

Bexleyheath Civic Offices Planning Brief

Adopted
13 July 2007

Updated
April 2015



Update April 2015

This update ensures the *Bexleyheath Civic Offices Planning Brief SPD* remains consistent with the planning framework and policies it is intended to supplement. Since the adoption of the SPD in July 2007, there have been key changes to the relevant policy framework at the national, regional and local levels as well as the disposal of the site and the relocation of the Council offices to 2 Watling Street. The highway and movement network has also changed as part of the Bexleyheath Town Centre Renewal scheme.

After extensive public consultation, the Government on 27 March 2012, published the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. The policy and guidance in the NPPF applied with immediate effect and is a material consideration when determining planning applications and preparing local plans. Supporting this, the Government published online National Planning Policy Guidance in March 2014.

Regionally, the Mayor of London published *The London Plan* in July 2011, Revised Early Minor Alterations (REMA) in October 2013 and Further Alterations (FALP) in March 2015. In addition, Bexley has progressed its local plan, with the adoption and publication of the *Bexley Core Strategy* in February 2012. The policies of both these Development Plan documents, along with remaining saved policies from Bexley's Unitary Development Plan, are taken into account in this addendum to the SPD.

This addendum sets out a series of modifications to the *Bexleyheath Civic Offices Planning Brief SPD* ensuring the document is up-to-date in light of the changing circumstances, as noted above.

Please note: Red text represents an addition, and ~~text with strikethrough~~ a deletion.

Foreword

Bexleyheath is one of the most successful shopping centres in the Thames Gateway and the civic heart of the borough but its continued success requires further land for expansion.

~~The Civic Offices buildings, at the eastern end of the town centre, need to be replaced. They have exceeded their life expectancy, are expensive to maintain and are unsuited to the needs of modern local government services. Since the relocation of the Council to the former Woolwich Building Society headquarters building, the former civic offices have been demolished and the site cleared.~~ Redevelopment of this site provides an exceptional opportunity for combining the replacement of civic accommodation with other uses that will enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole.

This Planning Brief sets out the Council's vision for a mixed use development, the range of acceptable uses and its design expectations. ~~It has been~~ **The original brief was** adopted following a period of public consultation in early 2007. Details of comments received **during the original consultation on the document** and how the Council ~~has~~ responded to them can be found on ~~the development plan page of~~ the Council's web site at bexley.gov.uk. The Planning Brief will be used to guide the Council's consideration of the proposals coming forward from prospective **developers** ~~partners~~.



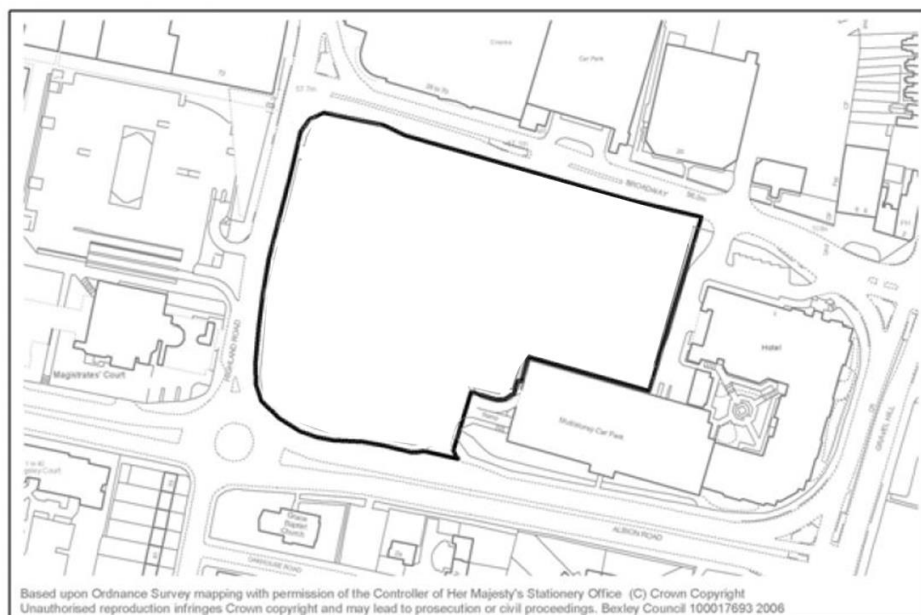
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The purpose of this planning brief

- 1.1 Bexleyheath is a major centre, situated at the heart of the Thames Gateway, Europe's largest regeneration initiative, between the major growth areas of East London, Greenwich Peninsular and North Kent. **The London Borough of Bexley Council** is seeking to promote the borough as the place of choice for sustainable, suburban living in the Thames Gateway with particular appeal to families.
- 1.2 As part of its strategy, **the London Borough of Bexley Council** is committed to continue the development of Bexleyheath as one of the best centres in the Thames Gateway and as the successful commercial, leisure and civic centre of the borough. The quality of new buildings and public spaces achieved to date has helped safeguard Bexleyheath from the impact of larger centres like Lakeside, Bluewater and Bromley. Growth planned **within Bexley Borough and** for the Thames Gateway presents opportunities for its further development.
- 1.3 ~~Situated at the eastern end of the town centre, the prefabricated 1970s Civic Offices have exceeded their life expectancy, are increasingly expensive to maintain and have no architectural merit. Redevelopment provides a unique opportunity for the Council and its partners to introduce new uses, to create an attractive, modern scheme that makes better use of the site and meets the needs of a successful modern Council.~~
- 1.4 This brief has been prepared to guide prospective **developers** partners on acceptable uses and design expectations. ~~The Council's civic requirements are also detailed.~~
- 1.5 ~~This fully Council-owned,~~ 1.5 hectare site is one of the last foreseeable opportunities for major regeneration in the borough's strategic centre and fronts three roads - Broadway, Highland Road and Albion Road. Parts of the highways may also be included for an appropriate scheme subject to closure orders **or other licenses**.

Map 1 site boundary



2 New Civic Requirements

Objectives

2.1 The Council is promoting a high quality development of the Civic Offices site to secure:

- sustainable development and a landmark building that enhances Bexleyheath as a place to visit, shop, live or work;
- a higher density scheme with a mix of uses contributing to high human interaction and amenity;
- the best possible use of this special development opportunity in the borough's strategic centre;
- modern accommodation for the Council's staff and civic activities suited to its community leadership role
- one or more development partners;
- a highly accessible development for pedestrians with the minimum impact on local traffic;
- a scheme that is integrated with the Bexleyheath commercial area and will contribute to its continued success; and
- a high quality public realm with opportunities for public art.

New civic requirements

~~2.2 The Council's accommodation is spread across five main sites and six other, smaller out-posts across the borough. The Council has been reviewing its civic accommodation needs with a view to making best use of its property portfolio, maximising value for money and minimising the call on its resources. The nature of local government has changed in recent years, and will continue to change rapidly, and this will have implications for future office and civic accommodation needs.~~

~~2.3 Following advice from its consultants, the Council has adopted the principle of consolidating as many of its civic accommodation requirements as possible on the current Civic Offices site. This assumes a reduction in the staff requiring accommodation and the adoption of more flexible working arrangements. Business continuity and the need to provide an efficient and accessible service to the public during the construction phase will be a key consideration for the Council as plans are taken forward. The Council will also seek to accommodate voluntary service providers that currently occupy Council civic accommodation. A business case for achieving these objectives is being developed and details of all civic requirements will be finalised in the marketing particulars.~~

~~2.4 The working assumption of this brief is that the replacement civic accommodation will be provided on the present site as part of a mixed use development, on the basis of the above principle. Business continuity requirements would most likely require a phased redevelopment of the site. However, the Council is prepared to consider developer proposals to relocate the Civic accommodation on a suitable alternative site in Bexleyheath town centre as part of a package for the redevelopment of the Civic Offices site, if this would have clear planning or other advantages over a development of the Civic Offices site alone. Planning advantages should include the wider regeneration and enhancement of Bexleyheath and maximisation of the site's potential. An alternative site would need to meet the following minimum requirements:~~

- highly accessible location within the town centre boundary, well-served by public transport;
- good pedestrian links and public transport connections;

- compatible with surrounding uses; and
 - a site which will enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- 2.5 In addition, the alternative site must be capable of accommodating the Council's Civic Office requirements, as described in this brief.
- 2.6 The Council would wish to minimise the costs and disruption to services of temporary relocation of Council office accommodation. Further information regarding the relocation of Council accommodation to facilitate the redevelopment of the Civic offices site will be published in the marketing particulars for the site.



Space requirements

- 2.7 The Council's civic space requirements are for up to 16500 sq. metres net useable area. However, at least 25% of this space should be provided flexibly, such that it could be taken out of civic use at a future date and adapted for other users or uses. Details of the Council's civic space requirements will be published in the marketing package.
- 2.8 Any civic activity on the site must be visible and easily accessible to the community it supports. The design of the main entrance to the offices requires a landmark feature and must accommodate the needs of official visits and the Mayor's limousine.

Planning background

- 2.9 Planning applications for this site will be considered in the context of the approved Development Plan, which, in Bexley, comprises the **Core Strategy and** Unitary Development Plan (UDP) **Saved Policies 2012** ~~2004~~ and the Mayor's London Plan ~~(2004)~~ **(2011) as amended 2015**. This Planning Brief has been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document within the Local Development Scheme and will be a significant material planning consideration. The Council will also have regard to ~~for~~ relevant Government planning policy guidance. Other documents will also form a material consideration in determining planning applications. A list of these is provided at Appendix A.
- 2.10 **Core Strategy policies CS02 Bexleyheath geographic region, CS14 Appropriate town centre uses and** Chapter 11 of the UDP, 'Bexleyheath Town Centre', **are** incorporates the main, relevant policies. The Broadway frontage is identified as Non-core Shopping Frontage (UDP policy

2 New Civic Requirements

BTC3) and within an Area of Archaeological Search (**Core Strategy Policy CS19**) (UDP policy ENV56 and 57). Policy ENV39 seeks to protect and enhance the quality of the built environment and local and strategic views. The site is not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area and there are no listed or locally listed buildings on the site. **Relevant Development Plan documents are** ~~The UDP is available to view~~ on the Council's website, bexley.gov.uk, **and the Local Plan** at borough libraries and **Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street, Bexleyheath DA6 7AT** ~~Wyncham House, Longlands Road, Sidecup.~~

- 2.11 This section of Broadway is designated **as a Local Traffic Route and still carries bus routes** ~~Borough Distributor Road,~~ with the A207 designation having been transferred to Albion Road **that was constructed in the 1980s** ~~which is designed~~ to carry through-traffic. The parking area serving the **previous present** offices **had** has an access from and egress on to Albion Road **and although it may still be possible for the principle means of access to be taken from Albion Road the nature of this road is still changing over the next year or two as it forms part of the Bexleyheath Town Centre Revitalisation Scheme.** The site is bounded to the west by Highland Road, an unclassified road that has carried occasional bus movements in the past and forms part of the London Cycle Network, which provided an alternative means of vehicular access utilised in connection with the recent demolition and site clearance works.



Proposed uses

3.1 Bexleyheath needs to remain as the focus of civic and community uses but the context for this site within the Borough's strategic centre makes it acceptable for a wide range of other uses, including:

- Shops (A1);
- Financial and professional services (A2);
- Restaurants (A3);
- Hot food take-aways (A5);
- Assembly and leisure (D2);
- Business (B1);
- Housing (C3); and
- Non residential institutions, including education and health use (D1)

Drinking establishments (A4) are not supported by the Council.

3.2 (The references in brackets refer to the national Use Class categories)

3.3 It is for prospective developers to determine the appropriate mix of land uses, having regard for the objectives of this planning brief, subject to the requirement that new uses at ground floor level on the Broadway frontage are town centre uses that will increase the centre's attraction. Guidance on some of these uses is set out below.

Retail

3.4 The site falls within the town centre boundary and is defined as non-core shopping frontage in the UDP (2004). One of the objectives identified within the UDP is enhancement of the quality and quantity of shopping floorspace in the town centre. Retail floor space will be welcomed on the ground floor, particularly a mix of large and small units.



Preference will be given to new retail units that will complement rather than compete with the offer of existing shops in Bexleyheath town centre. ~~The ground floor frontage to Broadway must, however, also make provision for a suitably prominent entrance to the civic accommodation if this is to be mainly located on upper floors.~~

3.5 The relationship of new retail frontages to pedestrian flows between existing shops and car park areas in The **Broadway Shopping Centre** Mall and Sainsbury development should be carefully considered to ensure close integration of existing and new development areas.

3 Uses

Housing



- 3.6 Residential development would be supported as part of a scheme, particularly on upper floors and/or utilising the open south aspect of the site. The UDP, adopted in 2004, and the Council's new residential design guide, [design for living](#), set out maximum recommended densities for developments in different parts of the borough. The London Plan 2011 as amended 2015 sets out recommended density ranges for developments in table 3.2 dependent on the setting and Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL). As this is a highly accessible town centre site, the higher range of densities will be appropriate.
- 3.7 Development should reflect best practice guidance set out in the Council's residential design guide '[design for living](#)', including the principles of building for life and Lifetime Homes. The Mayor of London has set an expectation for all major developments in London to achieve an excellent Eco-homes rating a 40% improvement on 2010 building regulations for residential and non-domestic buildings from 2013-2016 and that standard will apply to this development.
- 3.8 Residential development must make provision for affordable housing in line with Policy H14 of Bexley's UDP, [policy CS10 of Bexley's Core Strategy](#) which seeks affordable housing as part of any development of 15 or more dwellings in residential schemes of ten units or more (subject to Government requirements). Having regard to local circumstances, a target provision of at least 35% of units being affordable housing will be sought. The Council's current policy will require the affordable housing to be provided on the basis of a 70% social rented (including affordable rent)/ 30% intermediate mix, in accordance with the [Bexley Core Strategy 2012](#) London Plan and the Council's [Affordable Housing](#) Supplementary Planning Document. The affordable housing element of any residential development should comply with this mix, or such other mix as may be in force at the time when a planning application is submitted.
- 3.9 The affordable element must be fully integrated within the overall scheme in terms of spatial distribution, design and materials. Prospective developers are advised to consult with both Housing and Planning officers of the Council at an early stage to agree how the policy should apply to this site.
- 3.10 Affordable housing should meet the identified needs for the borough as reflected in the [Bexley Borough Housing Needs Study \(2004\)](#) [South East London Strategic Housing Market Assessment \(2013\)](#). That identified the following mix of unit sizes:
- 8% one bedroom
 - ~~45%~~ 49% two bedroom
 - ~~30%~~ 33% three bedroom
 - ~~17%~~ 9% four bedroom.
- 3.11 The rented affordable housing element should reflect this range of unit sizes, but for intermediate housing, a majority of two bedroom accommodation is preferred. An innovative approach to family housing units is required to ensure an appropriate environment is created in terms of living and private amenity space.
- 3.12 In addition, the affordable housing must comply with the relevant Housing Corporation's Scheme Development Standards. At least 10% of all housing units must be developed to be full wheelchair accessible compatible standards.

Business

- 3.13 Bexleyheath is designated a Preferred Office Location in the Unitary Development Plan. The Council will support commercial office development on upper floors in addition to the Council's own office requirements. ~~The Council's Economic and Employment Development Strategy 2005-10, "Knowing Bexley", seeks to embed higher value business activity within the borough, putting knowledge interests central to developing the local business base and empowering local people to access new employment opportunities.~~ Careful design will be required to ensure commercial offices complement other uses that form part of the scheme and do not adversely affect the amenities of nearby residents.

Outdoor space

- 3.14 Outdoor space must be provided to meet the needs of new residents. Situated in a strategic town centre location, it is unlikely to be practicable to provide ground floor amenity space for residents of any new housing. The Councils 'design for living' residential design guidance seeks that in flatted development, amenity space should be a minimum of 45% of the plot area. This may be possible to achieve through the inclusion of decked amenity areas, terraces at upper levels and large, usable balconies. In addition, the Council will seek a commuted sum from the developer to fund improvements to nearby open spaces in order to meet the needs of residents for informal open space and children's playspace. ~~This will be calculated on the basis of Design and Development Control Guideline 10 in the Unitary Development Plan, "Play space provision for new developments."~~
- 3.15 In addition to outdoor space for new residents, prospective developers will be expected to contribute to an improved public realm within and around the site's perimeters.

Hours of use

- 3.16 As the borough's strategic centre, Bexleyheath has a range of attractions, including a cinema, pubs, bars, restaurants and a bowling centre, contributing to a busy night-time economy. As a suburban centre, it also has people living in and close to the commercial areas. Whilst the Council wishes to encourage a night-time economy with a broad family appeal, it is also mindful of the adverse impacts that night-time uses can have on both existing and new residents. Very careful consideration will, therefore, be required to the disposition of commercial and residential uses on the site and whether hours of operation of potentially noisy uses should be restricted to minimise disturbance to residents.

4 Design Aims

High quality design

- 4.1 Bexley Council is committed to help improve the quality of life of those who live or work in the borough or visit it. The redevelopment of this major site provides a unique opportunity to combine high quality design and major uses - good design for everyone - to deliver the regeneration of the town centre as a whole and, in particular, its eastern fringes.

Developing a successful design

- 4.2 A high standard of design and layout for this site is essential and requires an experienced architect to lead a design team that should include an urban designer, a landscape architect and an artist.
- 4.3 To develop a successful scheme for this major site any developers will be required to demonstrate that they have established a skilled, experienced and focused team which can appreciate and develop a clear Design Vision with the local community and the Council.
- 4.4 The design vision, which should be developed through consultation, should seek to :
- create a sustainable form of development that integrates with other nearby sites to the town centre boundary;
 - reinforce the unique identity of Bexleyheath;
 - create a more inclusive town centre for all, including families, younger people and elderly people;
 - establish exemplary environmental credentials for the scheme so that it becomes a benchmark for the borough;
 - reinforce the network of existing public realm;
 - improve public transport accessibility to and within the town centre, specifically bus links to the closest railway stations;
 - improve pedestrian and cycle links with the rest of the town centre;
 - enable a significant quantitative and qualitative expansion of the retail offer of Bexleyheath town centre;
 - create high quality residential uses with integrated, affordable housing; and take account of important strategic and local views.
- 4.5 The design vision must be developed from an appreciation of the physical, economic and social context of Bexleyheath and the overall strategy for the town centre. It should lead to development proposals that are viable and capable of implementation.
- 4.6 A Design Statement will apply the vision. The importance, visibility and scale of this site must be considered and developed three dimensionally. As a minimum, the following issues must be addressed at the design stage and, once agreed, in the detailed design:

Massing and height

- 4.7 Over the last 30 years, major developments in the town have generally been developed to four or six stories high. The scale and arrangement of any new development and any spaces created must successfully relate to its neighbours. Any building lines must reflect the existing urban environment. The skyline of the town, as viewed along the Bexleyheath

ridge from the south and A2, is imposing but now needs relief and needs to make more of a positive impact on vistas and the skyline. A tower of eight or possibly ten floors, especially towards the northwest corner of the site, could provide the necessary impact without adversely affecting residential areas. However, the acceptability of the building heights will also be dependent on the mix of uses on site, the design quality of the scheme and the effect on the amenity of residents and other occupiers and town centre uses, including the effects of overshadowing and wind-tunneling. Rather than dictating an arbitrary building height, the Council will expect a design solution to emerge as part of the Design Vision and the testing and analysis of different design scenarios and their impacts.

Density

- 4.8 The accessibility and location of this site and its extensive frontage provides the opportunity for a high-density development compatible with the local context, design principles and public transport and highway capacity.

Design details

- 4.9 To be appreciated as successful, any scheme must meet the personal demands and wishes of users of the town as a whole as well as those using the development and addressing their surroundings in a positive manner.
- 4.10 The rhythm, scale and detail of openings and bays, windows and doors must be sensitively designed, 'dead' frontage avoided and designed out especially at ground floor. Examples of interesting design details, craftsmanship and building techniques will be welcomed. Around this exposed site colonnades, canopies and similar features will be welcomed to provide opportunities for protecting pedestrians from the elements and encouraging carefully managed sitting-out areas.
- 4.11 It is vital that elevations to the surrounding pavements provide an attractive, interesting, secure and safe environment for pedestrians and ensure that any scheme does not turn its back on the town and the street scene.
- 4.12 The amount of active frontage on to the street must be maximised and the opportunity for corner features along Highland Road must be exploited. Parking and servicing areas should be screened to minimise their impact on the public realm.
- 4.13 The exposed southern elevation and overlooked roof will require that the roofscape needs detailed design as a fifth elevation, particularly roofing materials. Accommodation for plant, ventilation and equipment should be designed within the development.

4 Design Aims

Landscaping

- 4.14 Any treatment of external space must be developed to compliment the design of the key structures. A Landscape Strategy must indicate how the treatment combines with the buildings and include shape, form, surfaces, colours, trees and planting, boundary treatments and a maintenance plan.



Public art

- 4.15 The public environment of this prominent site and this part of town would be enhanced by public art. As well as sculptures and fountains, which have proven popular locally, public art could take the form of an entrance or other integral features incorporated into the new structures. It could additionally include temporary artwork on hoardings around the construction site, produced with local schools and colleges. An artist should be part of the design team to work in collaboration with the architect and landscape architect.



Designing out crime

- 4.16 It is important for the scheme to embrace designing out crime principles, including: defensible space; natural surveillance visibility; lighting and other security measures.
- 4.17 Proposals should clearly define public and private spaces within the development. They should create active frontage and windows facing onto public areas to encourage natural surveillance and improve security. Care is needed to avoid creating hidden corners or left-over areas without any defined function. ~~Early liaison with the Crime Prevention Design Officer is recommended.~~
- 4.18 Within the car parking areas, the layout, lighting, openness and natural surveillance should aid security, and should meet secured by design standards. Consideration should be given to installing a CCTV system to cover the car park and pedestrian links as part of the development.

Waste management

- 4.19 Bexley sets high standards for the management of waste streams and the collection of waste for recycling. Careful consideration should be given to storage for segregated waste which is convenient and easily accessible for businesses, residents and the waste collection crews. The Council's residential design guide, 'design for living' requires that for blocks of flats, communal recycling and composting facilities should be provided. Internal storage areas should be designed to allow occupants to segregate their recyclable waste.

Sustainability

- 4.20 New buildings must be efficient in resource use, healthy, adaptable and responsible in protecting the environment and make the most of natural systems such as passive solar design. This site has the capacity to adopt the principles of sustainable construction and any new development will be required to adopt the highest standard of environmentally friendly, sustainable design and construction including for demolition and long-term management. This must be demonstrated in a Sustainability Statement. The Council has published a ~~draft~~ Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (2007) and the London Mayor published a Sustainable Design and Construction SPG in 2014 which should be finalised later in 2007. Regard should be had to the best practice principles contained in this guidance.
- 4.21 Redevelopment of this high, open location also provides a unique opportunity to incorporate renewable energy technology and design - in accordance with the energy hierarchy in using less energy, using renewable energy and supplying energy efficiently, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to comply with the London Plan. The new development will need to reduce CO2 by 35% in relation to the 2013 building regulations and should provide a detailed energy assessment in accordance with London Plan policy 5.2 C and D must generate at least 10% of its energy needs from renewable sources. ~~Draft Alterations to the London Plan propose revised targets of 20% renewable energy and prospective developers should view this as a minimum requirement for the Civic offices site.~~ However, as part of its commitment to encouraging renewable technology in public buildings, the Council would encourage prospective developers to aim for a zero carbon development as a target.
- 4.22 Proposals should also make efficient use of water, including minimising the use of treated water, maximising rainwater-harvesting opportunities, using grey water recycling systems and waste recycling facilities. New dwellings must be constructed to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 the Eco-homes excellent standard or equivalent.
- 4.23 Although the site is not located in an area at risk from flooding developers should consider the risk posed to others caused by surface water run off and how this can be reduced.

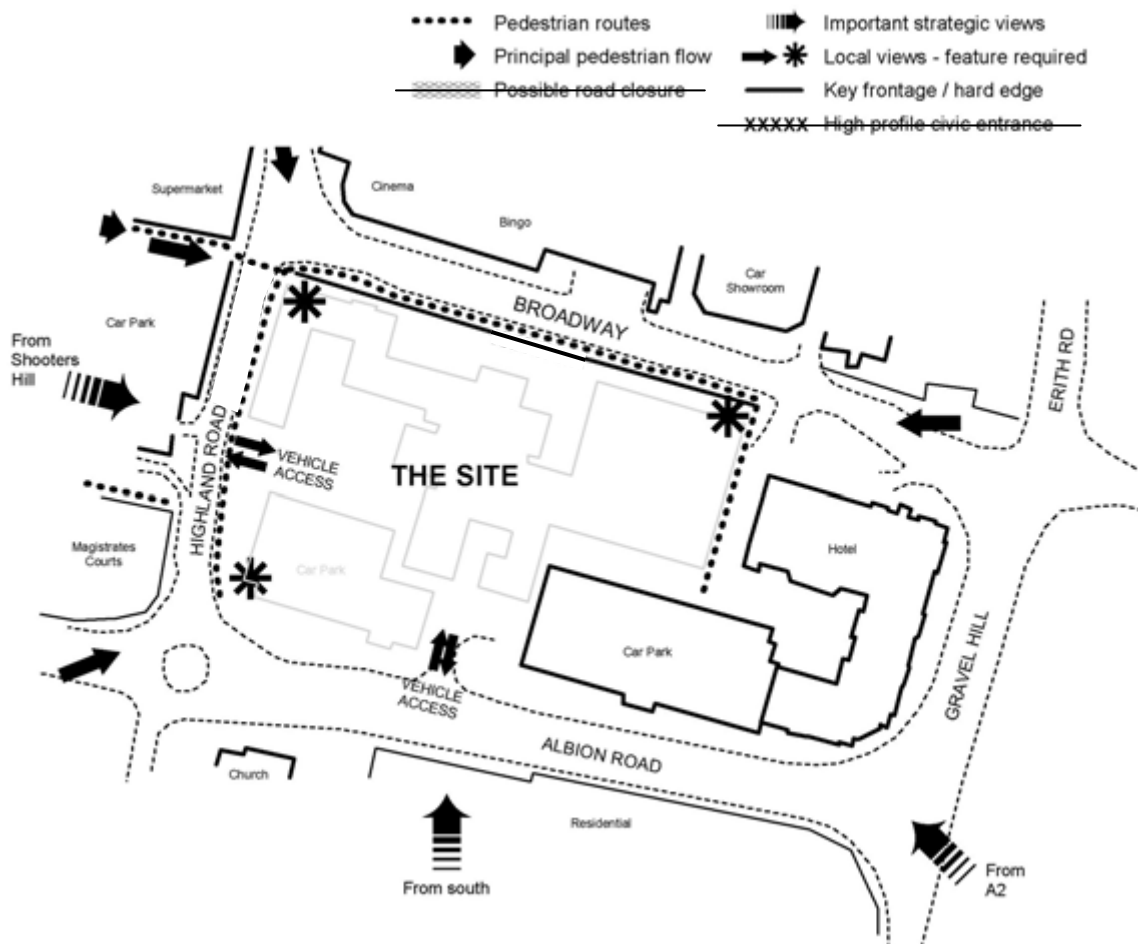
Movement framework

- 4.24 Proposals must create a place that is easy to get to and move through. A Transport Assessment will be required, with a planning application, to demonstrate this and explain parking provision. The Transport Assessment should assess the impact of the development on the movement of people and goods, and not be limited to vehicular movement.
- 4.25 Bexleyheath is already relatively well served by public transport with a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) index rating of 54. The Council is committed to further improving public transport access to the town centre to provide more sustainable travel alternatives to the private car and to assist those for whom public transport is the only means of travel to Bexleyheath for shopping, leisure or work. It is particularly conscious of the remoteness of Bexleyheath from the nearest railway stations and would welcome measures to strengthen bus network links between the town centre, Barnehurst and Bexleyheath Stations. Consideration should also be given, in liaison with service providers, to incorporate bus stop(s) and/or a taxi stand into the scheme. The Council will support provision for public transport as a means of reducing the on-site parking requirement.
- 4.26 Map 2 indicates the preferred vehicular access points into and out of the site. The site boundary incorporates the existing Albion Road access. Whilst this access may be modified or repositioned it must also provide access to the decked car park to the east linked to the Marriott Hotel. Construction phasing must also enable uninterrupted vehicular

4 Design Aims

and pedestrian access to this decked car park. The access point in Highland Road, which should be positioned to avoid conflict with vehicles entering or leaving the Sainsbury car park, should enable vehicles leaving the site to turn right at the Albion Road roundabout.

Map 2 Movement and design framework



4.27 Any proposals for vehicular access will need to be justified and demonstrate that they do not adversely impact the local network as part of the Transport Assessment. In addition, any works to the highway will need to successfully undergo an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit prior to the granting of planning permission.

4.28 On-site parking provision should not exceed the maximum standards in the the **London Plan 2011 as amended 2015** ~~Bexley Unitary Development Plan 2004~~. Relevant standards are set out in **Table 6.2 including provision for electric vehicles and cycle parking standards in Table 6.3 Table 4**. **The previous civic office site provided a significant amount of town centre car parking for Bexleyheath. National Planning Practice Guidance on parking states that where it is necessary to ensure the vitality of town centres the quantity of parking should be improved.** Non-residential spaces should be publicly available to support the town centre in general, including evening uses. To minimise its visual impact, high quality parking underneath the development in basement and sub-levels is preferred. This parking should meet Secured by Design/ Safer Car Parks or other appropriate standards and create safe and convenient links to and from the surface for those on foot or with impaired mobility. The Council will take into consideration the availability of public off-street parking spaces in the vicinity of the Civic Offices site when applying parking standards. The layout and management of the car park should take account of the needs of different users, ~~including functional requirements of the civic accommodation.~~

Design Aims 4

Table 1 Relevant car parking standards (Bexley UDP 2004)

Use	Maximum provision
Supermarkets, superstores and hypermarkets (over 1200m ²)	1 car space per 15m ² gfa
DIY stores, retail warehouses and garden centres	1 car space per 20m ² gfa
General retail, including take-aways	1 car space per 40m ² gfa or 1 per shop
Office (use class B1)	1 car space per 100-400m ² gfa
Restaurants and cafes (use class A3)	1 vehicle space per 7m ² for public spaces
Residential: 1-2 habitable rooms	1 car space per dwelling
3-4 habitable rooms	1.5 car spaces per dwelling
5 or more habitable rooms	2 car space per dwelling

4.29 A Travel Plan will be required to consider operational issues such as servicing and staff travel.

4.30 The Council supports improved planning and access for disabled people. Development of this site must create an inclusive environment including parking and drop-offs and an **Access Statement** will be required to support any planning application. Advice on [the Equality Act 2010 Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act](#) and Part M of the Building Regulations can be obtained from the Council's Building Control Access Officer.



4.31 Key pedestrian links that must be secured or retained in and around the site are shown on Map 2.

Cycling

4.32 The Council wishes to encourage the use of cycling to the town centre as an alternative, sustainable transport mode and will seek site provision for the use of cycles. Provision for cyclists should be included in the Transport Assessment, including the provision of convenient and secure parking and changing facilities. The [London Plan Bexley Unitary Development Plan 2004](#) sets out standards for cycle parking.

Noise

4.33 Noise from road traffic in Albion Road and Broadway is estimated to range from 65 dB to 75 dB for a continuous noise level over a 24 hour period (Lden) and 55dB to 65 dB for a continuous noise level at night (Lnight). If residential or other sensitive uses are proposed for the site, a detailed assessment of noise exposure levels will be required.

4 Design Aims

Air quality

- 4.34 On-site parking and traffic movements could have an adverse impact on air quality for residents and potential occupiers / employees in the new development. An Air Quality Assessment may be required to accompany a planning application if the proportion of on-site parking warrants it.

Site context

- 5.1 This 1.5 hectare site slopes gradually down from north-west to south-east, losing some 2 metres. There is no detailed site or soil survey kept on record but information about soil conditions on adjacent sites indicates the soil type to be the Harwich Formation (formerly Blackheath Beds). This comprises of mainly sand and gravel with occasional clay content. The bearing capacity, where undisturbed material can be found is in the range 280-350 kN/m².
- 5.2 Historical maps demonstrate that the site has been used for a multitude of purposes over the years and it would be expected that some areas of the site contain disturbed ground resulting from backfilled basements, wells and previous foundations. **Potentially known** structures include the basement of the **now demolished existing civic offices** building, an underground bunker for the Emergency Control Centre and a foul water drain pump chamber.
- 5.3 World War II unexploded munitions have previously been found on this and adjoining sites. Any developer will be required to survey the site for munitions prior to demolition or excavation work being carried out and any further excavation will need to be monitored for safety purposes. An Emergency Plan is available and the developer must ensure that the project and site managers are aware of its details.

Drainage

- 5.4 A detailed drainage survey is kept on record and shows the capacity of surrounding foul and surface drains around the site. An underground foul water drain pump chamber is located just north of the Albion Road Car Park and feeds into a 150mm drain running east to Gravel Hill.
- 5.5 On the information available to the Council, there would appear to be adequate infrastructure to provide the necessary waste water capability. However, developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate waste water capacity both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to fund studies to ascertain whether proposed development will lead to overloading of existing waste water infrastructure. Further information on both sewerage and sewage treatment can be obtained at Thames Water Utilities (Contact details at the end of this document). It is vital that developers consult Thames Water at the earliest possible stage in any development proposal to enable essential services to be provided in the most effective way.
- 5.6 In the disposal of surface water, Thames Water requires the separation of foul and surface water sewerage on new developments. It is the responsibility of the developers to make proper provision for the surface water drainage to ground, water courses or suitable water sewer. It must not be allowed to drain to the foul sewer as this is the main contributor to sewer flooding.

Water supply

- 5.7 Thames Water Utilities have advised that the water supply network is unlikely to be able to support the demand anticipated from the development and it will be necessary for Thames Water to undertake investigations of the impact of the development once the magnitude of the development is confirmed. The investigations would take several weeks

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and, if an upgrade is required, up to three years lead time will be necessary. Developers would be required to fund associated studies and any upgrading of the network. There may be existing water mains crossing the site and, in this event, the developer would also be required to pay for new, off-site infrastructure. Further information on water supply infrastructure can be obtained from Thames Water Utilities (contact details at the end of this document) and early consultation on development proposals is advised once again.

- 5.8 Much can be done within a development to save water and developers are encouraged to incorporate water saving measures into their scheme. Guidance can be obtained direct from the Environment Agency National Water Demand Management Centre at www.environment-agency.gov.uk or Thames Water at www.thameswater.co.uk

Contamination

- 5.9 In response to an asbestos report known areas of, or containing, such a material have been treated. This information will be available to the developer/ contractor to help plan safe demolition operations. In addition, this large site has accommodated a variety of uses and activities including a tram depot, corporation yard and civil defence depot. A Site Contamination Investigation will be required to determine what, if any, degree of remediation will be required to make the site suitable for the intended use of the land.

Archaeology

- 5.10 The site falls within an Area of Archaeological Search which straddles the assumed line of the old Roman Road across the old heath land. Much of this site was developed during the Victorian period and the surface of most of the site was disturbed when the current civic accommodation and car park were erected in the 1970's. No important finds were found during the excavations for the recent developments for the Cinema/ Bingo development or Broadway Square and evidence about the specific line of the Roman Road remains elusive.
- 5.11 As a result, it is anticipated that there will be no major finds located on this site. However, there may be traces of previous activity. Any developer will be required to co-operate in ascertaining, recording and, where appropriate, recovering material of archaeological interest discovered on the site. The developer will be required to implement a Programme of Archaeological Work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority.

Site management

- 5.12 In order to safeguard the amenities of nearby residents, users of local facilities and businesses and the safety of highway users, a Construction Methodology Statement will be required. The statement should include a programme and details of:
- the construction works;
 - storage of materials;
 - hours of working;
 - methods of abating noise and dust;
 - targets for minimising demolition and construction waste;
 - wheel washing and street cleaning arrangements; and
 - routeing of construction vehicles throughout the area.

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- 5.13 It is vital that measures to safely manage polluted material must be agreed. Developers are encouraged to consult the Waste **and Street Services** ~~Minimalisation and Recycling~~ Section for advice on minimising demolition and construction waste and recycling provision. Conditions will be imposed on any planning permission and/or within a legal agreement in regard to construction matters. The developers will be asked to require their contractors to commit to the highest environmental standards during construction.
- 5.14 Because of the prominent and sensitive location of this site and the likely duration of works, the design of the site hoardings around the site must be agreed with the local planning authority. Such hoardings should be durable and of high quality design and minimise the opportunities for fly-posting and graffiti, e.g. by the use of 'hit and miss' boarding. Site hoardings must be regularly maintained. The prominent frontages of this site, especially the south-facing frontage (Albion Road), justify sensitive consideration of the scale, location number and illumination of any temporary advertisements. Hoardings and advertising will require the prior consent of the Local Planning Authority and early discussions are recommended.

Local sourcing of labour

- 5.15 The Council is keen to encourage sustainable travel patterns and ensure the redevelopment of the Civic Offices site brings economic and employment benefits for local communities. To this end, developers will be asked to agree that any jobs created during the construction phase of the development, and as a result of subsequent site maintenance, are notified to the Council's **Employment and Skills Team** ~~"Resources Plus" local labour scheme~~ with a view to recruiting locally where possible. A financial contribution will be sought towards the scheme's costs of local recruitment and training. The eventual site users will also be expected to contribute to the scheme where new jobs are to be created.

Community engagement

- 5.16 ~~The Civic Offices~~ **This site** is one of the last foreseeable opportunities for major regeneration in Bexleyheath town centre and redevelopment proposals should be brought forward through a comprehensive, detailed application submission, following community engagement. The selected developers will, therefore, be required to undertake community engagement on the proposals before a planning application is submitted and to submit a report to the Council on the consultation undertaken and how the scheme has responded to views received. As well as the local community, the consultation should include key stakeholders, including the Greater London Authority, Transport for London, ~~Design For London, Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)~~ and the Environment Agency. Bexley Council will be able to advise on a full list of consultees. ~~There is no requirement to consult the public at the tendering stage.~~

Summary of planning obligation/development agreement requirements

- 5.17 This planning brief has identified a number of matters that will need to be dealt with, either by means of a Section 106 Planning Obligation or as part of a development or other appropriate legal agreement. For convenience, **a link to the [Planning Obligations SPD](#) is provided here** ~~they are summarised below. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, as other matters may emerge through the course of discussions on the scheme and its evolution to a planning application.~~

- ~~Civic office accommodation and associated civic uses specified in the Planning Brief~~

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- ~~Temporary relocation costs, if any~~
- ~~Affordable housing~~
- ~~Off-site informal open space and play provision~~
- ~~Public art~~
- ~~CCTV (if not part of the scheme)~~
- ~~Renewable energy installations~~
- ~~Off-site highway works~~
- ~~Contributions to improved public transport (in conjunction with a Travel Plan)~~
- ~~Resources Plus local labour scheme~~
- ~~Utilities infrastructure~~

~~Other items will be drawn to the attention of prospective developers at the earliest possible time.~~

The development will also be liable for a charge under the Bexley Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the Mayoral CIL. Links to the [London CIL](#), [Bexley CIL](#) can be found here.

List of other planning documents to consider

- A.1 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the online [National Planning Practice Guidance](#)** ~~Government guidance, Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and Planning Policy~~

~~Statements (PPS), (in particular but not exclusively):~~

~~PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development~~

~~PPS3: Housing~~

~~PPS6: Planning for Town Centres~~

~~PPS10: Planning for Waste Management~~ [National Planning Policy for Waste](#)

~~PPG13: Transport~~

~~PPG16: Archaeology and Planning~~

~~PPS22: Renewable Energy~~

~~PPS25: Development and Flood Risk~~

~~By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System - Towards Better Practice A CABE publication for the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions~~

- A.2 **London Plan 2011 as amended 2015** ~~London Plan 2004 The Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy for London and Proposed Alterations to the London Plan 2007~~

- A.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance to the London Plan, (in particular but not exclusively):

~~Sustainable Design and Construction (May 2006)~~ [Sustainable Design and Construction SPG \(April 2014\)](#) ~~Housing (November 2012 2006)~~

~~Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment (October 2014)~~

~~(April 2004)~~ [The control of dust and emissions during construction and demolition \(July 2014\)](#) [Town Centres Supplementary Planning Guidance \(July 2014\)](#)

~~There is also forthcoming guidance on Renewable Energy and Retail Needs Assessment.~~

- A.4 Bexley Council documents:

[Bexley Core Strategy and Saved UDP Policies 2012](#)

~~Bexley Unitary Development Plan 2004~~ [Design for Living: Bexley's Residential Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document \(June 2006\)](#)

[Affordable Housing: Supplementary Planning Document \(March 2006\)](#)

~~Sustainable Design and Construction: Draft Supplementary Planning Document (May 2007)~~

[Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document 2008](#)

[Bexley Community Infrastructure Levy April 2015](#)

B Appendix

Bexley Council contacts

Strategic Planning Policy:

Seb Salom Glyn Bryant, Head of Strategic Planning and **Growth** Development
020 8308 7776

Civic Requirements:

Suzanne Jackson, Head of Property Services
020 8294 6366

Sustainability Statement:

Ben Thomas, **Planning Strategy** Team Leader Strategic Planning and Development
020 8303 7788

Graham Mollison, Environment Manager
01322 356849

Development Control and Urban Design

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020 8303 7761

Mark Watling Ken Stone, Team Leader Development Control
020 8308 7772

Building Control (including disabled access – Part M):

Adrian Cole, Head of Building Services
020 8308 5802

Environmental Health:

Kevin Murphy, Head of Environmental Health
020 8308 7623

Drainage:

Dave Green, Head of **Engineering** Technical Services (Technical)
020 8294 6878

Roy Billings, Senior Engineer (General Engineering)
020 8294 6924

Transport and Traffic:

Richard Hawkins, Head of Transport and Traffic Services
020 8303 7900

Martin Able, **Transport and Development Manager** Group Engineer (Development)
020 8308 7883

Archaeology:

Martyn Nicholls, Team Leader Strategic Planning and Development
020 8308 7785

Resources Plus Local Labour Scheme:

Employment and Skills Lynn Lancaster, Head Skills and Training
020 8308 7722

Housing:

Anna Bourne, enabling and Development Manager
020 8294 6494

~~Crime Prevention:~~~~Val Hines, Crime Prevention Design Officer
020 8308 7931~~~~Waste Management:~~~~Steve Didsbury, Head of Waste and Street Services
01322 356905~~~~Other contacts~~~~Thames~~~~Water~~~~Utilities:~~~~Kew~~~~Business~~~~Centre~~~~0845 850 2777~~

If you would like the information in this document in a different format, please call 020 8303 7777 and ask for Communications/Graphics. The reference to quote is: 606134/4.15

