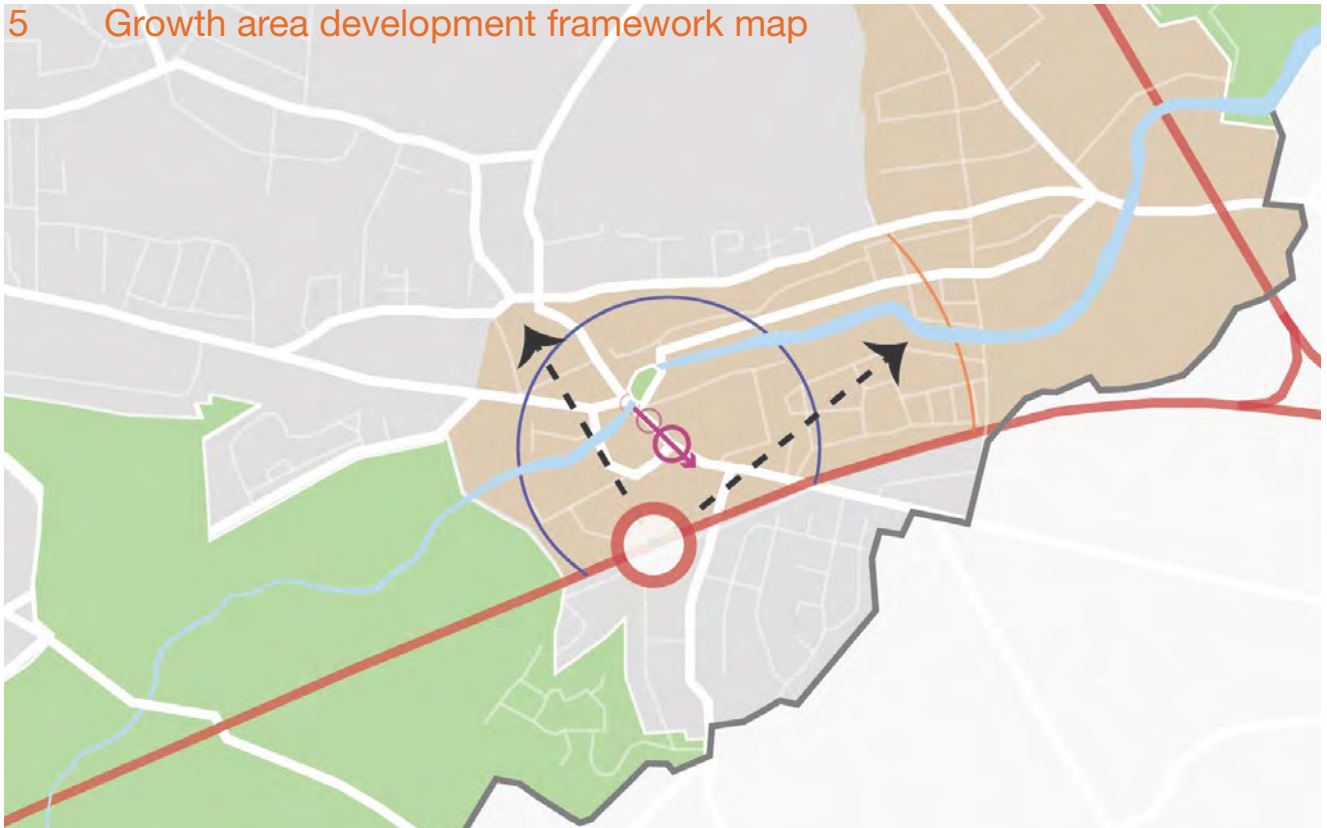
- **Reconfiguring the town centre:** The refocussing of retail activity towards the station will encourage integration with the core part of the original town centre, improving its vibrancy and vitality.
- **Improving the road network:** Targeting key junctions for improvement will allow for the enhancement of movement in and around the town centre and will increase local connectivity.
- **Maximising the potential for housing growth:** Encouraging well-designed, medium density, mixed-use schemes, and releasing some areas of industrial land for residential development, will promote a more efficient use of land in and around Crayford's town centre.
- **Protecting and enhancing biodiversity, and mitigating flood risk:** The use of innovative design solutions will increase resistance and resilience to flooding, particularly in high risk areas.

## 4 Crayford's development framework actions

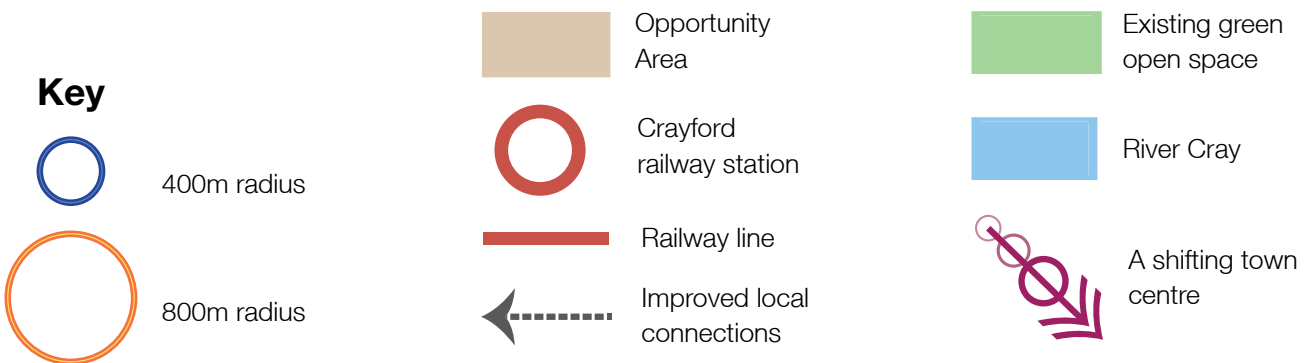
The following development framework actions set out what will be done to achieve Crayford's growth area objectives.

- **Consolidate the town centre:** By releasing the area of underutilised secondary retail frontage north of the River Cray for medium density residential use, and incorporating Tower Retail Park into the town centre, retail activity will become more focused and the vitality of the town centre will be improved.
- **Encourage more efficient use of land:** 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 including limited scope for improvements to connectivity. This growth area is not considered appropriate for towers.
- **Focus industrial development:** The successful employment area to the east of the growth area will continue to be the focus of industrial development, and activities appropriate for close proximity to residential development will be encouraged. Existing underused and poor quality employment sites, will be brought forward for medium density residential development further out.
- **Establish an appropriate density gradient:** A range of housing typologies reflect the riverside and open space characteristics of the area, and provide an appropriate transition from higher density development around the station and town centre, to the lower density suburban development.
- **Increase accessibility of open space:** Improving access along the River Cray green corridor will be a priority, given the proximity to the existing high-quality open spaces of Hall Place, Shenstone Park and Crayford Marshes, that can be reached along this route.
- **Improve local transport and highways:** A number of highway improvements will be provided to reduce severance and improve the general environment. Connections will be enhanced and junction alterations will also allow improved traffic flow through the town centre.

5 Growth area development framework map





**Key**




**6 Crayford's infrastructure requirements**

These are the Council's estimates for Thamesmead's infrastructure requirements. They have been produced by applying established assumptions to high level population projections. As more information is available about the timing and amount of development, these infrastructure assumptions will be reviewed. Where at all possible, the Council wishes to see development progress and infrastructure provision go hand in hand.

 1 new primary school

 4ha of allotment space

 7 additional GPs  
1 additional Dentist

 1 new community facility  
1 new children's play space



### Crayford Town Centre

Up to 400m from Crayford's town centre

**Use priority:** Mixed-use developments, comprising of **retail** and **residential**.

**Retail Typology**

*'Medium'*

**Density:** an average of 54 sqm per full time employee.

**Building style:** A mixture of traditional high street and retail warehousing.



**Residential Typology**

*'Urban Medium: Riverside'*

**Density:** 55 to 145 units / ha.  
**Building style:** Mansion blocks up to six storeys addressing the river.



**Residential Typology**

*'Urban Medium: Mixed-use'*

**Density range:** 70 to 170 units / ha.  
**Building style:** Apartments with retail units on the ground floor.



### Crayford Urban Area

Between 400m & 800m from Crayford's town centre

**Use priority:** Mainly **residential** development with some **employment**.

**Residential Typology**

*'Urban Medium: Transitional'*

**Density range:** 45 to 120 units / ha.  
**Building style:** Family housing with gardens and apartments with balconies.



**Employment Typology**

*'Medium: Light Industry, B1(c)'*

**Density range:** 47 sqm (NIA) per full-time-employee.  
**Industry type:** Industrial processes appropriate for a residential area.



# OTHER LOCATIONS

for growth in the borough

## 6.7 Other locations for growth in the borough

- 6.7.1 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. As this growth will be achieved without significant interventions in the built environment or a step change in transport connectivity, specific improvements will be required to ensure sustainable growth with lower scale development.
- 6.7.2 As such, development 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.
- 6.7.3 The broad principles of growth set out for the main growth areas are equally applicable, though at a smaller scale, in these locations.
- 6.7.4 Neighbourhood parades, which often act as centres of the community and are located on strategic bus routes, offer some additional development opportunities, where flats can be provided at higher densities above shops, as illustrated by Figure 15.
- 6.7.5 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 within the existing suburban context.



Figure 15: Higher density flatted development above shops in neighbourhood parades.

- 
- 6.7.6 The use of maisonettes or small blocks of flats that have the appearance of semi-detached houses can help to sensitively infill some residential areas. This type of development is successful as it can provide 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.

### **Bexleyheath**

- 6.7.7 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.
- 6.7.8 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.
- 6.7.9 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 up to 1,500 new dwellings and up to 1,500 new jobs.

### **Sidcup**

- 6.7.10 Sidcup is characterised by high quality housing stock, significant heritage assets, and two internationally renowned performing arts colleges: Rose Bruford and Bird College. The aim is to build upon this with complementary activity that grows the local economy.
- 6.7.11 Significant investment in the town to enhance the public realm and incubate businesses has much improved the retail offer and a number of new outlets have opened, 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.
- 6.7.12 A number of other key development opportunities are emerging, including a significant character building at the Grade II listed Sidcup Manor House and the potential for a cinema in the town, and a theatre by the station.
- 6.7.13 The area is considered to offer potential for further modest housing and commercial growth, amounting to 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 suitable for the clustering of towers.

### **Welling**

- 6.7.14 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. Aided by investment in transport and public realm improvements, the town has performed relatively well despite the wider restructuring of the retail sector.
- 6.7.15 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 up to 400 new homes and 800 jobs. Welling is not identified as a locality for the clustering of towers.

### **Foots Cray**

- 6.7.16 Foots Cray lies in the southeast corner of the borough and incorporates a large industrial area 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.
- 6.7.17 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 up to 1,000 new jobs.

## 6.8 Delivery mechanisms

6.8.1 There are a number of different mechanisms available to the Council to help deliver the Growth Strategy and these methods will be further developed and refined over time to provide a robust tool kit of interventions.

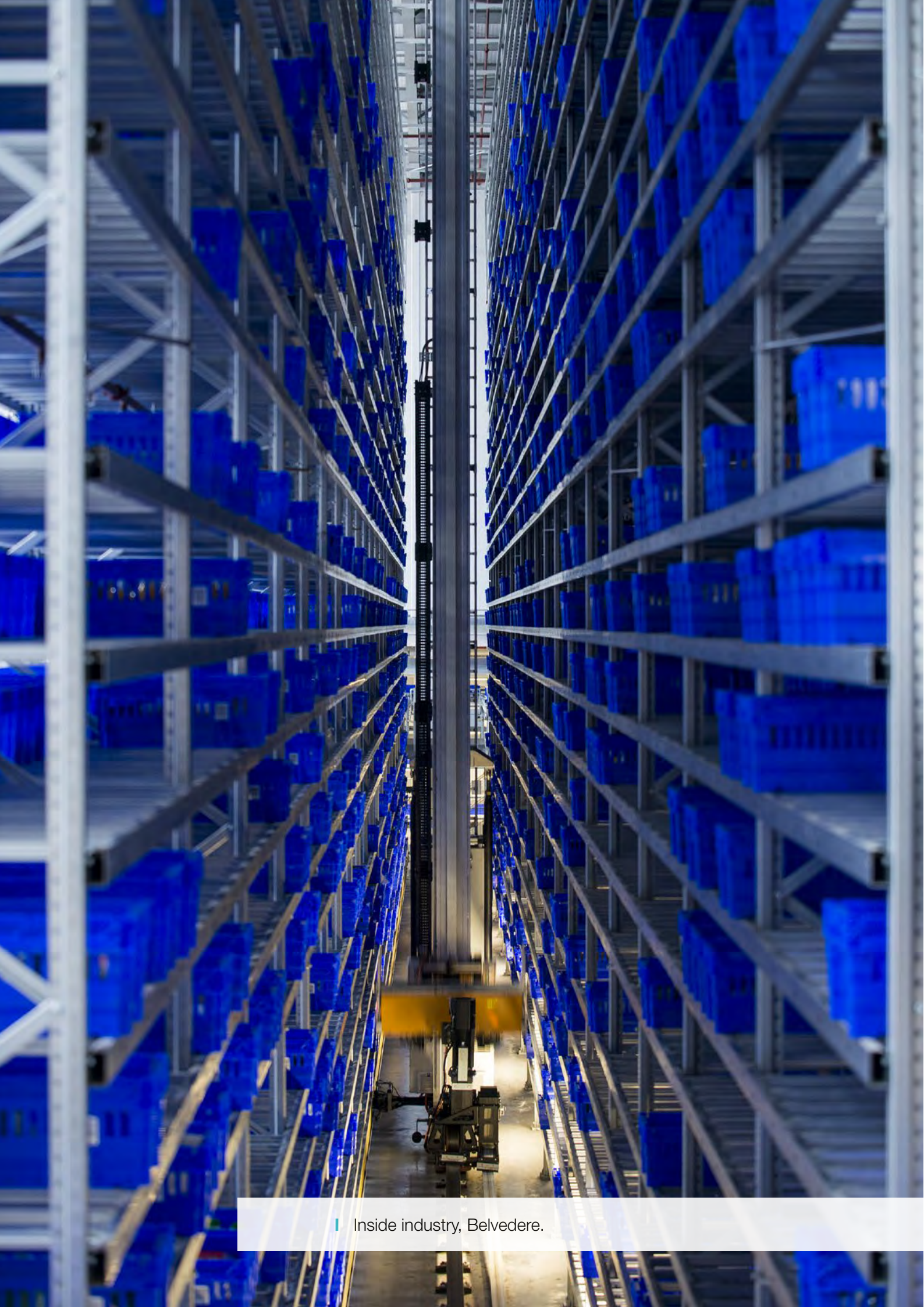
6.8.2 The Council has also established a growth fund whereby capital monies are pooled into a single pot to support projects that deliver positive growth. In addition, the Council has established a wholly owned development company.

6.8.3 Each mechanism 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. Options include:

- (a) The Council seeking to deliver growth through the development plan and development management process, adopting policies and guidance that set out the broad framework for an area, and evaluating the resulting planning applications against these;
- (b) The Council working 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 although this will be undertaken as a last resort to bring larger development sites forward where there are clear public benefits to doing so;
- (c) The Council using 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.

6.8.4 The Council already employs, or is investigating, a number of these methods to progress regeneration projects. One current example is partnership working with Peabody, including the use of the Council's CPO powers, to deliver the Housing Zone proposals in Thamesmead.





| Inside industry, Belvedere.

# TECHNICAL APPENDIX



# Appendix [A]

## Aims, ambitions and outcomes from the growth themes

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### Theme 1 - Economic development

#### Aims for economic development in Bexley

AIMS

- To secure the highest rates of economic growth in London including the encouragement of high technology and creative sectors, that not only support the development of the local economy but also the on-going evolution and competitiveness of London and the wider southeast;
- 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 and 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.

#### Ambitions for economic development

AMBITIONS

- To use growth to secure economic development;
- To create a broader, more resilient and higher quality economic base;
- To make Bexley a thriving and ambitious place of opportunity through education and employment;
- To enhance Bexley's image.



**Anticipated economic development outcomes**

**Short term**

- increased awareness of Bexley and its offer;
- increased investment by existing firms;
- increase in commercial property transactions;
- increased local jobs; and
- 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; and,
- 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 sector;
- 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; and,
- a skilled local workforce able to take advantage of good quality employment opportunities with every chance to acquire new skills and gain advancement.

## Theme 2 - Housing development

### AIMS

#### Aims for housing development in Bexley

- To ensure 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; and
- To move to high quality, compact, mixed use development, including live/work units and higher densities in locations with good transport links, service provision and regeneration potential.

### AMBITIONS

#### Ambitions for housing development

- To create lifetime neighbourhoods where people have the opportunity to stay throughout their lives irrespective of their accommodation need;
- To build more new homes at higher densities across all tenures and affordable to households across a range of incomes and sizes;
- To prevent homelessness;
- To develop a range of well-designed and managed dwellings; and,
- To meet a range of housing needs.

### OUTCOMES

#### Anticipated housing development outcomes

##### Short term

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

##### Medium term

- an increase in the supply of well-designed homes;
- reduced homelessness; and
- 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); and,
- strong, cohesive, sustainable, mixed and balanced communities.



## Theme 3 - Transport provision

AIM

### Aim for transport provision in Bexley

- 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.

AMBITIONS

### Ambitions for transport provision

- To improve the connectivity of places;
- To create healthy streets and liveable neighbourhoods to provide opportunities for local living;
- To ensure effective connections within, between and to/from each growth area, including links with the rest of the borough and beyond;
- To maximise connectivity by a choice of means of travel thereby reducing reliance on the car; and
- To secure the required transport infrastructure investment in a timely and cost-effective fashion.

OUTCOMES

### Anticipated transport provision outcomes

#### Short term

- increased capacity on, and number of passengers using, public transport; and,
- increased numbers walking and cycling.

#### Medium term

- higher mode share for commuting by public transport;
- lower levels of congestion; and,
- improved journey time reliability.

#### Long term

- a high quality, safe, accessible and affordable transport system;
- highly connected places across a choice of transport modes;
- improved access to jobs and services; and
- greater network resilience.

## Theme 4 - Social infrastructure provision

### AIMS

#### Aims for social infrastructure provision

- 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; and,
- To value, support, protect and promote the borough's heritage assets and make the most of them in adding value for growing communities and other visitors.

### AMBITIONS

#### Ambitions for social infrastructure provision

- To create and maintain a robust evidence base;
- To manage and protect assets effectively;
- To plan phasing of the provision of services and facilities;
- To develop a funding strategy for infrastructure; and,
- To ensure a flexible approach, with continuous communication and collaboration.

### OUTCOMES

#### Anticipated social infrastructure provision outcomes

##### Short term

- infrastructure need identified and funding strategy agreed;
- existing social and community infrastructure rationalised and safeguarded; and,
- engagement with key delivery bodies.

##### Medium term

- phase development/improvement of facilities in association with housing growth; and,
- a high quality educational offer that meets local needs within the community it serves.

##### Long term

- a range of flexible community facilities, capable of meeting a variety of local needs effectively and highly accessible to local people; and,
- treasured local heritage assets put to sustainable uses that contribute positively to the community.

## Theme 5 - Achieving good health and wellbeing

### AIMS

#### Aims for achieving good health and wellbeing

- 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.

### AMBITIONS

#### Ambitions for achieving health and wellbeing

- To encourage people to be active through creation of walkable neighbourhoods and availability of recreation facilities
- To improve the mental wellbeing of residents
- To improve the environment to address its impact on health

### OUTCOMES

#### Anticipated health and wellbeing outcomes

##### Short term

- health infrastructure need identified and funding strategy agreed;
- existing health infrastructure rationalised and safeguarded; and,
- 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; and,
- 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; and,
- a cleaner and greener environment that improves residents' health and mental wellbeing.

## Theme 6 - Green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity

### AIMS

#### Aims of green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity

- To protect and enhance 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;
- 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; and,
- To achieve a net gain for biodiversity and avoid a net biodiversity loss, 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.

### AMBITIONS

#### Ambitions for green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity

- To improve access to open space and nature and reduce deficiencies;
- To protect and enhance biodiversity and strategic green corridors;
- To ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is maintained and enhanced to a high standard; and
- To support maintenance and enhancement of blue infrastructure.

### OUTCOMES

#### Anticipated green and blue Infrastructure and biodiversity outcomes

##### Short term

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

##### Medium term

- provide additional green/blue infrastructure;
- reduce quantitative deficiency of green infrastructure; and,
- 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; and,
- open space deficiency is effectively addressed through new provision or enhanced facilities.

# Appendix [B]

## Density principles and typologies

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A range of typologies has been developed to illustrate appropriate types of buildings for the main land uses, in areas with different characteristics and levels of connectivity. They are used illustratively in the development frameworks within Part III of the Growth Strategy and have also been utilised to calculate the capacity of different sites and area.

The typologies are not prescriptive and can be varied depending on the circumstances of the site, the existing context, and other relevant factors. The main typologies are considered in Chapter 3, and further detail is provided here.

### **Housing typologies and examples**

Bexley has developed a range of proposed residential typologies to indicate the broad character of new residential development. The typologies 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. These typologies are set out in Table 6 and examples illustrated in Tables 7 – 9.

	Housing typology description	Habitable rooms per unit range	Units per hectare range	Habitable rooms per hectare range
Suburban medium	Family typology	2.7 – 4.6 hr/u	35 – 95 u/ha	150 – 250 hr/ha
Urban medium	Transitional typology, with a mix of storeys	3.8 – 4.6 hr/u	45 – 120 u/ha	
	Riverside typology	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	
	Buffer typology for adjacent industry or green and blue spaces	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	200 – 450 hr/ha
	Typology where new open space is included	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 145 u/ha	
	Town centre mixed-use typology	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 170 u/ha	
Urban high	High density	3.8 – 4.6 hr/u	45 – 185 u/ha	
	Mixed-use riverside typology	3.1 – 3.7 hr/u	55 – 225 u/ha	
	Mixed-use town centre typology	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 260 u/ha	200 – 700 hr/ha
	Transitional, high density in a previously low density area	2.7 – 3.0 hr/u	70 – 260 u/ha	

Table 6: Housing typologies.



Table 7: Suburban medium typology examples.

**Suburban medium typology**  
40–80 units / 150–250 habitable rooms per hectare

The suburban medium typologies typically include 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. Suburban medium is a good way to intensify existing suburbs when it is done in a sensitive way and supported by the necessary infrastructure.

**Example scheme: Suburban medium family typology**

**Ratio, Phases 1,2 and 3, Slade Green**

235 residential dwellings

- Density: 106 units per hectare
- Parking: 350 parking spaces (1.5 per unit)
- Housing mix: 23 x 2 bed and 12 x 1 bed apartments



**Example scheme: Suburban medium family typology**

**Queen Mary’s Place, Roehampton, SW London**

369 residential dwellings

- Density: 64 units per ha
- Parking: 459 parking spaces (1.3 per unit)
- Affordable housing: 25%
- Housing mix: 34% 3-bed family homes



Table 8: Urban medium typology examples.

Urban medium typologies 55–145 units / 200–450 habitable rooms per hectare
<p>These typologies generally include 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. Examples are provided to suit different locations within the growth areas.</p> <p>This transitional urban medium typology can provide a 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.</p> <p>The buffer typology shows how medium density can be achieved in a natural setting to capitalise on a unique location or when a gap is needed from an industrial location.</p>

Example scheme: Urban medium transitional typology
<p><b>Erith Park (Larner Rd), Erith</b></p> <p>Phase One= 343 units over 5.32 hectares</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Density: 64 units per hectare</li> <li>• Parking: 304 parking spaces (0.9 per unit)</li> <li>• Housing mix: 37% 3-bed plus; 80% affordable</li> </ul> <p>Phase Two = 244 units over 3.4 hectares</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Density: 72 units per hectare</li> <li>• Parking: 253 parking spaces (1 per unit)</li> <li>• Housing mix: 19% 3-bed plus, 78% affordable</li> </ul> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div>

Examples scheme: Urban medium riverside typology

**Chandlers and Chichester Wharves, Erith**

235 residential dwellings

- Density: 106 units per hectare
- Parking: 350 parking spaces (1.5 per unit)
- Housing mix: 223 x 2 bed and 12 x 1 bed apartments



Example scheme: Urban medium buffer typology, with green and blue spaces

**Stanmore Place, Harrow**

*Car parking is provided mainly in a screened multi-storey car park, which provides a buffer from the industrial estate beyond.*

798 homes over 6.2 hectares

- Density: 129 units per hectare
- Parking: 697 parking spaces (0.9 per unit)
- Housing mix: 20% 3-bed plus family units



Example scheme: Urban medium typology, providing additional open space

**Kidbrooke Village (Phase Six), Royal Borough of Greenwich**

*South-facing, landscaped podium garden 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.*

713 homes over 7.07 hectares, including parkland

- Density: 101 units per hectare
- Parking: 363 parking spaces (0.5 per unit)
- Housing mix: 14% 3-bed plus family houses; 611 1 to 3 bed apartments



Example scheme: Urban medium town centre mixed-use typology

**Hillcrest Court, Amersham**

*Design is modern but sensitive to surrounding properties.*



31 residential dwellings

- Density: 129 units per hectare
- Parking: 53 spaces (1 per unit plus for retail)
- Scheme mix: 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments with private and shared amenity space; three ground floor retail units (including a restaurant)





Table 9: Urban high typology examples.

<b>Urban high typologies</b> 70–260 units / 200–700 habitable rooms per hectare	
<p>These typologies illustrate the top density range in Bexley’s growth areas and include predominantly flatted development in four to eight storey mansion blocks, and less residential parking. It seeks to utilise the most connected locations within easy reach of key public transport nodes. A few locations in the borough would be appropriate for a focussed cluster of towers of up to approximately 15 storeys. Please see the strategies of the specific growth areas for further detail.</p> <p>There is a range of typologies to fit with differing locations including a mixed-use town centre development, a riverside location and a transitional scheme moving from lower to high density as the connectivity of an area increases.</p>	
<b>Example scheme: Urban high density typology</b>	
<p><b>Crayford Town Hall, Crayford</b></p> <p>186 residential dwellings over 1.1 hectares</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Density: 169 units per hectare</li> <li>• Parking: 215 spaces (1.2 per unit)</li> <li>• Scheme mix: One, two and three bedroom apartments; 30% affordable</li> <li>• 2,298m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential uses including library, community centre, surgery and shops</li> </ul>	
	

**Example scheme: Urban high mixed-use riverside typology**

**Charter Quay, Kingston-upon-Thames**

244 residential dwellings over 1.3 hectares

- Density: 188 units per hectare
- Parking: 244 underground spaces (1 per unit)
- Scheme mix: 239 flats in six and seven storey blocks arranged around two pedestrian squares; five town houses along the riverside
- Eight commercial units, business centre, gym and theatre



**Example schemes: Urban high mixed-use town centre typology**

**Walthamstow Arcade, London**

*Above the leisure complex, new flats and houses surround a communal garden. A nine screen multiplex cinema, 2,000m<sup>2</sup> of shops and restaurants all fronting on to a public square.*

121 residential dwellings in three to six storey mansion blocks

- Density: 263 units per hectare
- Parking: Car free development with three disabled spaces. Residents not eligible for local parking permits.
- 850 space public car park.





**Example scheme: Urban high mixed-use town centre typology**

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

*Five to seven storeys over 2,955m<sup>2</sup> of retail and community uses including a library on the ground floor.*

106 dwellings over 0.526 hectares

- Density: 202 units per hectare
- Parking: 140 spaces



**Example scheme: Urban high typology in a previously low density area**

**Zenith House, Barnet**

*High density residential in a low density area of suburban houses and 'big box' retail. A 16 storey tower is surrounded by six storey mansion blocks stepping down to mews houses to form a low rise boundary to neighbouring gardens. Half the site is landscaped open space, 1,600m<sup>2</sup> of B1 or D1 and 100m<sup>2</sup> of retail.*

308 residential dwellings

- Density: 282 units per hectare
- Parking: 226 spaces (0.7 per unit)



# Appendix [C]

## Urban design principles

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The general design principles set out in Chapter 5 will achieve the highest quality of architecture and of urban design. They are supplemented by more detailed principles relating to different development locations and types below.

### 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 healthy streets, 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 Design should allow streets to retain a domestic scale and character, for example by stepping buildings. Higher densities should be accommodated 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 Private amenity should facilitate an urban form of living and include provision of open space above ground level such as balconies, terraces and roofs. Communal or private garden spaces should be designed with regard to the context of the development and their impact on the wider area. Soft landscaping, usually featuring native species, should be incorporated as appropriate. Spaces should be attractive, practical, easy to use and maintain, and designed with all residents in mind, with connections to existing off site spaces maximised.
- 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 to simultaneously create street frontages and protect the biodiversity of the riverside edge, and use development as an opportunity to enhance biodiversity.
- 4 Maximise the 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. Where appropriate, create green spaces to act as buffer zones between development and river's edge, to provide visual, amenity, and biodiversity benefits.
- 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. Have regard to the Areas of High Archaeological Potential along the rivers, which have the potential to provide archaeological evidence of the evolution of development and settlements in the borough.

### **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. Planting should use native species as appropriate.
- 2 Create green links, including linear parks between neighbourhoods to promote access and improve biodiversity, aiming for a net increase in native species.
- 3 Create and improve connectivity to rivers and lakes.
- 4 Consider the use of water features and whether they could 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 all 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 Ensure design, scale and layout 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. 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. Kerb-guided busways are not considered appropriate within the Bexley growth areas.
- 2 Create an attractive, accessible and safe pedestrian environment in line with the principles of healthy streets. Improvements in public transport and pedestrian environment are key to reducing reliance on vehicles and therefore facilitating a reduction in the provision of parking.
- 3 Base street patterns on the established street types, considering the 'movement' and 'place' functions of streets.
- 4 Provide wide and well-designed pavements that include tree planting.
- 5 Incorporate high quality and low maintenance landscaping where appropriate.
- 6 Provide pedestrian and cycle crossings along desire lines to the Thames riverside and other key locations.
- 7 Incorporate features in the highway such as shared utility corridors that promote the efficient and effective coordination, provision and maintenance of utility infrastructure.
- 8 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.
- 9 Provide links for pedestrians and cyclists to key destinations including shops and services, transport links and amenity space.

### **Segregated transport corridors**

- 1 Provide a minimum width of 15 metres, unless there are good design and operational reasons to provide something narrower. 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.
- 2 Provide sufficient space at stops 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.
- 3 Accommodate cyclists 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.
- 4 Utilise remaining space as landscaping, a utilities margin, or other public realm elements integrated into the wider design of the development.

# Glossary

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## A

**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).

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## B

**Bexley Core  
Strategy (2012)**

The key document in Bexley's Local Plan. It contains 21 strategic policies to guide development in order to achieve the strategic vision. See also Bexley Local Plan.

**Bexley Local  
Plan (2012)**

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.

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## 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 to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east. The line will become operational through central London in 2018.

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C2G	<b>Crossrail towards Gravesend</b>	A potential extension of Crossrail 1 from Abbey Wood towards Gravesend and Hoo Junction. The route is currently safeguarded.
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**D**

	<b>Dark fibre network</b>	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	<b>Development Infrastructure Funding Study</b>	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**

	<b>'Fab Lab'</b>	An abbreviation of the term 'fabrication laboratory.' Fosters an entrepreneurial spirit by providing the space, equipment and help for people to rapidly turn ideas into working prototypes.
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**G**

	<b>Garden City</b>	A holistically planned new community with a focus on provision of open space and greenery.
GDPO	<b>General permitted development order</b>	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 detailed thresholds within which the development is considered to be permitted. Development that is outside of these thresholds requires planning permission.

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GLA	<b>Greater London Authority</b>	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).
GI	<b>Green and Blue Infrastructure</b>	Green and blue Infrastructure can be described as the network of multi-functional green space and green features (e.g. green roofs), which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. It includes the Blue Ribbon Network, rivers, streams and ditches, but excludes the hard-surfaced public realm. This network lies within the urban environment and the urban fringe, connecting to the surrounding countryside. Due to the character and density of the built environment in town centres, the green infrastructure elements that are most applicable in these areas include green roofs, street trees, and techniques such as soft landscaping. It provides multiple functions and benefits for people and wildlife including: flood management; urban cooling; improving physical and mental health; green transport links (walking and cycling routes); ecological connectivity; and food growing. Green and open spaces of all sizes can be part of green infrastructure provided they contribute to the functioning of the network as a whole.

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## H

	<b>Healthy streets</b>	An approach to making streets healthier, safer and more welcoming through environmental improvements and prioritising public transport and walking/cycling routes.
HMO	<b>House in multiple occupation</b>	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.

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**L**

LDS	<b>Local Development Scheme</b>	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	<b>London Enterprise Panel</b>	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 Mayorality works with London’s boroughs, businesses and Transport for London, to take a strategic view of the regeneration, employment and skills agenda for London.
	<b>London Plan</b>	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**

	<b>Maker Movement</b>	An emerging industrial trend in which individuals re-engineer existing products to provide new products, services, or efficiencies.
	<b>Mayor of London</b>	An elected politician who, along with the London Assembly of 25 members, is accountable for the strategic governance of Greater London.

**N**

NPPF	<b>National Planning Policy Framework</b>	The Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
NPPG	<b>National Planning Practice Guidance</b>	Provides guidance as to how policies within the NPPF should be applied.

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	<b>Network Rail</b>	The authority responsible for the railway network in the UK.
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## O

OA	<b>Opportunity Area</b>	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	<b>Opportunity Area Planning Framework</b>	Supplementary planning guidance to the London Plan which sets out the strategy for development within opportunity areas.

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## P

PCPA	<b>Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</b>	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.
	<b>Policies Map</b>	A 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.

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## R

RP	<b>Registered Providers</b>	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.
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**S**

SMEs	<b>Small and medium-size enterprises</b>	Enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euros.
SHLAA	<b>Strategic housing land availability assessment</b>	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	<b>Strategic housing market assessment</b>	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.
SRN	<b>Strategic Road Network</b>	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 the London Borough of Bexley.
SPD	<b>Supplementary planning document</b>	Guidance that expands on policies and proposals in a planning authority's Local Plan.
SPG	<b>Supplementary planning guidance</b>	Guidance associated with the Mayor's London Plan, including opportunity area planning frameworks.

**T**

	<b>Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission</b>	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.
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	<b>Thames Gateway</b>	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.
TfL	<b>Transport for London</b>	One of the GLA groups of organisations, accountable to the Mayor, with responsibility for delivering an integrated and sustainable transport strategy for London.
TOD	<b>Transport orientated development</b>	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.

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## U

UDP	<b>Unitary Development Plan</b>	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).
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